



April 2006
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Upperkeysfishingclub.com

Upper Keys Fishing Club
P.O. Box 370484
Key Largo, FL 33037
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Dock Talk

The Upper Keys Fishing Club Newsletter

Next meeting – Wednesday April 5, 7:00 PM, Lighthouse Boat Center
Mini-seminar – "Dolphin for dummies", Sally Stribling
Saturday April 22 7:00 PM, Weenie roast,
Rob Stewart's home - 121 Jolly Roger, MM 98.5 bayside



" One on the throat?, X on the head? "

Yellowtailing with "Fluff" (above) on Capt. Chan's Gulfstream

A great time was had with many yellowtail, a few mangroves, some schoolmasters, and lots of food onboard Capt. Chan's Gulfstream. More pics inside.

President's message by Capt Doug Jeffrey

Well the month of March was a good one for the Upper Keys Fishing Club. We enjoyed our second meeting at the Lighthouse Boat Center. As one of the people up front doing the talking it is sure nice to not have to stand up there and holler. At that meeting our new club banner was unveiled with the new logo, members in attendance were impressed. I think it was worth the wait. I would like to thank Pasta for all his work on the logo and for donating the banner to the club at no cost.

The trip on the Gulfstream went very well. I would like to thank Capt Chan for helping us to do that again this year. Capt Chan also donated a free trip for two to use as a door prize. Pasta donated an art print as well to be used as raffle prize to be given away with the fishing rod and reel and fishing trip making for three great prizes. Lots of yellowtail were boated on the trip, the food was great. And the weather for the most part cooperated.

After the trip several people thanked me for their good time, all they learned, and for the great food. Well as much as I would love to be able to take credit for all the fun, it was the people on board the boat that made it fun; I was only one person on the boat. With close to 30 people on the boat one person can not really change the mood on the boat good or bad. So the real thank goes to all the club members that brought covered dishes, brought their happy faces, walked around and socialized, and made the trip a real blast. Bottom line all I did was set it up and throw a bunch of sand all over the ocean.

I hope to see all of you at the weenie roast at Rob's house on April 22 7:00 PM. I hope you all have a great April. There should be some great fishing Sorry Mike, we will miss you.

Offshore Fishing Report, Capt. Doug

Well the big news is all of the dolphin, they are everywhere. Offshore, inshore, in the chum lines, on weeds, under debris, dolphin are everywhere. The kingfish are still offshore in 100 to 160 feet of water. The live bait trollers are catching the most of the lingering kings. The fish that are missing are the blackfin tuna and the wahoo, where they are no one really seems to know. I think the wahoo are done until next year, but there is still hope for the arrival of the blackfins. There are good numbers of large amberjacks on the humps if you have in-laws that you really don't like and you want to play charter captain for them. Hook 'em up with a few amberjacks and that should cool their fires. We should have the biggest dolphin of the year showing up offshore this month, so if the weather allows, venture off and take your shot at a dancing rainbow.

Reef Fishing Report, Capt. Doug

Well the yellowtail started to bite just in time for the night reef trip. I knew they would, there is no way I was nervous about it, it just had to happen, all the conditions were right. Well I would rather be lucky than good. The muttons are still on the bite, even though none were caught on the night trip, which really surprised me, I was sure there would have been some muttons caught. The grouper are still being caught in pretty good numbers. And should continue until the water really starts to warm and send them to deeper water.

Inshore Fishing Report, Capt. Doug

The patch reefs continue to be hot, and are life savers for those windy days. Lots of nice schoolmaster snapper, hogfish, mangrove snapper, and red grouper are still finding their way in to the chum lines of the boats that choose to remain close to shore. There is also a lot of ballyhoo on the patch reefs and now is the time to load the freezer for dolphin season.

