

THE PUBLICATION DEDICATED TO CONSERVING AND PROTECTING FLORIDA'S MARINE RESOURCES

SEAWATCH

SUMMER 2021

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WATERS?

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Sea Watch is published three times a year by CCA Florida, a nonprofit state affiliate of the Coastal Conservation Association.

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REDFISH RELEASE RESTOCK

CCA Florida's East Coast Redfish Restocking Initiative

Anglers on Florida's east coast know that the redfish population has declined in recent years. And at CCA Florida, we know that something needs to be done to ensure this iconic fishery is healthy for generations to come.

We're working with the Duke Energy Mariculture Center to restock Florida's redfish population and you can help. Phase I of our east coast redfish restocking initiative includes the raising and release of up to 100,000 juvenile redfish, but we can't do it without you.

With your support, we can meet our \$100,000 goal, which will fund the equipment, feed and other supplies needed to support the effort. Feeding the broodstock and juveniles is a \$25,000 annual cost alone! Get more information online and donate today.

Corporate partnerships are welcome. Learn more online.

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New Bill to Reauthorize Nation's Primary Fishing Law

Congressmen Jared Huffman (D-Calif.) and Ed Case (D-Hawaii) introduced the Sustaining America's Fisheries for the Future Act to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA), America's primary law governing marine fisheries. MSA has not been reauthorized since 2006. The recreational fishing community commends Reps. Huff-

man and Case for their thorough approach to drafting the legislation, which included stakeholder roundtables on each coast and the invitation to stakeholders to provide input on the discussion draft of the bill.

"While MSA has made significant strides in ending overfishing and rebuilding depleted fish stocks, Congress must build upon

the progress of the Modern Fish Act to better recognize in MSA the importance of saltwater recreational fishing to the nation," said Mike Leonard, vice president of government affairs for the American Sportfishing Association. "We thank Reps. Huffman and Case for incorporating much of the input we provided on their earlier



**WE WILL REMAIN VIGILANT
IN ADVOCATING FOR
AN MSA REAUTHORIZATION
THAT ADVANCES
MUCH-NEEDED
RECREATIONAL FISHERIES
MANAGEMENT AND
CONSERVATION
IMPROVEMENTS.**



discussion draft. We will remain vigilant in advocating for an MSA reauthorization that advances much-needed recreational fisheries management and conservation improvements.”

“We appreciate Congressman Huffman’s thoughtfulness in gathering input from all marine fishing stakeholders when drafting the Sustaining America’s Fisheries for the Future Act,” said Jeff Angers, president of the Center for Sportfishing Policy. “A reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act is long overdue, and we look forward to working with Members from both sides of the aisle to recognize the contributions of the recreational sector to the Blue Economy and to the conservation of America’s public marine resources.”

“Congressman Huffman’s thorough process in engaging stakeholders prior to and during the development of this legislation should be commended,” said Chris Horton, senior director of fisheries policy for the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation. “While we think there are areas where the

bill could be strengthened for the benefit of recreational fisheries, it represents a good starting point to begin the process of reauthorizing the Magnuson-Stevens Act and building upon recent improvements by the Modern Fish Act.”

A focus of the recreational fishing and boating community has been the enforcement of the Modern Fish Act, which became law in December 2018. The Modern Fish Act adds more appropriate management tools for policymakers to use in managing federal recreational fisheries. The recreational fishing community looks forward to working with bi-partisan Members of Congress to build on the successes of MSA and improve the law where it is weak.

Saltwater recreational fishing is more than a passion for millions of Americans. According to the latest data from NOAA Fisheries, 9.2 million saltwater recreational anglers support 487,024 jobs throughout the United States and contribute \$74 billion to the economy annually. Furthermore, anglers and boaters contribute hundreds of

millions of dollars annually to conservation and habitat restoration efforts through excise taxes and licensing fees.

The American Sportfishing Association (ASA) is the sportfishing industry’s trade association committed to representing the interests of the sportfishing and boating industries as well as the entire sportfishing community. We give the industry and anglers a unified voice when emerging laws and policies could significantly affect sportfishing business or sportfishing itself. ASA invests in long-term ventures to ensure the industry will remain strong and prosperous, as well as safeguard and promote the enduring economic, conservation and social values of sportfishing in America. ASA also gives America’s 55 million anglers a voice in policy decisions that affect their ability to sustainably fish on our nation’s waterways through Keep America Fishing, our national angler advocacy campaign. America’s anglers generate nearly \$50 billion in retail sales with a \$125 billion impact on the nation’s economy creating employment for 800,000 people.



DECISION ON RED GROUPE FISHERY ATTEMPTS TO FIX HISTORY OF FLAWED DATA.

