

eel has not been found near shore. There seems to be two separate populations of eels, American and European. Both populations seem to spawn in the mid-Atlantic, and the tiny newborns, called elvers, somehow find their ways back to their respective continents. No one has any idea how they do this. The eels then stay in the estuarine waters for several years and eventually find their way back to the Sargasso Sea. To me, this is truly amazing. Eels are caught on hook and line, but they are slimy fish and most fishermen consider them non-edible pests. The Japanese, Dutch and other Europeans consider them delicacies. Smoked eel to them are sort of like pretzels in Philadelphia. You buy them on the street and eat them as a finger food.

An eel fishery based on using tubular eel traps or "pots" was attempted back in the 70s and 80s. The intent was to ship live eels to Japan. It was a failure. The potting was to be done far up the estuaries, near Bath, Belhaven and Swan Quarter. I still run a few eel traps near Belhaven. The eels I catch I eviscerate, brine overnight, and then smoke at low heat, 180 degrees, for six to eight hours. After smoking, the skin is dried out and peels off easily. The meat is white and rich and very tasty.

Other than the "rock," most of us on the coast never know about these other "anonymous" "anadromous" fish that pass us by.

As far as our normal fish, nice blues have shown up at the Cape Lookout rock jetty. We are talking blues in the 22 plus inch range, some big enough to call "choppers." They are taking mud minnows, fresh squid, shrimp and white Gulp. I hope to try some white streamer flies as well. Twenty inch blues on a fly rod are a hoot. I do try to sneak a small piece of multi-strand stainless steel leader to the end of the line fly to reduce cutoffs. In the turning basin, sea mullet are showing up in good numbers and nice sizes. These are also known as whiting and northern kingfish. They are delicious to eat. Speckled trout and puppy drum are showing up hungry in the deeper holes in the marshes. Of course, sometime in the next month, the ocean water will hit 65 degrees, and the Atlantic Bonita will zoom through, feeding over the artificial reefs like 315 and 320. As always, these fish are early feeders, so fishing usually is best at dawn and over by 8 a.m. As the water warms more, the cobia will show up on the reefs and in the inlets. Out deep from #14 to Big Rock, nice tuna can be trolled. However, at \$4 a gallon for fuel, you had better plan on a fuel bill of at least \$300. Add in the bait and forgetting the gear and wear and tear on the boat and equipment, even a great day of two 40 pound tuna per fisherman for three folks, and the edible meat cost is going to over \$3 a pound—not that many fishing days actually yield six yellowfin tuna, just for the record.

In any event, let's hope the close-in fishing gets good so we can enjoy some good fish without going broke. Enjoy spring.

THE GEEK CORNER

By Dan Law

Spring is finally upon us, and I have to admit that it has not come too soon for me. We have been busy doing spring cleaning in the yard, home and on our sailboat. It's amazing how dirty and moldy things can get during long, cold winter months. This is also a great time to take a close look at your desktop computer too. A desktop's tower not only collects dust on the outside and on the cooling fan vent, but an inspection of the inside will reveal even more heavy dust.

It's bad to clean the inside of your computer with a vacuum cleaner because vacuuming creates a large static buildup that could (and most likely will) discharge into the sensitive electronics inside the computer case. Static electricity will cause serious damage to sensitive internal electronic components when it is allowed to discharge directly to them inside the case. There are specialized vacuum cleaners designed for cleaning out computers and electronic equipment, but given the limited amount of use a single user would get from such a purchase, it's not a very wise one since they range in cost from \$300 to \$1000.

What the Geeks recommend doing is taking your computer case into a well-ventilated area (outside on a sunny day or in your garage is a great place), grounding the case to protect against static discharge (although the risk here is very low) and using compressed air to clean the dust off. If you're using an air compressor (as opposed to just a can of compressed air from the computer store) make sure to start a good 24" or so away from the case and work your way in closer. You want to use just enough air pressure to blast the dust off the surfaces and out of the case without overdoing it and pushing dust into even more difficult-to-remove places.

One important thing to consider is that compressed air (from a compressor, not a can) contains minute amounts of water vapor. However remote the chance, it is possible to blow moisture into the connectors on your mother board and damage it if you were to boot it immediately afterwards. This is in the range of lightning-strike remote, however. Nonetheless, to be extra cautious, we would recommend that you leave the computer off and in a warm, dry location for a few hours

after you give it a good air compressor cleaning to allow any residual moisture (if it's even there to begin with) to evaporate. It's better to be safe than sorry later. Personally, I use store-bought compressed air cans since I don't currently own an air compressor for the garage.

The "How-To" Geek website has this information and many more computer tips. Got a question? You can seek the information from the same people I turn to frequently. Just e-mail them to Ask@howtogeek.com. They give great advice, but remember it's often difficult to solve every computer issue remotely since most issues can be caused by many different circumstances.

In the March issue of *Smart Computing*, a subscriber asked: "I've already installed Adobe Flash, but whenever I encounter a Flash-enabled Web site, I get a message telling me that I need to install it." The answer: "It's possible to have downloaded but not installed Flash, so first make sure that you downloaded and ran the installer. If so, it may be that Flash is, in fact, present but is disabled in your browser's add-on manager. In Internet Explorer, go to Tools and select Manage Add-Ons. Select the Flash add-on and click the Enable button. In Firefox, go to Tools and select Add-Ons. Select Flash and click the Enable button."

Although the above suggestions are very likely the solution to that issue, the problem could have other causes, like outdated driver software that runs the hardware. The problem could also be caused by a Trojan, malware or spyware.

Until next month, stay safe and have a happy, warm spring season.

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May 2011 Sudoku Puzzle • Difficulty level: medium