Back-country Fishing Report, Capt. Doug

The flats are starting to see more bonefish than we have in the recent months. The redfish are starting to move from the deeper water to the grass flats. Permits are on the job patrolling the edges of the flats. Jacks, ladyfish, small tarpon and plenty of sharks are keeping those skinny water anglers very busy. With the clear warm days April is a great time in the backcountry, the only down side is the high number of April windy days that hamper mess up some really great days.

Upper Keys Fishing Club News, Whit Van Cott

March 1, 2006 Meeting

Mike MacDonald opened the meeting welcoming everyone to the Light House Boat facility thanking David Cavallaro for allowing the club to meet in their building. Mike welcomed new members and asked if members enjoyed the Chili Cook-off at the last meeting . Many members indicated it was a good time and we should have more functions like the Chili Cook-off in the future. Mike asked Tom Frankovich for the treasurer's report and asked John Ohisson to give an update on the winter tournament . There was a last call for nominations for new officers, being none, Mike took a unanimous hand vote to support the new officers. Small groups were arranged to facilitate the seminar on knot tying. The Bimini twist , spider hitch and terminal tackle knots were presented. Chicken rigs and knots for attaching hooks were discussed, and a presentation was made on attaching mono and fluorocarbon leaders to super braid.

March 15, 2006 Meeting

Capt. Doug Jeffrey opened the meeting welcoming everyone to the Light House Boat Center. He indicated that the Board agreed that we should change the format of future meetings . The first meeting of the month would be for club business and for teaching different aspects of fishing and boating . The second meeting of the month would be a social function which would include cookouts and fishing trips. He presented the members with the new club banner of a Wahoo chasing a bait fish and then asked "who's been fishin', where and what you been catchin'". We talked about dolphin , grouper , kingfish , snapper and trout being caught by the members . We then moved into the presentation on Coast Guard boating requirements by Larry Hadd. His topic covered registration numbers, life preservers, throw cushions, flares, fire extinguishers, ventilation, sound devices and navigation lights. There were lots of questions and Larry did a great job of providing answer . He offered to provide courtesy inspections to any of the members interested in having the boating equipment checked out. Doug reminded everyone about the fishing trip with Chan and that the next meeting in April will be a teaching on fishing for Dolphin. We started a 50-50 raffle and Bob Goodrich was the first winner.



Piggin' Out!

From left - Whit Van Cott, The "Mutton Man" Tom Vogel, and Bill Young



1st prize - Pasta Reef Painting!

First prize of the Pasta Pantaleo print in the onboard raffle went to Ron Ciaccio. Wife Rhonda Ciaccio (above right, missing head) won third place with a getaway cruise for two to exotic Dixie Shoals onboard Capt. Chan's Gulfstream. Lee Lavery won second place with a Penn rod and reel combo. Thanks to Pasta Pantaleo, Capt. Chan and Gary and Barbara Stills for donating prize items!

Catch of the month - Tom Vogel - Mutton Snapper



Do you know the Mutton Man?, the Mutton man?, the Mutton man?

My wife Sue and I caught these 3 mutton (03/17) largest nine pounds and a 32", 16# grouper. All on ballyhoo. We also had 5 keeper yellowtail. We were fishing in about 120' anchored. - Tom Vogel

Tom has been catching a lot of muttons this winter. He is going to have to give us a mutton seminar next winter, or we are going to send some spy planes to follow him out!

www.upperkeysfishingclub.com - **Capt. Ed Stell** - ejstell@a-zwww.com

The WEB site is your one stop information spot. You will find a calendar of events and meeting dates. All past club newsletters can be found in one section. The other links section has WEB sites of interest to Keys fisherman including weather and real time reporting stations. On the home page are pictures from members showing off their catch. These pictures are moved to the Photo Album after they are dropped from the home page. They will be kept by year. We need more pictures. It seems to me that the Winter visitors catch a lot more fish than the full time residents. It's also possible the full timers can't point and click. Other short notes of interest are also on the home page.

