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Vol. XII • Issue 8
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John holding up his swordfish that was caught off of Marathon with Capt. Dave Schugar.

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January 13th, 2010

Volume XII, Issue 8

“UNITED WE FISH” – Fisherman to March on Washington on Feb. 24th . . .

In a historic show of solidarity, recreational and commercial fishermen will gather together on the steps of the Capitol on February 24, 2010 from noon until 3 p.m. in an organized demonstration against the unintended negative impacts of the Magnuson Stevens Conservation and Management Act (MSA), the federal fisheries law which was revised in January of 2007. Coordinating the march under the flag of **United We Fish**, rally organizers are hoping to see a large show of force in defense of coastal communities.

The **Recreational Fishing Alliance** is a national, grassroots political action organization representing recreational fishermen and the recreational fishing industry on marine fisheries issues. RFA’s Mission is to safeguard the rights of saltwater anglers, protect marine, boat and tackle industry jobs, and ensure the long-term sustainability of our nation’s saltwater fisheries.

For more information, call 888-JOIN-RFA. 

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Fishing Report

Brought to you courtesy of
Capt. Chris Lembo
of Incognito Charters, Key West.
To fish with Capt. Chris,
call (305) 292-0067, or visit
www.incognitolighttackle.com
incognitocharters@comcast.net

Capt. Chris Lembo Key West Offshore



What a run of lousy weather we have been having here in all of South Florida. A couple of record breaking cold days and plenty of wind and rain. The forecast is for much improvement this week and a good run of back to normal. In Murray Marine the water temp was 57.8 degrees on 1/8/2010. Just halfway to the reef it was 65 and it was back to 70-71 on the reef. The current has been moving just right to the east and the water is fairly clear.

With the Grouper closure in place bottom fishing has been mostly for Mutton Snapper and those miscellaneous reef fish like Porgies and Margate as well as Yellowtail and Kingfish. The Kingfish have been stacked up on the usual drops and ledges and I had charters catch both a 56 pounder and a 51 pounder in the past week. Dead ballyhoo free-lined on a stinger rig that caught both fish. We threw back a few nice Red and

Black Grouper as well as a big Gag from a small patch reef just inside the reef. The Yellowtail bite has been up and down with the weather. Amberjacks and Sharks are also cruising the same drops and ledges.

Trolling has been working well on Sailfish and Dolphin this past week. I had charters that found both along the 120-130 foot depth around lobster trap buoys. As we approached the traps you could see a few small Mahi just holding close to the buoy. They came out and hit small trolled baits but went right back as soon as we passed. Hopefully the cold will not send them away and we will see a good year like last year. Sailfish have been hitting trolled Ballyhoo, both dead and slow trolled livies. Kite fishing has been difficult with the strong winds and lack of good baits. I found a few thread Herring on some channel markers but not big quantities. Wahoo are out there and a few boats found fish.

Gulf wrecks and rock-piles are worth hitting as soon as the weather breaks as this cold snap will have pushed plenty of Cobia down our way. We may even see some more unusual bites this coming week with this cold. Look for some big Redfish to have pushed south along with loads of Kingfish.



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Spring Time Bahamas Fishing Tips:

Captain Trey Rhyne • Over Under Sport Fishing

Here's some information we've accumulated over the years. Some things to consider as you ponder tackle, spreads, and strategy when fishing in the Bahamas come this Spring.

1. Rig your Blue Marlin Lures with Cable Under the Skirts. There are some monster Wahoo hanging around in April and May, and they love Purple and Black Marlin Plugs. This 113# Wahoo was taken off of San Salvador, the last week of April in 2008. The fish was caught on a Rick's Fancy in Purple and Black, rigged with Cable Underneath as pictured. Hide Wire in your Pin Rigged Ballyhoo (as pictured) – again, this may save a late season Wahoo Bite.



2. Cedar Plugs – Daisy chain 3 plugs, and run them down the middle from your bridge rod or rocket launcher. Most of our tuna are caught on this rig.

3. Trolling Speeds – Don't be afraid to pick up the speed here. Make sure your spread looks right, your lures have the right action, and go as fast as you can. Dolphin, Tuna, and Billfish will all bite, and are not afraid of speed. 8-9 knots works for everything, and you will still get wahoo bites.

4. Keep your largest lures in tight behind bridge teasers on your short riggers – this will draw fish into the spread. Blue Marlin are typically not boat shy here. This also allows you to bait & switch whites and sailfish onto pitch baits. Fish your smaller lower profile tackle on the long riggers for dolphin and tuna.

5. Standard May/June Spread – 2 Bridge teasers. Two blue marlin lures on the short riggers, a large blue marlin lure in the center of the spread run from the Bridge, a Cedar Plug down middle off the center rigger, a small lure on one long rigger, and an islander/ballyhoo on the other long.

6. Resist the temptation to put a big high profile lure down the middle, way back. While, this strategy will certainly draw the attention of billfish, it will also keep them from coming into the spread, and if they are missed on the first go-round, there is little chance of an exiting bite.


7. Run your highest profile lure from the bridge, just behind the short riggers. The captain can use this as a third teaser and bring the whites in close for pitch baiting.

8. Our tackle set-up: we fish Penn 70VS's on our shorts (targeting Blue Marlin), an 80 VSW bent butt from the bridge (Also targeting Blue Marlin), and a Penn 50VSW off the center rigger with the cedar plug chain (Targeting Tuna). The long riggers are either a Penn 16VSX (targeting white marlin, sailfish, and dolphin) or 50 VSW's, depending on the likelihood of tuna bites. As soon as the Yellowfin show up, we swap out our 16's for 50's and add another cedar plug, feather, or ballyhoo to the spread.

9. Save a couple Blackfin Tuna and chunk them up for dolphin on spinning rods.

10. Drop a jig. Don't be afraid to stop on the edge, in the middle of a bunch of birds and drop a jig. You never know what you might catch, like this wahoo taken on a jig off of San Salvador.

11. Got Your Fly-Rod? May offers a great opportunity at catching big dolphin on fly, as they can be teased up close to the boat.

There are many ways to fish, and many thoughts on all these topics. We've settled in on a methodology that works for us, which is what is important. Figure out what works for your boat, crew, time allotted, and targeted species. We've had the luxury of spending countless days fishing these waters, allowing us to experiment with different techniques and explore new locations. But we have also been lucky enough to have had great advice along the way from many seasoned Skippers over here. Tight Lines . . . 



Unknown Critic

Who says the glass is always half full? Our Unknown Critic certainly doesn't agree! If you are one of those positive people, hopefully you will get a giggle out of him, and if you are a crabby critic yourself, please drop him a line. You can reach the Unknown Critic at critic@weeklyfisherman.com, with complaints, comments and all those things that tick you off!



From "somewhere" in the Keys . . .

The Weather . . .

I'm starting to re-think my decision to move to the wonderful Sunshine State of Florida. What the F%&! What kind of sick, vast left wing conspiracy is being waged against me? I worked for 25 years in the


frozen north saving every penny and dreaming of the day when I could live easy and breezy, fishin' in the warm waters of the Florida Keys. Instead, my reality is to wake up here covered in every blanket we have in the house and I am still freezing my backside off!

I never thought I'd need a winter coat down here, now all I can think of is how I've left all of my cold weather clothes up north. Wish I had a stocking hat. Sure could use those warm gloves I left behind. Wool socks would also come in handy right about now. Maybe I should have brought my ice fishing clothes? Heck my nose is cold! Do I have to go further south? Should I get in my boat and just motor south? How far would I have to go? Cuba? Further?