GULF COUNCIL SETS PRECEDENT WITH RECREATIONAL DATA CORRECTION

At its meeting last week, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council adjusted recreational and commercial red grouper quotas using revised recreational historical data that gives a much-clearer picture of actual participation in the fishery. By correcting errors in the historical data, the Council's action changed the allocation of the red grouper fishery from 76% commercial / 24% recreational to 59.3% commercial / 40.7% recreational.

"We appreciate the efforts of NOAA Fisheries and the Gulf Council to improve recreational harvest data and implement it into the management system," said Bill Bird, chairman of CCA's National Government Relations Committee. "Although this was a science-driven process, it was complicated, and we appreciate everyone – including staff at NOAA and the Gulf Council - who

were a part of this precedent-setting decision."

NOAA Fisheries is in the process of correcting the historic recreational data in many of the fisheries it manages which will likely result in additional allocation changes. Red grouper was one of the first fisheries to work the new numbers through a stock assessment and although it was not a true reallocation process, it did present the opportunity to correct the allocations which have been based entirely on past catch history from a select and limited set of years.

CCA and other groups representing the recreational boating and angling community have called for a reallocation process that is based on forward-looking criteria, including economics and demographics to provide the maximum benefits to the nation.

"This correction to historic data is a

step in the right direction, but for the most timely data and efficient management possible the Gulf states should be responsible for more fisheries off their coasts," said Trip Aukeman, CCA Florida Advocacy Director. "Florida and the other Gulf states have developed state-of-the art data collection systems for red snapper that provide much more flexible and responsive management that could easily be adapted to other fisheries."

The Gulf Council will soon begin discussing regulation changes for red grouper, which are presently at a historically low level of abundance for a variety of reasons, including red tide. Despite the changes in allocation resulting from the data correction, anglers may see shorter seasons and tighter limits in the near future.



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ICAST





2021

In partnership with CCA National, CCA Texas and Building Conservation Trust, CCA Florida participated in ICAST, the industry's largest trade show event.



ANGLER DRIVEN. CONSERVATION MINDED.

PATHFINDER AND CCA FLORIDA

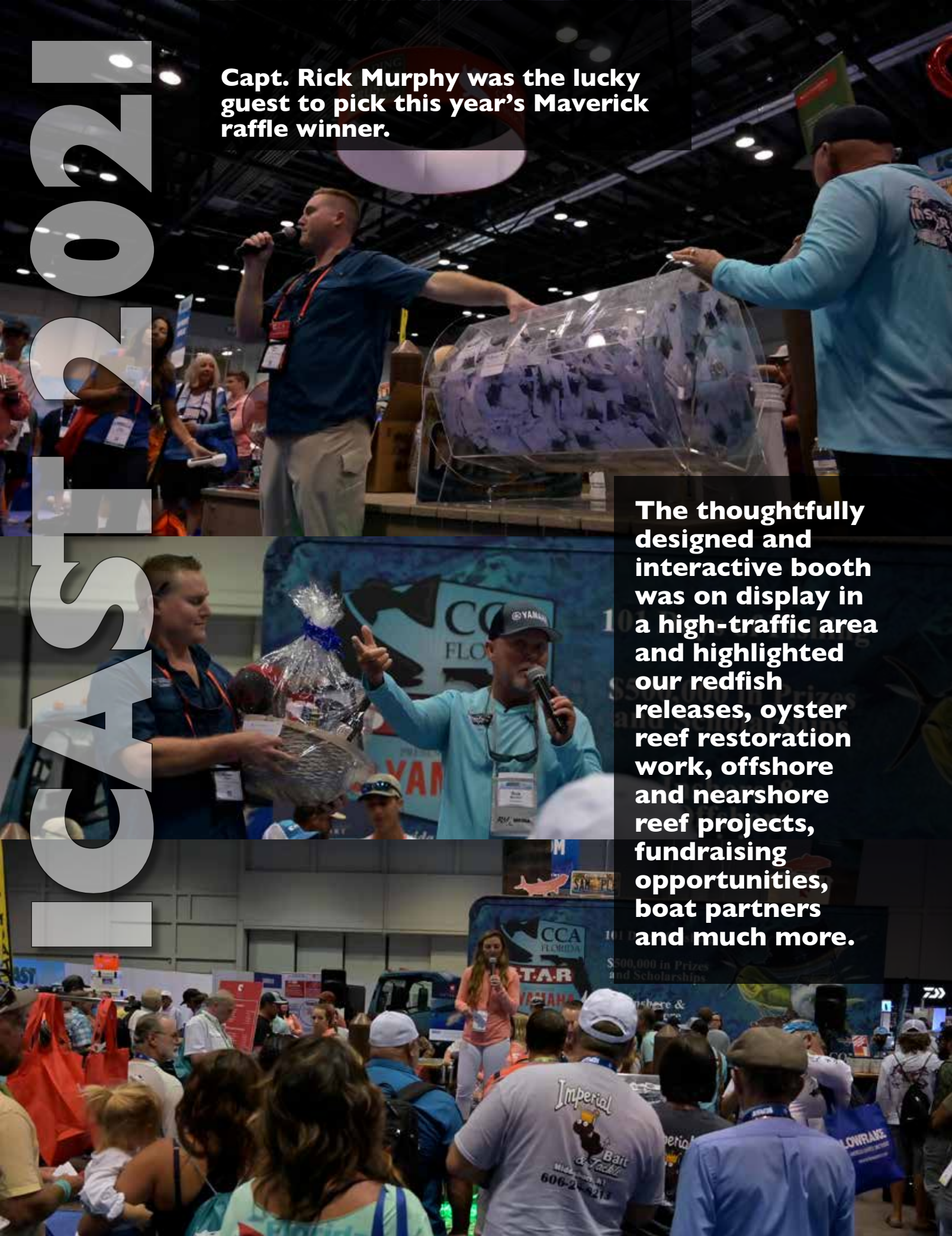
EDUCATION, ADVOCACY & HABITAT CONSERVATION



