

Bulletin

Salt Water Anglers of Bergen County NJ

Free Issue

February 2025

At The American Legion Hall, Post # 170, 33 West Passaic Street, Rochelle Park, N. J.

President/ Writer/ Editor

John Toth

tothjohn@verizon.net



1st Vice President

Don Lohse



2nd Vice President

Gary Gusterson

Gus54@optonline.net



Membership Secretary.

Art Vrola

Art@ajvrola.com



Treasurer

Jim Galanaugh Jr.

Jgalan4962@aol.com

Assistant Treasurer

Charles Santoro

Boats62@aol.com



Assistant Writer/Editor

Fred Villanova



Visit our revised Web page & try some of the new functions

www.swabc.org

SWABC Flea Market 2025



A "BIG THANK YOU" to all our Club Members Helpers -
It's because of you that our event was a success

Stories & Events

Page 2 – Presidents Corner, Upcoming Meetings

Page 3 – Membership, Club Raffle, Boat Show & Salt Water Expo work schedule

Page 4 – Flea Market Report, Letter to NJDEP

Page 5 – Final standings on Big Fish Derby, Article – Flounder a Unique Fish

Page 6 – Article – Seasonal Striped Bass Closures?, Membership form

Good fishing, good friends.

That's what SWABC is all about

The Best Fishing Club in NJ

The regular meetings will be held every third Tuesday of the month, (except March) at 7:30 PM at the Legion Hall. A \$5 fee is required, for non-members. This entitles you to refreshments, snacks, and some new tricks about fishing plus participation if you choose in our dark horse drawings. Welcome all; we hope you enjoy the evening.

President's Corner

It was a very cold night with temperatures in the teens, but our members still came to our January 21st meeting to hear member Arnie Ulrich give us a very informative power point presentation on what it's like to fish in Maine to catch cod, pollock and haddock. Maine offers great opportunities to catch these tasty fish and Arnie told us what is like to catch two pollock at the same time with both of them in the 10-pound class.

I fished in Maine many years ago with some of our members and I know what this experience is like. I hooked into a 28-pound pollock on a Viking jig with a 5-pound cod on a teaser. The line on my reel just ripped off and I had some fight bringing both of them in! We used to call pollock a Silver Bullet since they, unlike cod, move away fast and hard when hooked up!

Rick Reitano was the lucky winner of our 50/50 drawing and had **\$180** more in his wallet to take home.

Our Chef, Nico, made Fillet Mignon that was so good along with French fries, Apple crumb cake, salad and cookies. What a meal and **Thank You Nico!**

Andrew Basso gave a report on our Flea Market and it looks like we have almost all of our 80 tables sold and ready for our vendors.

Our club raffle books have been printed and are ready to be picked up when you attend our meetings. All members receive two books as part of their club dues.

Our March 18th meeting is the past President's Dinner and it be held at the Mountain Side Inn in Clifton starting at 7:00 p.m. Incredibly, the cost for this dinner is still the same as last year, \$35 per member, and this dinner is served family style with roast beef, chicken and much more. See details on this dinner in another section in this newsletter.

Ralph De Julia gave a report on his setting up fishing trips for 2025. While in the planning stages, Ralph is looking to set up a club fluke trip on the Keyport Prince for fluke and several club trips for about 20 members on the Ebbtide Charters for sea bass, fluke and blackfish that sails from Atlantic Highlands. Fishing is what a fishing club should do!

As a reminder, club dues must be paid before the end of February.

We held our club's Flea market on February 2nd and a report on it is in another section of this newsletter. I want to **THANK** all of our club members who helped to make it an event that our club can be proud of!

February 18th Meeting –

Kimberly Korth from NJ Fish & Wildlife

Kimberly Korth of New Jersey Fish & Wildlife will give a presentation on the interaction of Red Knot birds and horseshoe crabs. Red Knot birds fly from South America all the way up to the Arctic area! On their way on their long journey, they stop in New Jersey to feast on

horseshoe crab eggs to receive energy for their amazing long flight to the Arctic. Horseshoe crabs feed not only these birds but are very important to our medical health. Both these birds and crabs are experiencing environmental issues and Kimberly will explain them to us.