Hell no! I'm going to stand my ground. I've invested everything I have on this dream. The weather has to break, right? It's going to get warm again, isn't it? Where is global warming when you need it . . .

All I know is that if it gets any colder, I'm going fishing anyway. I'll bring the wife with the video camera and we'll do our own "Deadliest Catch" episode just like they do in the Bering Sea!

Sure hope I don't have to reinforce the bow of my boat to start breaking ice.

Might as well get a god d%*n job! 

Fishing Report

This report is brought to you courtesy of Capt. Ron Wagner aboard his boat, the Producer. If you would like to fish with Capt. Ron, please call: (305) 664-2028, or visit: www.captainronwagner.com fishwithcaptron@hotmail.com

Capt. Ron Wagner From the Skiff



Let's turn the date back to January 16, almost 30 years ago. I am fishing with a couple from England, Richard and Linda Rosser. I am booked for a Bonefish trip and with a cold front coming through in the afternoon, it will be tough to catch one. But it's what they want to do and I'm in the business to try and make it happen. At least I'll show them a good day on the water. We would leave the Islamorada Yacht Basin and work the area flats south to finally end up on the ocean side of Lower Matecumbe.

From one flat to the next we would not find a single fish to throw at. Leaving the backside, we headed through Indian key bridge, along the highway and stop about halfway down where the road runs right along the beach there. Trimming up the engine, I was back up on the platform poling close to the shore and proceeded to work my way south. All the time I am looking over my shoulder across the highway and I could see

the front barreling down on us. We know they can get severe and I have ducked safely away from many of them. It was now around 1pm and the wind was blowing a gale on the bay side but on this side it was still calm from the protection of the Islands.

And then it happened.

Looking down the flat you could see a school of bonefish, hundreds of them heading right at us. Both Rich and Linda would throw their baits in front of them and BANG, a double-header was on. Jumping off the platform, I would watch them play and land those 2 nice bones. But by no way is this the end of the story. Within the next 3 hours and with the darkest, most ominous clouds overhead, they would hook up with 27 bonefish and land 19 of them. WOW. It seemed the big school of fish would start northbound going by us, turn around and head southbound next, going back and forth.

Because of this we experienced my best day Bonefishing. The weather never improved but because of that weather change those fish were there to feed and we were very lucky to be in the right place to witness it. What happy, smiling faces as we headed back to the dock with one special day that won't soon be forgotten.

This story is still not over because on that same day within perhaps a mile of where we were fishing, two other guides, Capt. Vic Gaspeny and Capt. Kenny Knudsen out of Bud And Mary's Marina would also duplicate our catch, each catching 17 and 19 Bones. I'd never dreamed that the three of us would catch and release almost 60 Bonefish.

This is a story I am grateful to have been a part of and that is why all of us are still here pursuing our passion. That was quite a long time ago but to me it seems just like yesterday. So, enjoy each day you are on the water with rod in hand waiting for that first cast.

You're already BLESSED . . . 

Fishing Report

Capt. Dave Schugar of Sweet Enuf Charters is located at Castaway's Restaurant/Marina in Marathon. If you would like to fish with Capt. Schugar, call (305) 610-4778, or visit: www.sweetenufcharters.com sweetenufcharter@aol.com

Capt. Dave Schugar Marathon



With all the bad weather we had to pick the right days to get out this week. I did manage to get out and find some quality fish. When the wind blows, or it's just too cold to go fishing, you can use the time wisely and go over all your safety equipment. Having operational emergency equipment is important no matter who you are. Even if you never need them, always check your fire extinguishers to make sure they are fully charged and check out your first aid kit to make sure that everything is good and not moldy. We have a problem with mold down here from the humidity and even if you never opened it, there is a possibility it could be ruined. Most of you already know that your flares have an expiration date, so check them and if they are expired keep them onboard and get some new ones. Even though they are expired it won't hurt to have a few extra. They might be out-dated but they will most likely work.

We went Sail fishing in the beginning of the week and it wasn't great, but we did catch two fish. Fishing for Sails can be a waiting game sometimes and if you are impatient you can miss out, but sometimes making a move can also turn your day around. It can be a coin toss, but what I look for is an outcropped piece of reef when I set up for Sails. The bait holds up on the shallow patches and will get pushed out by the tide and wind. Game fish such as Sailfish will gather in these areas. So look on your chart for areas with really shallow water near the drop off. Before you set up, look around, ask yourself a few questions such as; is there any bait around, is there a color change in the area, and is there a temperature change in the area. If you can say yes to at least one of these questions, fish the area and see what happens.

Before the weather broke on Friday, I fished for Mutton two days in all this wind and we caught some choice fish. We didn't set the world on fire, but we were able to put a nice catch of Muttons together with numerous Amberjacks. I was able to keep my clients with bent rods and smiles on their faces. Live bait was also the key. I like to drop a live pinfish or grunt and a split-tailed ballyhoo to keep them honest. You just never know what they will eat but when they choose one of the two I will drop the same bait on both rods next time. But in this case the live bait was working while the dead bait just didn't seem to get noticed. Most of the Muttons were from 12-15 pounds and the Amberjacks were from 20-30 pounds with a few small ones around 10 pounds. The AJ's were biting on every wreck, but the 140-180 foot wrecks is where we caught the Muttons. We also caught some Muttons on live bottom in 140-165 feet as well.

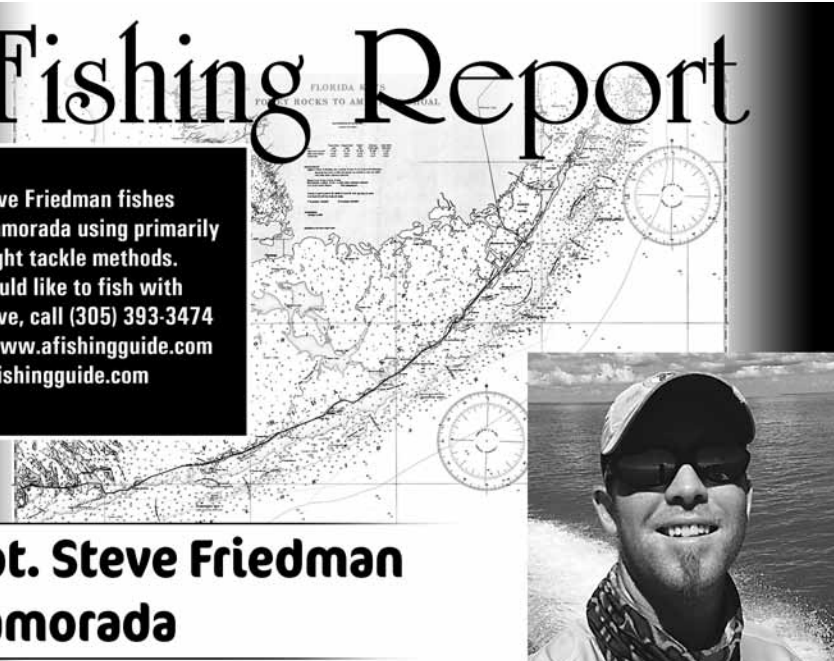
Finally, we got a break from the wind on Friday, so we went offshore to do some Tuna fishing, deep dropping, and Sword fishing. The Tuna bite was hot, but the fish were only a few pounds. I kept a few for bait

Cont. on pg. 14

Fishing Report

FLORIDA KEYS
FROM THE ROCKS TO AMERICA'S SHORES

Capt. Steve Friedman fishes off of Islamorada using primarily fly and light tackle methods. If you would like to fish with Capt. Steve, call (305) 393-3474 or visit www.afishingguide.com steve@afishingguide.com



Capt. Steve Friedman Islamorada

Despite the winter weather conditions we're having to endure lately, I've enjoyed some fine days of fishing.