In the members only section (You need a user id and password) you'll find a members forum to post questions and fishing reports. WE NEED MORE FISHING REPORTS! There are membership lists which you can download and print out. There is a complete directory which shows all the information from your membership application (except for business phone #). There was no room plus no one works down here, anyway ☺. There is a contact directory which just has name phone numbers and e-mail address and a boater's directory listing member, boat name and cell phone #'s. Print it out and keep it on the boat.

This data file was re-entered from the old directory and may have errors. Please check your information for correctness. One problem was what type of phone #'s we had. (home, winter, cell etc.) Check that as well. Looking over the information it would appear we don't have a lot of the cell phone #'s, very handy to have on the water. E-mail any corrections or additions.

Club membership applications and weigh in slips for the fishing contest can also be found on the WEB. Print out a few and keep them handy.

Use the WEB site. It's only as good and interesting as member contributions make it.

UKFC Winter Fishing Tournament - Results

Many fish caught but only a few officially weighed in, including a 70# black grouper caught at Dixie Shoals.

Kingfish	no entries
Light tackle	no entries
Ladies Black grouper	1st - Beverly Rowe - 19# 0 oz.
Junior angler -	no entries
Wahoo-Open	1st - Dick Meade - 41# 0 oz.
Black Grouper- Open	1st - Roger Grosswiler - 36# 0 oz. 2nd - Ron Murphy - 35# 8 oz.

Summer tournament now open

3 species - Dolphin, yellowtail, mangrove snapper in four categories [Open, Ladies, light tackle (12# and under), and junior angler] now open. Weigh fish in at Yellow Bait House.

Fish of the month – Greater Amberjack - *Seriola dumerili*

This month's featured fish are the Greater Amberjacks (AKA - AJs), the largest of our jacks (Family Carangidae). They are bruisers occurring over deep structure (wrecks, seamounts). They are easily hooked with live bait, but landing these fish from the depths takes some stamina, strength and a good heart. Few people forgo the fighting belt and harness when fighting these fish. Deep water amberjack may average 30 - 50 pounds. Some go to over 100. That's a lot of meat, so you only need one, not that you might consider fighting a second. One thing good for the novice angler is that amberjack will fight in the open water and will not go into the structure. They are very strong though, and will fight right up to the surface. They will only be brought to the boat if you put the muscle to 'em. Stout gear with 50# + string is recommended. 1 - 3 pound blue runners are excellent baits and will not last long when the AJs are on the seamounts.

One thing to be aware of is that AJs are known to cause ciguatera poisoning. A bio-accumulating toxin that concentrates in the largest of reef predators. The bigger the fish, and the further into the tropics the fish are - the greater the chance of ciguatera. More on ciguatera poisoning in next month's Dock Talk.

Bait of the month - Blue Runner - *Caranx crysos*

Blue runners are choice baits for kings, AJs, wahoo and many other gamefish. They are very active larger baits averaging under a pound. They last well in a live

well, and when they are around, they can be caught in abundance using small baited jigs (e.g., 1/4 oz Hank Brown's are good). They can be caught on wrecks or in open water as large schools.

Blue runners are jacks (Family Carangidae) just like many other popular baits (e.g., cigar minnows, goggle-eyes, and speedos). They are similar in appearance to the larger jack crevalle having a black spot on the operculum (gill plate) but the head of a blue runner has a much gentler slope than the blunt head of the crevalle jack. During late summer, large schools of thousands of fish gather in front of the reefs. These are thought to be breeding aggregations. These aggregations have frustrated many yellowtailers and fooled many "run and gunner's" looking for dolphin. Catching these fish can be so much fun, you may forget that you were supposed to be fishing for dolphin or yellowtail, not bait!

Hotspot of the month (NEW feature!)