March 18th Meeting

Past President's Dinner at the Mountainside Inn

Our club will host this annual event on **March 18th at 7:00 p.m.** to honor all the presidents who have served our club over its many years. Food is served **Family Style** with roast beef, chicken, salad, pasta, potatoes, veggies and dessert. Beer, wine and soda are also included with the dinner. The price for this year's Past President's Dinner with all of the above is **\$35 even in spite of this high inflation!** We will have speakers to touch briefly on a variety of fishing-related topics, a **huge Dark Horse**, door prizes, and certificates/gift cards to be presented to all of the winners of the Big Fish contest! The Mountainside Inn is located at 509 Hazel Street, Clifton, NJ

To purchase tickets and to receive more information about this dinner, please call Art Vrola, our Dinner Chairman, at (201) 280-8612.

There is **NO meeting at the Legion on March 18th**. The Past President's Dinner is our March club meeting.

Enjoy a Wild Game Dinner

The New Jersey Outdoor Alliance, a PAC that supports the rights of hunters and anglers in New Jersey, is holding a Wild Game Dinner on March 2nd at the Black Forest Inn in Stanhope starting at 4:00 p.m. The menu has a lot offer with venison prepared in many ways, wild boar, smoked turkey, smoked salmon and trout, a huge buffet selection, and a carving station offering roast venison with a port wine reduction. A tricky tray and 50/50 will be available.

Cost per ticket is \$100 and John Toth (a Trustee of the NJOA) will have tickets for sale at our club's January and February meetings. John can be reached at (732) 656 – 0139 if you want to order tickets or have questions about this dinner.

In Memoriam - Kevin Morgan

A member of SWABC and the HRFA where he was a major asset in the creation of their annual Hooked on the Hudson event and the kid's fishing programs. He remained a steadfast volunteer at the HRFA's Youth Angler fishing clinics and derbies for as long as it was physically possible. He was one of the American Littoral Society's most prolific taggers of striped bass. Kevin played Santa Claus at the SWABC's Christmas/Hanukkah party, always yelling Ho, Ho, Ho and clanking his cow bells. He also led our club's auction on fishing gear when we had them at our meetings. Kevin was a veteran of the U.S. Navy serving on the aircraft carrier, Forrestal. Kevin made us smile and he will be missed.

May he rest in peace!

--	--

Message from our Membership Chairman

Art Vrola

On behalf of our Board members, I want to **Thank** all of you members who have already paid their 2025 dues. Please keep in mind, the club depends heavily on the timely payment of dues to fund our programs throughout the year. As stated in our club's by-laws; in order to be an active club member our dues are due no later than February 2025.

If dues are not received by the end of February, delinquent members will be removed from our membership roster and will not receive our club's monthly newsletter or be eligible to participate in the club's activities. Checks for dues payment should be made out to **SWABC**. Mail your check to the American Legion Post # 170 c/o **SWABC, 33 West Passaic Street, Rochelle Park, NJ 07662**.

Our club membership dues are **\$55 for an individual and \$60 for family membership. Included** in the dues are **two club raffle books** with a value of **\$20**. (Each book has ten tickets in it at a cost of \$1 for each ticket). Members can buy these raffle tickets for their own use to possibly win our raffle prizes or sell the tickets and keep the \$20 from selling their two raffle books.

The new raffle tickets are in the process of being printed and will be distributed at our meetings to paid members as soon as they are completed.

This membership policy was adopted by the club's Board to have an ongoing revenue stream to cover the club's expenses relating to insurance fees, hall rentals speaker fees, postage, refreshments for our meetings and other expenses.

Club Raffle Prizes

The drawing of raffle tickets will be held on

April 15th

at our regularly scheduled club meeting at the American Legion Post # 170. Our club has some very nice prizes to offer and they are:

1. **Charter Fishing Trip on the Fins on Feathers Charters - \$800 value**
Captain Frank Tenore - 125 Concord Ave., Leonardo, NJ. (Gratuity not included).
2. **JW Onyx 701C-H Rod, Tsunama Shield 6000 Reel - \$230 Value**
3. **JW Onyx 701S- H Rod, Quantum AT 100S Reel - \$200 value**
4. **2 Tickets for the Party Boat "Fisherman"- \$200 value**
5. **Gift Certificate - Jigging World, \$100 value, 175 Rt.17, Rochelle Park, NJ 07667**

NJ Boat Show Sale & Expo -

February 13th - 16th - NJ Convention Center

Thursday, February 13th

11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. - John Toth, Steve Totten, John Piazza