Let's review the beginning of the week when the weather was a bit more kind. Some great folks from New York were interested in honing their skills in the fly casting department. We fished in the Everglades for Snook and Reds and had some choice chances. Although we had no hook ups that afternoon, the opportunities were there and we had a great time – even when we got caught in the rain on the way back to the dock. It all adds to the experience, I say.

Once the front passed through, conditions changed on a daily basis. If you approach your day with an open and flexible attitude, you'll almost always be rewarded. Those who really expected to go out and catch a "mess of Bonefish" were inconvenienced, to say the least. When it blows 30 out of the north, and even a bloody mary sounds too cold, it may not be the best time to sight-fish for Bones.


Flamingo wouldn't have been a fun run, so the patch reefs would have been the best alternative. But I'm hardheaded and like to Bonefish. With water temps in the fifties my confidence was not zooming. I had to soak bait for a couple hours to see if we could fish out a miracle. I got a couple rods out with some shrimp and kept busy cutting bait. The

only bite we had was from a small Bonefish, but I must have tied on the rubber hooks because the Bonefish was gone before the fight was over. They won again. At least we got the small victory of hooking a Bonefish on a day we shouldn't have even been trying for one.

Next we decided to catch dinner. We headed to the patches to see if we could stir up the entree. With some frozen cut bait, a chum bag and some dirty water, it wasn't long before the phones were out texting the chefs to get ready. Yellowtail, Mangrove Snapper and the main course, Mutton Snapper, were all eager to get in on the bite. In between bait snatchers and re-rigging we were also battling the now catch-and-release Grouper – which were after our baits like it was their last meal. A busy rod makes a happy angler, even when it's cold and blowing 30.

Then it got colder. A client from Japan was eager to fly fish and we fished late. The fish we found made for great casting targets because they didn't care what we had to offer. Can you believe there was a Snook out there so desperate for some nourishment it actually ate our imitation minnow and fought with surprising valor? The first ever Snook for my angler. We had Redfish and Goliath Grouper tease us the next day by following the fly almost to the boat but never taking the fly.

So I guess if you were hoping to get a tan, or catch a career big Bonefish on fly, you were going to be on a disappointing fishing trip. But an open mind and sometimes a stubborn will to use the fly rod will get you a great time on the water no matter what the conditions. As Capt. Bill Wert likes to say, "There's only two kinds of weather - whether you want to go fishing or whether you don't."

Stay warm – and fish. 



Termination of the LORAN-C Signal . . .

Consistent with the Administration's pledge to eliminate unnecessary Federal programs and systems, the USCG broadcast of the Loran-C signal is going to be terminated.

Federal broadcast of the Loran-C signal will cease at 2000Z on 08 February 2010 with some exceptions, including the following five sites that are bound by bi-lateral agreements with either Canada (Caribou, ME; George, WA; Nantucket, MA; Shoal Cove, AK) or the Russian Federation (Attu, AK).

Mariners or other users of Loran-C are encouraged to shift to GPS navigation and plotting systems as soon as possible and not later than the termination date.

Questions regarding the information presented in this alert may be addressed to Bill Cairns of the U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters e-Navigation Division at 202.372.1557 or William.R.Cairns@uscg.mil.



400 lb+ Bull Shark was caught / released in 180 ft of water off of Key West. Shawn Smith (Valrico, FL) had the rod; Capt. Dan (*Second Nature*) shot video/pictures. She had at least 10 Cobia following her - one 30 pounder was kept.

Fishing Report

Capt. Greg Eklund owns and operates the CLOUD NINE in Islamorada out of Bud n Mary's Marina. You can reach him at (305) 360-7476, email: cloudninegreg@bellsouth.net, or visit him at: www.islamoradafishingtrips.com

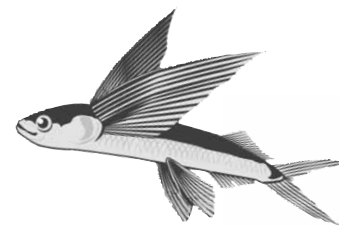


Capt. Greg Eklund Islamorada Offshore

BRRRRR! Old Man winter's blast of cold air the last ten days has created some unique fishing conditions offshore of Islamorada. This duration of cold weather has cooled water temperatures in our area drastically. Water temperatures along the edge of the reef line have hovered in the mid sixties for the last week. Further inshore in the shallow water along the island chain and back into Florida Bay the water has cooled into the low fifties. This has sent the fish scrambling for warmth out into the deeper water along the reef and patch reef areas. The Sailfish and King Mackerel have continued to bite through the latest front as they are less affected by this cold weather. The real news has been the great Cobia fishing. The cold has pushed all of the Cobias that were located in the gulf out to the patch reef and reef line. The Cobia

fishing is so good that many of the older captains in town say that they haven't seen these numbers of Cobia in more than 20 years. The weather is going to moderate this week and the water temperatures will recover to more normal levels in the next ten days. This is good news as our fish are not very tolerant of these water temperatures for extended periods. But for the time being it is a great opportunity to get out on the water and take part in this amazing Cobia fishing.

The Snapper fishing along the patch reef is better than normal right now because of the aggregation of these fish on the ocean side of the island due to the cold. Yellowtail, Mangrove and Mutton Snappers are all using these areas right now. There are also Groupers, Cero and Spanish Mackerel in several of these areas too. While we haven't seen temperatures this cold in many years it has not stopped all of the fish from biting. If you find yourself in our area this week you should take advantage of these unique fishing conditions and get out on the water for a day's fun. If I can help you with any questions or to make reservations for some fishing please contact me at the number or email address above. Have a great week! 🐟



Islamorada, the Sport Fishing Capital of the World — a not-so-quiet drinking town with a large fishing problem . . .

The tale of my trip starts north of here about 1500 miles. It was December 5, 2009 and it was cold and windy with lots of snow on the ground. It was looking like we were going to have a KILLER WHITE Christmas.

My buddy called with a real HATTATUDE about the weather. He said we needed to find some fun in the sun, fishing and drinking spirits in Islamorada.

My next PRIORITY before I headed out of town was to get permission from that RELENTLESS wife of mine. So instead of calling her, I just wrote a note and put it on the fridge. It said, "Honey, I'm GONE FISHIN - o KAY K bye". I knew I be in the DOG HOUSE when I got back but thinking of south Florida fishing made me say "YABA DABA DOO, let's go!"

With a FOUNTAIN HEAD full of coffee and 22 hours later we were on CLOUD NINE in the Florida Keys. Our first stop was at a TIKI bar & marina because it was just about MILLER TIME. After a while we met a deckhand on one of the local charter boats. He told us some FISH TALES, and his enthusiasm was so CONTAGIOUS we had a bunch more beers and gave him a deposit for the next day. He asked us to bring food and drinks and see him at 7:00am the next morning - which sounded like a great idea at 7:00pm that night!

With our fishing plans made, our next stop was to a local watering hole for drinks and a game of pool. Having a great time and shots of SOUTHERN COMFORT, my buddy started talking to a couple of young ladies at the bar. One was a real SASSY LADY named Suzanne; the other was named SUZANNE, TOO. I thought, well hell, that will make January 13th, 2010

it easy to remember! We invited them to go fishing with us the next day and they agreed so we all kept drinking. "More GOLD RESERVE!" the girls yelled. "GOTCHA", said the bartender. By now it was 3:00am and we're in a real CATCH 22 - should we stay out or go get some sleep? An hour later the bartender said, "You don't have to go home but you can't stay here". We realized we had never checked into a hotel, so my buddy and I went back to our first stop and slept in the truck behind the boat we were fishing on in 4 hours.