Islamorada Hump - 24 48.175 80 26.674

AJs should be thick on the offshore seamounts this month. The Islamorada Hump is probably the most popular offshore hotspot in the Upper Keys. The Hump is actually a close group of many seamounts centered at about lat. 24 48.175 and long. 80 26.674. The Islamorada Hump is about 18 miles southeast of Tavernier Creek. The seamounts rise from the bottom at about 500 feet and approach to within 200 feet of the surface. The north flowing Gulfstream will collide with these underwater hills producing a short period and steep chop of standing waves on the surface of the water. If there weren't any boats on the "Hump" (a rarity) you could know you were there using only this feature. The structure and upwelling currents concentrate baitfish and predators. April is good for finding AJs, blackfins, dolphin, and billfish on the Hump.

Keys Daydreaming - Mike MacDonald

It was with a sense of sadness that Carolyn and I left "THE KEYS "on March 12th. In fact it was much more than that, we both dug our fingernails in and left quite a scratch on the highway.

In all seriousness my message this month is very important. I lost my brother-in-law Tuesday March 6th to colon cancer and then on Wednesday March 7th my longtime employee and friend called and told me he had colon cancer. I'm not telling you this to vent my frustrations to the club, my purpose is to SCREAM "Get Screened". Neither of the above men did this.

IF YOU ARE OVER 50 - GET SCREENED. Screening may be a pain in the a@#, however it will save your life.

Mike

Fish Feast – Recipes from the Deep - Smoked amberjack - Rob Stewart

Box of brown sugar
Box of kosher salt
Mesquite wood chips

Filet amberjack, or any fish for that matter, into 1/2 - 3/4 inch thick filets. Skinless filets will absorb more smoky flavor into meat. Steep these in equal parts salt and brown sugar brine overnight (about half of a box of brown sugar per 10 lbs of fish). Next morning, remove filets from brine mixture and pat dry or air dry for about a half-hour. Rub remaining brown sugar into filets. Place filets in smoker for 3- 4 hours (200°F if you have electric smoker). 3 hours for moist smoked fish, 4 hours for crispy or jerky-like.

Munch!

For Sale

20' boat, motor, and trailer. 2003 Campion 582, 2004 Mercury 125, 2004 galvanized trailer with spare tire, T-top with electronics box, raw water, 30 hrs on motor, 2 live wells, depthfinder, GPS, VHF, - \$20K

Bill Young 1-800-782-5319, 453-5031 (Key Largo) or email at hilltop@hancock.net

Danforth hi-tensile galvanized anchor 13# with 30 feet 5/16 chain - \$100

Barrie Wantz at 852-4286

7 Cu Foot freezer, chest model. 3 months old under warranty. \$175.00. Don't want to store it. (with or without bait). Can deliver it. I'm leaving April 8th.

Ed Stell 305-451-9974

2000 Hewes Redfisher 18ft, 150 VMAX (300 hours), 10" draft, Yamaha SS dual prop, poling platform, Teleflex steering, graphite push pole, 20g live well, trim tabs, 30 gal gas, trolling motor, canvas cover, No Trailer - \$15,900 or OBO

John Welch 305-852-2708

Tip Corner – Deep water hook-setting on the drift - John Rowe

John has got catching AJs (amberjacks) down to a routine. His "catch to bait" percentage is close to 90% (no fooling). AJs are most often found on deep water structure. If you are using mono, getting an effective hook set in 300+ feet of water can be difficult, if not impossible, with conventional techniques. John recommends power-drifting over the structure with the rod in a very strong rod holder. When the AJ takes the live bait, the captain will briefly, but with a little umff, put the motor in gear to set the hook. This is done while the angler is cranking the reel as fast as possible. Recall, mono has a lot of stretch, especially when over 300 feet. After the hook set, the angler can remove the rod from the holder, hook up the shoulder harness, and fight the 50+ pound from the gimble. This is obviously not IGFA fishing, but your looking for meat for the smoker!

Florida Fishing Regulations

Amberjack - 28" fork length, 1 per person per day.

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