3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Tom Bornemann, Fred Villanova

Friday, February 14th

11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - John Toth, Rick & Sue Reitano

3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Jim Catanzaro, Tom Tyls, Gene Snyder

Saturday, February 15th

10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. - Steve Totten, John Piazza, Frank Rella, Jim Galanaugh

2:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Art Lein, Rich Melton

Sunday, February 16th

10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. - Steve Totten, John Piazza,

1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - John Toth, Rick Swarthe, Bobby Jones

Salt Water Expo - March 14th - March 16th

Friday, March 14th

Noon - 4:00 p.m. - John Toth, Steve Totten, John Piazza

4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Tom Bornemann, Gene Snyder

Saturday, March 15th

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Don Lohse, Jon Campbell, Steve Blumenfeld, Steve Totten, John Piazza

2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. - Bob Goldstein, John Farrell, Ralph DeJulia

Sunday, March 16th

10:00 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. - Dennis Kuntz, Steve Totten, John Piazza

1:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - John Toth, Rick Swarthe

Kevin Morgan - doing what he loved



SWABC Flea Market Report

By John Toth

February can be brutal with bad weather and **Thank God** it did not snow or rain, but the weather was cold with a chilly 18 degrees at the start of the morning and remained cold throughout the day. Our Flea Market Chairman, Andrew Basso, along with the assistance of Don Lohse did a fine job with enlisting 81 vendors to fill the tables at the Hasbrouck Heights Hilton on February 2nd!

Our club members volunteered their time to sell 50/50 tickets like Rick Swarthe, Harry Vogt and Barry Paull. Bobby Jones and T.J. Taber sold our donated club tackle at our "Make me an Offer" table and at the end of the day they sold about \$460 worth of fishing gear! Mike Peluso, Art Vrola and Fred Villanova sold our club's raffle tickets and a number of members worked as security guards to give our vendors a sense of security and to prevent theft. Rick Reitano and Nick Cassamassimo assisted vendors to move their gear into the building and Rick's wife, Sue, even made tasty muffins for our volunteers that were so good with a cup of coffee! Jim Galanaugh Jr. and Chuck Santaro collected money as visitors entered the building. Gary Gusterson, a former police officer, was in charge of arranging our volunteers to act as security guards and who better than Gary can arrange security! Lou Castellano made the signs we needed for our seminar, 50/50 ticket raffle and the sign needed for the raffle on our 4 1/2 hour fishing charter donated by Captain Bob Henn of Ebbtide Fishing Charters. Thanks Lou! Steve Totten, our best salesman to sell raffle tickets, sold raffle tickets for this charter. Other members showed up to help in wherever they were needed and they include: Bill Lessimore, Jack Babin, Steven Blumenfeld, Frank Rella, Jon Campbell, Ken Lesenko, Frank Kassetta, Gene Synder and Tom Tyls. We did experience some issues in arranging a speaker to do our seminar for the flea market and it seemed at one point that there was even a gremlin who secretly wanted to prevent us from having one. However, Dave Lilly who has been at our club for a number of times to give presentations on a difference fishing topics stepped up to the plate and gave a presentation on fluke Fishing techniques at the Ambrose channel. This presentation was well attended and it went very well since you could not hear a pin drop when Dave was talking. **Thanks Dave!**

Our 50/50 prize was won by Sylvia Santoro, Chuck Santoro's wife. I called Chuck's home after the flea market to ask if Sylvia was going to take Chuck to a fancy restaurant to celebrate and I heard her say "NO, he is just getting ravioli that I am making". So, I think Chuck is going to wait if this day will ever come! I, surprisingly, won the raffle for the Ebbtide Fishing charter. After that announcement was made a large number of our members said that they were free to fish on any day I wanted to make this charter. I did not know that I had so many

friends all of a sudden!

Also, February 2nd was **Lou Castellano's birthday** and Chuck brought a birthday cake to celebrate Lou's 85th birthday and we all sang Happy Birthday at the flea market to Lou who does a lot for our club. **May you have many more birthdays Lou!**

Finally, I want to **Thank** all of you who helped in so many ways to make this Flea Market happen!