When the sun peeked just over the horizon we woke up, and my first thought was I felt like I had a MAN O' WAR in my head. This hangover was the REEL MCCOY! We gathered some food and drinks, met the girls and boarded the boat. CAP'T EASY was crusty old guy with not a lot to say, so out fishing we went, all of us feeling like the day after the night before, and the motion of the ocean takes its toll on me. If I had a Bible with me I would have opened it to the book of GENISES looking for a prayer to feel better.

The SKIPPER says DEE CEE that bird on the water? The mate readies a bait and on the captain's call he casts. All at once there was a MOTHERLOAD of sailfish behind the boat. It was the coolest example of PREDATOR and prey I have ever seen. In a matter of seconds everybody on the boat had one on. As bad as I felt this fish made me feel like a CHALLENGER in a title fight. When the line broke, the rod smacked me in the face, gave me a black eye and a BLUE CHIP, TOO in my front tooth. Everyone else caught their fish, though, and one at a time the mate would TAG 'EM and release them.

At the end of a great day the captain told the mate to take the flags and HANG 'EM HIGH in the rigger. Thanks to the KALEX and all the captains and crew in Islamorada for a trip to remember. Sorry if I missed ya', we'll get ya' on our next trip!

~Anonymous 🐟



Fishing Report

This report is brought to you by
James M. Simcic III
If you would like to learn more
please contact him by phone:
(305) 393-5600, or e-mail him at:
Keysdiver0106@yahoo.com
Captain Hooks Marina
(305) 743-2444
www.captainhooksmarina.com



James Simcic III Spearfishing



Spearfishing started as an after-school activity that has morphed into one of the driving factors of my life. Like all Keys kids, I grew up on the water fishing with buddies, and towing each other around behind the boat. As a boy, I watched my dad hold his breath for minutes at a time and come up with a red grouper in one hand and a lobster in the other. It really had its effect on me. Spearfishing is definitely an activity that easily brings a family together, and in my case, bonded father and son. Whether it was a direct introduction into the sport like mine, or a longing to find something else to do, spearfishing unlocks many doors for the young and old. Starting out in the shallow patch reefs pursuing Hogfish is the perfect scenario for honing your skills. With time, you can graduate to more difficult fish and deeper water. Suddenly, mom's cooking Red and Black Grouper, Mangrove and Mutton Snapper and

Yellow Jack. If you think you're done there, think again. I gave up on the reef for some time and turned to the blue water that the gulfstream offered. During this time we pursued Dolphin, Wahoo and Tuna – a 36# bull being my most memorable. Although trophy fish are constantly on my mind, I do frequent my old stomping grounds to put Hogfish on the menu. One of my favorite things about spearfishing is the ability to pick out which fish you want. There is very little by-catch and, in most cases, you do not need to bring chum or bait.

This brings me to getting you started. Initial start-up costs are the only notable investments you'll be making to get into this awesome sport. Just like golf or tennis, you can spend a fortune. Or, you can just grab a pair of fins and a cheap mask and snorkel off the shelf. You can start with a gun or a pole spear and go from there. As you grow with the sport, you can purchase freediving fins, low volume masks, weight belts, wetsuits, booties, etc. Most manufacturers have wide product lines. As the world of spearfishing continues to expand (exponentially), its market will follow suit, making it easier and more affordable to start acquiring the gear you need to target specific fish.

This introduction to the sport has been based on concepts of freedive spearfishing but being a certified scuba diver offers even more opportunities. Scuba diving will help you reach greater depths, increase bottom times and provides a more relaxed hunting effort. Remember, spearfishing, just like any hunting/fishing activity, has inherent risks. Some of these risks apply to the freediver and scuba diver alike and some are specific to each. We will discuss safety in our next issue. To learn more about products, types of fish, rules and other facets of the sport, log on to www.spearboard.com or www.spearfishingplanet.com. If you have any questions about the set-ups used for targeting specific species feel free to contact me. As we go further we can discuss specific manufacturers, models, sizes, and types of equipment. 🌿



Capt Steve Friedman caught this 22" Mutton Snapper on a cold and windy day on a piece of free-lined cut-bait.



(L-R) Steve Tummillio (Islamorada); Bob Serata (Islamorada); Jack Valent (Cashiers, NC) caught this near 80 pounder near Crocker Reef.



Capt Richard Burson - Snook caught last week.



A great day on the Rarin' T' Go II out of Whale Harbor.



John Weingold (from England) was fishing with Capt. Don, *Fishin' Mission Offshore Charters* on New Year's Day.



M.L. Fletcher and Nora Murphy (both from NY, NY) sure knew how to ring in the New Year in Islamorada! With the continued guidance from Rod Fletcher (Port Antigua), they were able to land their first sailfish.

Fishing Report

Captain Richard Burson
 RUFishingYet.com
 rufishingyet@yahoo.com
 (305) 360-3262 (cell)

Capt. Richard Burson Key Largo Backcountry



Near record low temperatures are crossing the island chain this week and as a result many animals are washing up on shore. A very sad sight indeed! Snappers, Grunts, Barracuda, Goliath Groupers, Box fish, Snook, small Sharks, Pilchards and many other varieties of fish are being seen floating belly up near the Keys. I am also sad to report that our beloved manatees are taking a hit as well. They are in search of warmer waters and find themselves in canals where the waters are a few degrees warmer. Unfortunately the food is limited in canals and biologists fear if this cold snap doesn't come to an end soon, the endangered animals will lose their thick layer of blubber which is protecting them from the cooler waters. The only thing that marine biologists can do is wait and see. Rehabilitation centers are near capacity and there are only a few locations to take sick manatees. We will not know what kind of damage this cold front has done until the waters warm back up.

Another species taking a hit during this cold period are the sea turtles. Reports are coming in that over 100 sea turtles have been found floating along the Florida's Atlantic Coast. They have been brought to area centers to assist in their recovery. On my way to the mainland after a long day of sail fishing, Captain Juan Garcia and I came upon an injured sea turtle and immediately called the Turtle Hospital in Marathon. Managers from the Turtle Hospital called Sue Schaf from the FWC and

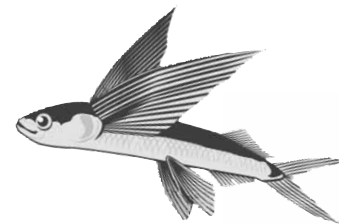
she met us at the dock to examine the turtle. Unfortunately the turtle had more going on then just being cold. The five year old green turtle has what is called Fibropapillomatosis.

Fibropapilloma is a type of herpes virus effecting sea turtles all over the world. I first heard about this virus from the book by Osha Gray Davidson called "Fire in the Turtle House". The Fibropapilloma virus looks like large pink, white or black warts with a "cauliflower" texture growing on the soft tissue areas of a sea turtle. At times these growths will blind the turtle, ultimately starving them. Unfortunately, the tumors will also grow internally encompassing the lungs, kidneys, liver and intestines. The largest tumor recorded at The Turtle Hospital weighed over three pounds. If you happen to come across a turtle in distress, do not touch it, but call Sue Schaf at (561) 262-1707 for instruction. She will meet you at your dock and examine the turtle. She has asked that if you see a turtle that has already died, please take a photo and e-mail it to sue.schaf@myfwc.com. This will help in further research.

Well, on a healthier note, the Snook bite was great just before the cold front crossed the Keys. We had our best luck encompassing the Flamingo area in the deeper channels and run-offs surrounding the flats. The Snook were enticed by any sized shrimp on a jig or a 2.0 hook with a split shot. Use between a 30-40 pound floral carbon leader, approximately 3 foot long. If the water is murky, you will not necessarily need a floral carbon leader, just tie on any type of leader material to your fishing line. Small Snappers and Redfish were also biting just before the cold front but the Snook bite was much more prominent! As this cold front passes I am certain the fish will be very hungry and I am sure to be on the water having a great time catching record fish!

So until next time ask yourself this one question . . .

Are You Fishing Yet? 



Leon Shell Memorial Billfish Tournament Raises Money for Hospice of the Florida Keys . . .

Marathon, Florida • January 9, 2010. Every March enthusiastic anglers gather in the Middle Keys to share a passion for fishing, and more importantly, to raise money for an organization that may one day play a vital role in all of our lives: the Hospice and Visiting Nurses of the Florida Keys.

Since its inception in 1998, the Leon Shell Memorial Billfish Tournament has raised over \$125,000 for Hospice, including \$25,000 in 2009 alone. Additionally, each year the Leon Shell raises money for a Youth Division that awards academic scholarships to young anglers looking to pursue higher education.

The non-profit Leon Shell Tournament, and the wonderful donations made annually to Hospice, are made possible only with the support of the local citizens and businesses of the Florida Keys.

We are currently accepting sponsors for this year's event, as well as items that can be auctioned at the awards banquet. These tax-

deductible sponsorships are not only a great way to support a worthy cause, but also help to promote your company through radio and television ads, tournament press releases, tee shirts, posters, and more.

The Leon Shell Memorial Billfish Tournament, to be held March 5-7, is quickly becoming Marathon's premier sailfish tournament, with 20 boats competing in 2009 for a \$25,000 top cash prize.

With your help and support, we look to continue the success of the event and exceed last year's donation to Hospice and Visiting Nurses of the Florida Keys.

Please lend a hand in helping those that aid us in need . . .

To become a sponsor or register to compete in the tournament, please call the Key Colony Beach Marina at (305) 289-1310. For questions and additional information visit www.leonshelltournament.com or email Drew Dinan at ddd@lonestaroh.com.

Thank you for your support!

Fishing Report

If you would like to book a charter with Capt Luke Kelly in the Lower Florida Keys for fly or light tackle inshore fishing, please call: (305) 304-3152, or e-mail: KeyFlat@mac.com. Visit www.lowerkeysflatsfishing.com for more information.

Capt. Luke Kelly Lower Keys Backcountry

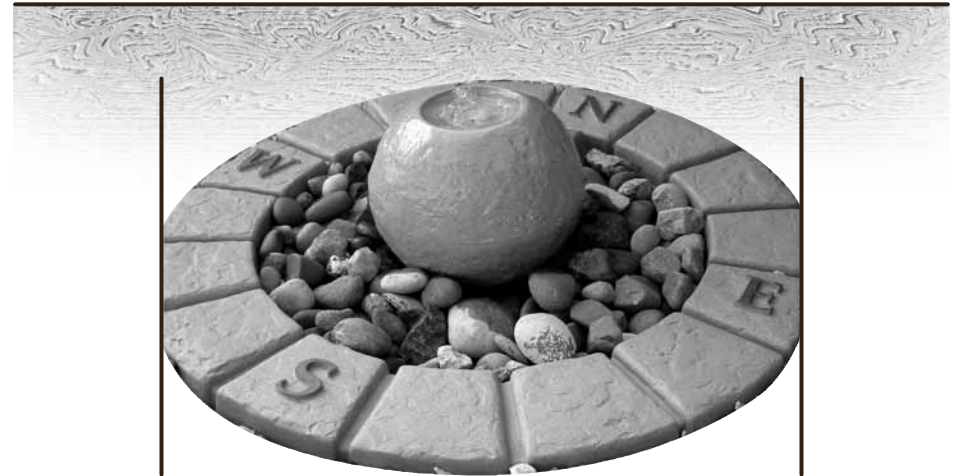


Someone turn on the heater. Oh yeah, there isn't one! Quite the weather we have had here in the sunny Florida Keys. With air temps in the forties and fifties for a straight week, I have done little fishing. Staying warm has been on the top of my list, operating a flats boat in this cold damp weather has been on the bottom. Sometimes you just can't make the best of a situation. When it's cold like it has been, I'd just as soon not try. Too many summer time mornings in the backcountry have spoiled me.

Winter weather does bring great fishing to the Keys, but severe cold snaps much like the one we just experienced literally kills the flats and backcountry fishing. In-fact, sea water with a temperature near 50 degrees can become lethal to many inshore fish. It is not uncommon to witness a "fish-kill" after such a cold snap in the Keys where unfortunate

fish are found washed ashore after a cold night. Barracuda and other bottom dwelling fish fall victim to this the most, while the Snapper and Grouper species seem to show a higher tolerance. The Tarpon, Permit, and Bonefish run from it long before the cold temps set in.

With every punch this winter season gives us, I become more and more eager for spring to roll around. I am feverishly tying Tarpon and Permit flies for what I am anticipating to be an epic spring fishing season. All of this cold weather is going to do wonders for the crab and shrimp stalks for the lower Keys and there will be plenty of gamefish here to eat them when that time rolls around again. Future weather reports show an upcoming warming trend which should give some good inshore fishing potential. If the warm up lasts, we should see a good spark in hungry fish. If it doesn't, I'll be indoors tying more flies. 🦋



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Fishing Report

Captain Aaron Brower
Holiday Isle Marina, Islamorada
www.killerwhite.com
(305) 522-0374

Capt. Aaron Brower Islamorada Offshore



After you have driven your truck out on the ice and settled in to your shanty, now it's time to saw a hole in the ice – just kidding. Can some one say brrr – it's cold! Record lows, crazy cold weather and I even heard reports of fish floating in canals and iguanas frozen stiff. That's how I feel right now. I've got three pairs of socks on and my feet are still freezing.

This weather is actually good for some species of fish on the offshore side of things. Even though our water temperatures have dropped it is still warmer than any where else on our coast line therefore we still have bait and predators pushing southwest for warmer water. There has been a great bite of King Fish all week and I am pretty certain that anybody that fished for them achieved their limit quite easily. You can use dead or live bait when the bite is this good. I even used a gotcha jig on a ten pound

spinner this week just to have a little fun. Also heard of a couple of nice Blackfin Tunas caught this week in the 20-30lb range, while fishing for Kings, from more than one boat.

The sails are still in full swing! Plenty of fish moving through are popping up now and then. This past weekend was the Sailfish Open at Hawks Cay Resort and in two days of fishing there were 132 releases from 29 boats. The Vitamin Sea Too won with 11 releases, in second with 9 releases was The Natural and Sandman in third with 8 releases. Congratulations to the winners on a well fished tournament. A lot of teams had some trying times. After arriving at Hawks Cay they were hit with this strong cold front dropping the water temperatures rapidly, causing a major die off of their expensive bait. Finding ways to keep thousands of dollars worth of bait from dying in this cold weather is still a work in progress.

There have also been reports of Cobias being caught. With these strong fronts and heavy winds out of the north, Cobias are pushed through the gulf and out into the ocean side, mostly found in the sand. What fun that is for those of us lucky enough to have towers on our boats, riding around in the sand on calm days looking for packs of Cobias. We are also looking for rays. Usually if you find a ray swimming in the sand, there is a good chance there will be a couple of Cobia with him. One of the choice baits for Cobia are grunts (although they will eat pretty much anything you throw at them), so keep a couple just in case you happen to find a pack of Cobia. Toss one of those out in front of a pack and hang on!