Letter to NJ DEP Concerning Access Restriction to Tidal Waters for Endangered Species

Protection

By John Toth












When endangered birds like the Piping Plover arrive at our NJ beaches, the area where they nest is closed by fencing to protect them while they are in the process of laying their chicks and beach access by this area is also restricted for their protection. While we want to protect endangered species by our beaches, the New Jersey DEP has proposed a new regulation: Access Restriction of Tidal Waters for Endangered Species Protection (N.J.A.C.7-25-4 A.3) and this regulation will impose restrictions on public access to beaches and our use of them.

Under this new regulation, areas where endangered birds used to nest will be closed even when the birds are not even there. Beach access by these areas will be restricted and also the location where the birds are expected to nest. This is an overreach by the DEP and imposes restrictions on the public using the beach for a variety of uses such as walking, fishing and other recreational activities. Additionally, some local municipalities who do everything they can to restrict access to anglers may use this DEP proposal to further restrict access to their beaches for anglers on the pretext of protecting the birds.

A number of recreational fishing clubs are concerned about this NJ DEP proposal and are in the process of developing a letter outlining their concerns about this proposal that is being drafted by a Mr. George Browne who has been a very vocal advocate to protect beach access for the public. I personally know George since I was in Trenton working with George and other groups to develop guidelines on beach access guidelines for the Public Trust Document. George has asked fishing clubs and other associations to sign on to his draft letter as a show of support. I brought this issue up at our club's January 14th Board meeting and our Board approved our club signing on to this letter. Other clubs have already signed up to this letter, including our friends at the Hudson River Fishermen's Association (HRFA). Comments on the NJ DEP proposal are due February 13th and this letter will be sent to them by their deadline. I will keep you updated on this issue as it unfolds.

Final Standings 2024 BIG FISH OF THE YEAR DERBY

Prizes for the winners of our Big Fish Derby will be given out at our **Past President's Dinner** that is scheduled for **March 18, 2025** at the **Mountainside Inn in Clifton, NJ**. A Huge Dark Horse will be available. This is our club meeting during March and it will **not** be held at our regular meeting place at the American legion Post in Rochelle Park.

H	SPECIES	MIN. WEIGHT	ENTRY WEIGHT	ANGLER
	BLACKFISH	4	13 lbs.	Bob Goldstein
	BLUEFISH	12		
	COD FISH	10		
	FLOUNDER	1.5 lbs.	2 lbs. 9 oz.	Glenn Peckel
	FLUKE	4	12.5 Lbs.	Jeff Criswell Sr.
	LING	2	2.4 lb	Don Lohse
	POLLOCK	10	15 lbs.	Arnie Ulrich
	PORGY	1.5 lbs.	2 lb. 1 oz.	Ralph DeJulia
	SEA BASS	2		
	STRIPED BASS	12	48 lbs.	Rick Reitano
	WEAKFISH	2		

Flounder is a Unique Fish By John Toth

Around 66 million years ago, a six-mile asteroid slammed into earth and turned the sky black wiping out over half of the species on land and earth. This mass extinction opened up ecological opportunities for the survivors. One survivor lineage split apart, with some individuals finding opportunities in the open ocean and others settling on the sea floor. Flounder, like 800 hundred species of flatfish, lie flat on the sea floor, their two eyes gazing up at the water overhead. When a smaller fish swims by, the flounder shoots up and strikes.

The larvae of flounder look normal with eyes on both sides of their head. Only when they go through metamorphosis into adults does one eye migrate to the other side of the head. Hormones from the thyroid gland trigger larvae to go through this metamorphosis. The hormones switch on genes in the flatfish skull that cause it to take shape, helping to push one eye into a new position. Inside the eye itself, other genes simulate the growth of the neurons so that it can stay connected to the brain as it travels into a new place. This movement of an eye to another side of a flatfish is one of nature's mysteries.


In Darwin's "Origins of Species, he argued that natural selection favors tiny variations. Each little increment benefited an organism. Over countless generations he said that those increments gradually added up to large-scale transformations. One critic of Darwin's theory, (George Jackson Mivart, a British biologist) rejected such changes could possibly happen. It seemed impossible to him that the slow migration of the eye around the fish's head would be advantages at every stage of the way. "How such transit of one eye a minute fraction of the journey toward the other side of the head could benefit the fish is unclear." Of course, Darwin was right and nature has the final say on how flounder should look like with two eyes on one side of its head.