Here's to keeping the rods thawed . . . 🦋

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12 / 16

Allen, Realtor Realty World Freewheeler 305-522-4185

Enjoy Elegance & Luxury

Ocean Views & Dockage at Beacon Reef Condo perfectly located at MM 83.2 in Islamorada. This 2 bed/2 bath has updated Kitchen & Baths. Located just 1 unit from Ocean – Views are Spectacular! Clubhouse, Pool, Hot Tub, Large Undercover parking for boat & car. This condo has it all & shows beautifully!

\$749,000 – MLS 550110. Nancy



12 / 16

Allen, Realtor Realty World Freewheeler 305-522-4185

Above Flood - Concrete

Home has been remodeled: large spectacular kitchen, 3 bed/2 updated baths, tile floors, nice storage. All located in an X flood zone! Great homeowner's park nearby with boat ramp & temp. dockage offering easy ocean/bay access through Tavernier Creek. This is not a drive-by! Must see!

\$349,000 – MLS 547908. Nancy



12 / 16

Allen, Realtor Realty World Freewheeler 305-522-4185

Rare Find! Tri-level

3 bed/2 bath townhome offers Endless Oceanviews, shallow dockage, pool & sandy beach area for sunbathing. Gated and Secluded property located on Windley Key MM 84. Enjoy that Keys feeling on the open porches overlooking the ocean! Furnished and ready to enjoy! This is a must see!

\$625,000 – MLS 548135. Nancy



12 / 16

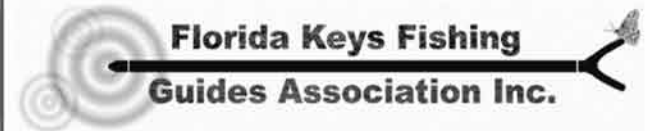
Picture-Perfect Canal Home

in desirable Indian Waterways MM 89. Meticulously maintained, 3 bed/2 baths. Like new condition; screened patio overlooks the canal and another off the master bedroom; dock, hot tub, workshop down, plenty of storage. Large lot with room to park all the toys! Easy Bay & Ocean access via Tavernier Creek. Shows Beautifully! Seller is Motivated!! **\$559,000 - MLS 546777**

Tide Tables Brought To You Courtesy Of . . .



info@charterboatassociation.com
P.O. Box 462 Islamorada, FL 33036



KEY LARGO (Ocean Reef - 25.3100° N, 80.2800° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 13	Wed		00:50 / -0.32 ft	07:13 / 2.27 ft	13:19 / 0.28 ft	19:15 / 2.13 ft
Jan 14	Thu		01:33 / -0.35 ft	07:53 / 2.31 ft	14:00 / 0.18 ft	19:56 / 2.16 ft
Jan 15	Fri		02:14 / -0.36 ft	08:30 / 2.33 ft	14:39 / 0.10 ft	20:35 / 2.18 ft
Jan 16	Sat		02:51 / -0.33 ft	09:05 / 2.33 ft	15:16 / 0.04 ft	21:13 / 2.18 ft
Jan 17	Sun		03:27 / -0.26 ft	09:40 / 2.30 ft	15:52 / 0.00 ft	21:52 / 2.16 ft
Jan 18	Mon		04:02 / -0.16 ft	10:14 / 2.25 ft	16:26 / -0.01 ft	22:30 / 2.12 ft
Jan 19	Tue		04:37 / -0.03 ft	10:48 / 2.18 ft	17:01 / -0.02 ft	23:09 / 2.07 ft
Jan 20	Wed		05:13 / 0.12 ft	11:23 / 2.10 ft	17:37 / -0.02 ft	23:51 / 2.01 ft

BIG PINE (Pine Channel - 24.6900° N, 81.3833° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 13	Wed		04:42 / -0.12 ft	09:50 / 0.43 ft	15:32 / 0.12 ft	20:57 / 0.91 ft
Jan 14	Thu		05:18 / -0.13 ft	10:20 / 0.46 ft	16:16 / 0.11 ft	21:35 / 0.91 ft
Jan 15	Fri		05:52 / -0.12 ft	10:48 / 0.49 ft	16:58 / 0.09 ft	22:10 / 0.91 ft
Jan 16	Sat		06:23 / -0.11 ft	11:15 / 0.53 ft	17:39 / 0.09 ft	22:46 / 0.89 ft
Jan 17	Sun		06:52 / -0.08 ft	11:43 / 0.57 ft	18:20 / 0.08 ft	23:22 / 0.85 ft
Jan 18	Mon		07:20 / -0.05 ft	12:12 / 0.61 ft	19:02 / 0.08 ft	
Jan 19	Tue	00:00 / 0.79 ft	07:47 / -0.01 ft	12:41 / 0.64 ft	19:47 / 0.07 ft	
Jan 20	Wed	00:41 / 0.70 ft	08:14 / 0.03 ft	13:12 / 0.66 ft	20:37 / 0.06 ft	

ISLAMORADA (Whale Harbor - 24.9400° N, 80.6083° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 13	Wed		01:24 / -0.08 ft	07:28 / 1.45 ft	13:53 / 0.07 ft	19:30 / 1.36 ft
Jan 14	Thu		02:07 / -0.08 ft	08:08 / 1.47 ft	14:34 / 0.04 ft	20:11 / 1.38 ft
Jan 15	Fri		02:48 / -0.09 ft	08:45 / 1.48 ft	15:13 / 0.02 ft	20:50 / 1.39 ft
Jan 16	Sat		03:25 / -0.08 ft	09:20 / 1.48 ft	15:50 / 0.01 ft	21:28 / 1.39 ft
Jan 17	Sun		04:01 / -0.06 ft	09:55 / 1.47 ft	16:26 / 0.00 ft	22:07 / 1.37 ft
Jan 18	Mon		04:36 / -0.04 ft	10:29 / 1.43 ft	17:00 / -0.00 ft	22:45 / 1.35 ft
Jan 19	Tue		05:11 / -0.01 ft	11:03 / 1.39 ft	17:35 / -0.00 ft	23:24 / 1.32 ft
Jan 20	Wed		05:47 / 0.03 ft	11:38 / 1.34 ft	18:11 / -0.00 ft	XXX

CUDJOE KEY (Pirates Cove - 24.6600° N, 81.4917° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 13	Wed		03:31 / -0.21 ft	08:51 / 0.72 ft	14:21 / 0.21 ft	19:58 / 1.52 ft
Jan 14	Thu		04:07 / -0.21 ft	09:21 / 0.76 ft	15:05 / 0.18 ft	20:36 / 1.53 ft
Jan 15	Fri		04:41 / -0.20 ft	09:49 / 0.82 ft	15:47 / 0.16 ft	21:11 / 1.52 ft
Jan 16	Sat		05:12 / -0.18 ft	10:16 / 0.89 ft	16:28 / 0.15 ft	21:47 / 1.49 ft
Jan 17	Sun		05:41 / -0.14 ft	10:44 / 0.96 ft	17:09 / 0.14 ft	22:23 / 1.42 ft
Jan 18	Mon		06:09 / -0.09 ft	11:13 / 1.02 ft	17:51 / 0.13 ft	23:01 / 1.31 ft
Jan 19	Tue		06:36 / -0.02 ft	11:42 / 1.07 ft	18:36 / 0.12 ft	23:42 / 1.18 ft
Jan 20	Wed		07:03 / 0.05 ft	12:13 / 1.11 ft	19:26 / 0.10 ft	

MARATHON (Boot Key Harbor - 24.7067° N, 81.0967° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 13	Wed		02:00 / -0.31 ft	08:47 / 0.97 ft	13:05 / 0.41 ft	19:32 / 1.98 ft
Jan 14	Thu		02:39 / -0.32 ft	09:08 / 1.01 ft	13:48 / 0.34 ft	20:10 / 1.99 ft
Jan 15	Fri		03:15 / -0.31 ft	09:28 / 1.06 ft	14:29 / 0.28 ft	20:47 / 1.97 ft
Jan 16	Sat		03:48 / -0.28 ft	09:51 / 1.13 ft	15:09 / 0.24 ft	21:23 / 1.91 ft
Jan 17	Sun		04:19 / -0.22 ft	10:16 / 1.22 ft	15:48 / 0.22 ft	22:00 / 1.81 ft
Jan 18	Mon		04:48 / -0.14 ft	10:45 / 1.30 ft	16:29 / 0.20 ft	22:38 / 1.68 ft
Jan 19	Tue		05:14 / -0.03 ft	11:16 / 1.37 ft	17:12 / 0.19 ft	23:19 / 1.51 ft
Jan 20	Wed		05:37 / 0.10 ft	11:48 / 1.44 ft	18:02 / 0.18 ft	

KEY WEST (Hawk Channel - 24.5450° N, 81.7833° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 13	Wed		02:18 / -0.23 ft	08:38 / 0.97 ft	13:13 / 0.34 ft	19:42 / 1.93 ft
Jan 14	Thu		02:55 / -0.24 ft	09:07 / 1.01 ft	13:57 / 0.27 ft	20:21 / 1.93 ft
Jan 15	Fri		03:29 / -0.23 ft	09:33 / 1.06 ft	14:38 / 0.22 ft	20:57 / 1.90 ft
Jan 16	Sat		04:00 / -0.21 ft	10:00 / 1.12 ft	15:19 / 0.18 ft	21:33 / 1.84 ft
Jan 17	Sun		04:30 / -0.18 ft	10:27 / 1.19 ft	15:59 / 0.16 ft	22:09 / 1.73 ft
Jan 18	Mon		04:57 / -0.12 ft	10:56 / 1.25 ft	16:40 / 0.14 ft	22:46 / 1.60 ft
Jan 19	Tue		05:23 / -0.04 ft	11:25 / 1.31 ft	17:24 / 0.13 ft	23:26 / 1.43 ft
Jan 20	Wed		05:49 / 0.05 ft	11:56 / 1.37 ft	18:13 / 0.12 ft	

Moon Phases

New: 01/15/10 • First Quarter: 01/24/10
Full: 01/30/10 • Last Quarter: 02/05/10

Tide predictions may not be accurate. The Weekly Fisherman accepts no liabilities associated with any referenced use of the above-listed tidal information. Remember that weather conditions affect tidal ranges and current speeds, sometimes very strongly.

KEYS CAPTAIN & GUIDE DIRECTORY



This Directory is a comprehensive list of the best shallow water flats guides & offshore charter skippers from Key Largo to Key West. Flats species of fish include: Bonefish, Permit, Tarpon, Redfish, Snook & Trout. Offshore species of fish include: Dolphin, Sailfish, Wahoo, Kingfish, Tuna, Snapper & Grouper. Gulf species of fish include: Kingfish, Grouper, Snapper, Cobia & Tarpon.



BC-Back Country • LT-Light Tackle • FL-Flats • OFF-Offshore • GF-Gulf Fishing
WR-Wreck • OVN-Overnight • MD-Multi-Day • TP-Tarpon • FLY-Fly Fishing

Listings in this Directory are available for only \$299 / year (print and web).

Upper Keys	Key Largo to Islamorada
Captain / Charter	Contact Info
Capt. Greg Eklund Cloud Nine Charters	OFF / REEF / WR / FL (305) 360-7476 www.islamoradafishingtrips.com
Fin Razer Sportfishing	OFF / BC / REEF (305) 923-9293 captgreg@keyssportfishing.com
Key Largo Fishing Adventures	www.keyssportfishing.com
Capt. Ron Allen	Fish Tales Charters (305) 664-0050 www.fishtalessportfishing.com
Capt. Jack Falcucci	OFF / REEF 50' Custom Ocean Sportfish (305) 393-0795
Capt. Ron Wagner	TP/LT/FLY/BC/FL/GF/REEF (305) 664-2028 fishwithcaptron@hotmail.com
Capt. Aaron Brower	OFF/REEF/WR www.killerwhite.com (305) 522-0374
Capt. Steve Friedman	FL / BC / FLY (305) 393-3474 www.afishingguide.com
Capt. Richard Burson	BC/LT/FL/GF/TP/FLY www.rufishingyet.com (305) 360-3262 rufishingyet@yahoo.com
Capt. Scott Keller	OFF / BC / WR / GF (305) 664-6678 captscott@badhabitfishingcharters.com
Bad Habit Charters	
Capt. Z	OFF / REEF / WR (305) 393-6931 hookedupgladius@aol.com
Hooked Up Charters	

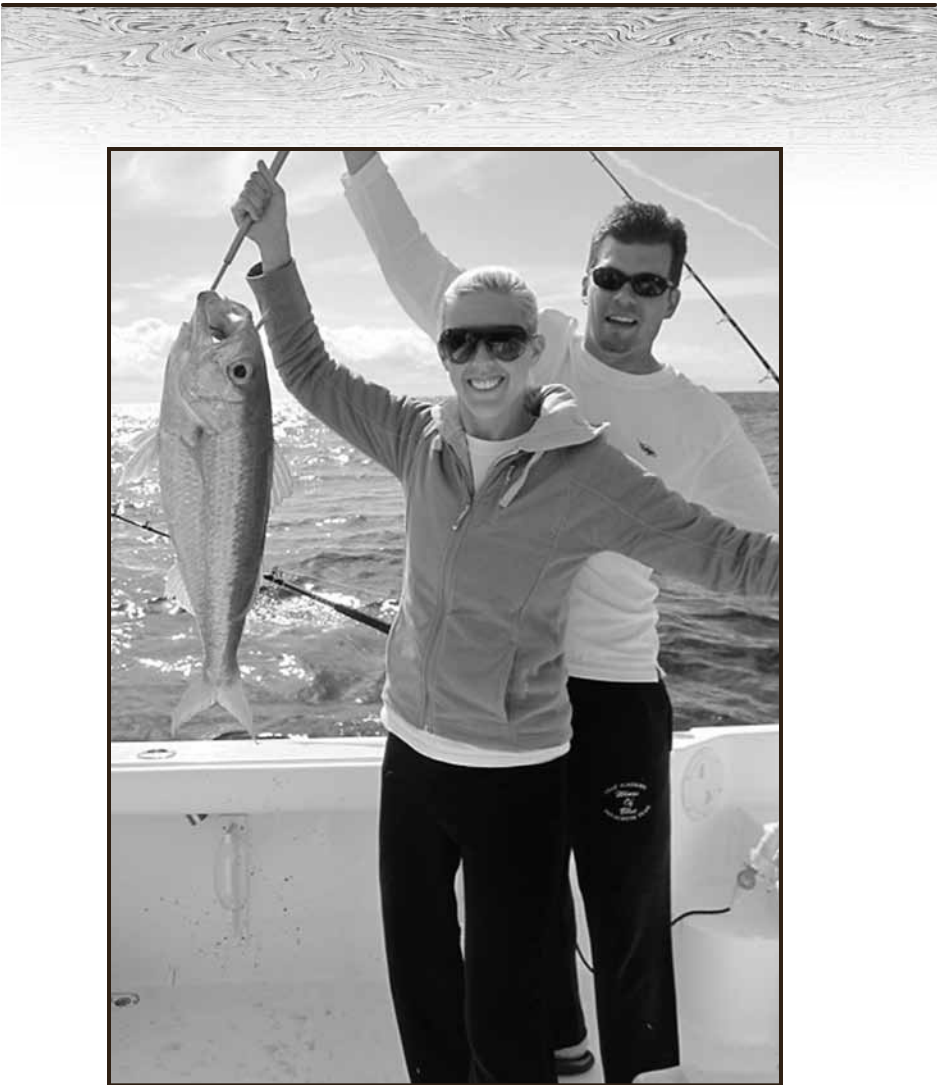
Middle Keys	Long Key to Marathon
Captain / Charter	Contact Info
Capt. Nick Borraccino	OFF / REEF / WR (508) 769-4189 www.noreastersportfishing.com
Capt. David Schugar	OFF / REEF (305) 610-4778 www.sweetenufcharters.com