I watched a video on how a flounder camouflages itself by using its tail to flip sand over its body so that it is totally covered with only its two eyes sticking up. It also seems to change its color so that it matches its surroundings, making it practically invisible to its prey. It is a very unusual fish compared to others, but unusual or not, it is one of the fish that many of us enjoy to catch and especially to eat!

(New York Times, June 25,2024)



TACKLE WORLD
PREMIUM TACKLE OUTLET



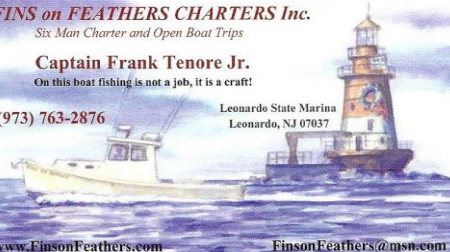
TEL: (201) 587-0011 / E-MAIL: INFO@TACKLEWORLD.COM
174 ROUTE 17 NORTH, ROCHELLE PARK, NJ 07662

FINSON FEATHERS CHARTERS Inc.
Six Man Charter and Open Boat Trips

Captain Frank Tenore Jr.
On this boat fishing is not a job, it is a craft!

(973) 763-2876

Leonardo State Marina
Leonardo, NJ 07037



www.FinsonFeathers.com FinsonFeathers@msn.com

Seasonal Striped Bass Closures May Happen in 2026 By John Toth

Toward the end of 2024, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) was considering closing the months we could fish for striped bass in 2025. This could be the months of November and December of 2025. The ASMFC's justification to do this was that the biomass of striped bass was too low at only at 191 pounds and striped bass stocks were in trouble because we caught too many of them. The ASMFC wants the biomass of striped bass to be increased to 247 million pounds by 2029. One of the ways to do this is to close the seasons we could fish for them. The ASMFC decided on December 16th not to do any seasonal closures for 2025 and the regulations we have had in 2024 for striped bass will remain the same for 2025, 28 to 31 inches, including the Bonus Tag program. However, the ASMFC Board also voted to initiate a new Addendum which is to be completed by October 2025 that will list a number of options, including seasonal closures, to reach the new target of 247 million pounds of striped bass. This Addendum will allow for public comment on these options. After hearing public comments, the ASMFC will make their final decision on which option to approve at their January 2026 meeting. All states will be required to implement this option for their striped bass season during 2026.

According to their own data, the ASMFC projects that there is only a 50% chance of reaching their 247 million pound target with the seasonal restrictions for striped bass that may be imposed upon the recreational community. If there is an inability for us to reach this goal, then why have such a high target of 247 million pounds for striped bass that we most likely will not reach? This does not make sense to me and I do not believe that I am alone in this conclusion.

If there is a closure of a month or especially two that we can fish for striped bass, it would be devastating to the for-hire industry! A captain told me that he would lose at least 25% of his striped bass charter trips. Tackle shops and marinas would also be adversely affected by this seasonal closure. The ASMFC is relying on data to justify their restrictions for striped bass that we have seen time again to be unreliable. I still remember that during Sandy when so many boats were destroyed, we were told that we overfished our fluke quota!

It seems to me that we are always being punished by the ASMFC and other fishing managers by having our quotas reduced and now we may have seasonal closures for striped bass. For example, the stocks of black sea bass are up over 200%, yet we almost faced a reduction of our black sea bass quota by 20% for our 2025 season by fishing managers. By the way, I still remember a number of years ago I was at a meeting in Philadelphia initiated by fishing managers to consider closing the fluke for a month or possibly two just like we are facing with striped bass. It did not happen because of our opposition to this proposal.

While we are facing so many restrictions on our ability to enjoy fishing, so many fishing boats have gone out of business. Bob Bogan, Captain of the Gambler, wrote a report in 2002 that showed 50 fishing boats have gone out of business because of punitive regulations imposed by the ASMFC, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Mid-Atlantic Marine Fisheries Council. This report did not cover the tackle shops and marinas that also lost their businesses. It is always reducing the quota of a certain fish or reducing the bag limit of that fish. Maybe one day we will finally see a decision by fishing management that finally works in favor of us!

I will keep you updated as this striped bass issue.

Salt Water Anglers of Bergen County #1 Salt Water Fishing Club

Enclose a check in the amount of \$55 for a one-year membership, into New Jersey's #1 Salt Water Fishing Club

Mail To: **American Legion Hall Post # 170, 33 West Passaic Street, Rochelle Park, N.J. 07622**

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____