Lower Keys	Big Pine Key to Key West
Captain / Charter	Contact Info
Capt. Chris Lembo	OFF / REEF (305) 292-0067 incognitocharters@comcast.net
Capt. Andrew Tipler	BC / FL / OFF / REEF (305) 744-9796 www.lastcastcharters.com
Last Cast Charters	
Capt. Luke Kelly	FL / FLY / LT / BC / TP (305) 304-3152 www.lowerkeysflatsfishing.com
keyflat@mac.com	

Capt. Schugar cont. from pg. 5

and we went to my Queen Snapper spot down to the west and the bite was on. We dropped five times and caught fish every drop. We ended up with two Queens around fifteen pounds and two around ten pounds. We also dragged up a big Amberjack, which we released unharmed to fight again. Four big Queens were enough and the day was getting late so we headed further west to drop for Swords. We had a really long first drift and no bite so we started to bring up the bait when all of a sudden we got a bite a couple hundred feet off the bottom. We stopped the retrieval of the bait and slowly dropped the bait down to put slack in the leader and it was just enough to allow the Sword to eat the bait. Hooked up, we ended up landing a 100 pounder, not a big one but it was getting late so we bagged the fish and headed home. What a cooler - four jumbo Queens and a decent Sword, to boot.

Good luck this week and wear layers to keep warm.



Emma and John, newlyweds from Wisconsin, fishing with Capt. Dave Schugar and Sweet e’Nuf charters.



John Pappas of Punta Gorda, FL with a nice Bonefish, caught with Capt. Ron Wagner before last week's cold front came through.



L-R: Todd and Tarah Thompson, Peter and Becca Krause, Matt and Sarah Tupa. Fishing with Capt Chris Johnson, Sea Squared Charters out of Marathon.

Cold Temperatures Impact Florida Fish and Wildlife . . .

The FWC Fish Kill Hotline has received several reports of cold-related fish kills over the past few days. Extended periods of unusually cold weather can kill fish outright by cold stress or make fish more susceptible to disease. The Florida manatee and sea turtles, plus warm-water species, including snook, are particularly vulnerable to cold

temperatures. Fish affected by the cold may appear lethargic and may be seen at the surface where the water may be warmer from the sun. Recreational regulations still apply with these fish.

The FWC monitors fish disease and mortality events around the state. The FWC asks the public to report dead and dying fish to the Fish Kill Hotline at 800-636-0511.

All other distressed wildlife may be reported to the FWC Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-FWCC (3922).

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TOURNAMENTS

We want to hear about your tournament!
Have it listed here for FREE by calling
Jess at (305) 852-FISH (3474), or via
e-mail: editor@weeklyfisherman.com.

Jan 12-14: Islamorada SailFly Championship. Islamorada. In this all-release boat team tournament with no more than two anglers per boat allowed, captains, mates or anglers can tease, but only the registered anglers can cast, hook and play the fish. Tournament rules will be IGFA format. Contact Denise Scoble or Sandy Moret at (305) 664-5423, e-mail sandy@floridakeysoutfitters.com or write to P.O. Box 603, Islamorada FL 33036.

Jan. 15-17: Key Largo Sailfish Challenge. Key Largo. Anglers battle sailfish during the peak of the season. The tournament also features raffles, drawings and cash prizes. Contact Tammie Gurgiolo at (305) 852-9337 or e-mail fishnbully@msn.com.

Jan. 21-23: Cheeca Lodge Presidential Sailfish Tournament. Islamorada. In this all-release tournament, anglers fish for the mighty sailfish in waters surrounding the region known as the Sportfishing Capital of the World. The tournament is an official event of the World Billfish Series, Southeast Division. Contact Liz Hill at (305) 451-5094, e-mail presidentialsailfishtournament@cheeca.com, visit cheeca.com or write to Cheeca Lodge, P.O. Box 527, Islamorada FL 33036.

Jan. 22-24: Key West Harbour King Mackerel Tournament. Key West. Anglers use fast boats to target the voracious king mackerel, also known as kingfish, for cash prizes. Contact Lee Murray at (305) 296-0364, e-mail lee@murraymarine.com or write to Murray Marine, 5710 U.S. 1, Mile Marker 5, Key West FL 33040.

Jan. 25-26: Captain Al Flutie Over the Hill Sailfish Tournament. Islamorada. Anglers ages 50 and over are challenged to catch and release the most sailfish. Contact Bill Kelly at (305) 394-5333 or write to 130 Tequesta St., Tavernier, FL 33070; or contact Gary Ellis at (305) 664-2002, e-mail redboneinc@aol.com, visit redbone.org or write to P.O. Box 273, Islamorada FL 33036.

Jan. 27-28: Islamorada Fishing Club Sailfish Tournament. Islamorada. The historic fishing club offers a \$30,000 winner-take-all cash prize in this sailfish challenge. The tournament is limited to 30 boats. Contact Dianne Harbaugh at (305) 852-2102 or (305) 664-4725, e-mail fishing@theislamoradafishingclub.com or visit theislamoradafishingclub.com.

Jan. 29-30: Florida Keys Fishing Guides Association Swamp Guides Ball. Islamorada. This all-release event offers fishing for bonefish, redfish and snook in the shallows of the Florida Keys and the saltwater fringes of the Everglades. Contact Captain Rusty and Terry Albury at (305) 664-5142, e-mail talbury@aol.com or write to P.O. Box 303, Islamorada FL 33036.

Feb. 4-6: Billfish Bowl. Key Largo. An all-release sailfish tournament hosted by NFL legends Jimmy Johnson and Mike Ditka to raise money for the nonprofit group Gridiron Greats. The event will take place at the Big Chill Bar and Restaurant in Key Largo. Contact Tammie Gurgiolo at (866) 203-2720 or visit billfishbowl.com.



L to R: Richard Smith, Ian Trow & Woody all from Manchester, England fishing with Capt. Paul Suarez on their Rental Boat on Summerland Key, Yellow Tail, Bonito & Runners, a release of a 150 lb Nurse Shark plus a tug of war all afternoon with Lemon Sharks eating their Yellow Tails.

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Quick Note on Photography . . .

Please submit your photos in RGB format, with the largest pixel dimension (width X height) set to at least 1600, or the highest "quality" setting. Photos from camera phones generally are not big enough, or steady enough (too blurry). Please do not adjust (Photoshop) files.

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