PATHFINDER
ANGLER DRIVEN

Capt. Rick Murphy was the lucky guest to pick this year's Maverick raffle winner.

The thoughtfully designed and interactive booth was on display in a high-traffic area and highlighted our redfish releases, oyster reef restoration work, offshore and nearshore reef projects, fundraising opportunities, boat partners and much more.





During the event, favored artists and celebrity fishing guides joined us to showcase marine art, highlight restoration projects and, even, give autographs.



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A monumental year for the STAR competition presented by Yamaha

2021 BRINGS A SUPER **STAR** COMPETITION



More than 7,500 anglers participating, 167 West Marine tagged redfish released along Florida's coasts, 25 Tigress Tagged Dolphin released in the Keys and countless opportunities for over 100 anglers to be awarded his or her share of the \$500,000 in prizes and scholarships... do we need to say more?

If so, here goes. To date, STAR already has a great line up of West Marine Tagged Redfish winners and the competition is not

over. The first angler to be registered for STAR and a member of CCA Florida, Ken Craig, hails from St. Lucie County and caught his winning tagged redfish during the second week of competition from his dock in Fort Pierce. Ken had a choice of the Contender 22 Sport with a 250hp Yamaha, Pathfinder 2200 TRS with 200hp Yamaha or the Spyder 19FX Vapor with a 115hp Yamaha, and chose the Contender package.



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STAR

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The next winner would be a first for the STAR competition, a winning youth angler. In June, Dalton Williams landed his West Marine STAR tagged redfish in Citrus County. Dalton was fishing with his dad, and they knew that Citrus County was a STAR Destination County, which meant eight tagged redfish were in the nearby waters.

The third West Marine Tagged Red-

fish winner is from Flagler County and is also a youth angler. He caught his tagged fish near Bings Landing the first week of July. Jude Lukaszewski is not only a member of CCA Florida, but a member of the Flagler Sportfishing Club and annual participant in the Club's Spring Fishing Classic, which provides their live redfish to the STAR competition for

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Knotty Tails

Rod Runners

Hydro Glow

Florida Sportsman Magazine

GuideLines Television

Dolphinfish Research Group

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Talon

STAR 2021

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tagging and release back into the local waters of Flagler, St. Johns and Volusia Counties. Jude and his father have been very engaged in CCA and STAR for the past two years.

The West Marine Tagged Redfish Youth winners have won a Salt Marsh Skiff 1656 with 40hp tiler Yamaha motor, Minn Kota Trolling motor, Humminbird Helix 7, shallow water anchor on the transom and trailer valued at nearly \$20,000.

The Pathfinder and the Spyder boats are still available to winning adult anglers in the West Marine Tagged Redfish Division but don't forget there are 16 other divisions to win boats and other great prizes in.

The Salt Marsh Skiff Open Inshore division features the T H Marine Non-tagged redfish division which has the winning angler being awarded a Salt Marsh Skiff 1656 with 40hp Yamaha and trailer. The Central Florida Marine Spotted Trout division has the winner being awarded a Custom Gheenoe Lo Tide 25 with 25hp Yamaha and trailer. The Piranha Boatworks Snook division rounds out the inshore divisions with the winner being awarded a Piranha RASO 140 with 15hp Yamaha and trailer. One of the overlooked divisions is the Humminbird Tarpon Division with the winner being awarded \$10,000 in prizes from Humminbird, Minn Kota, Engel, Costa and more great partners.

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FINISH

This year's destination counties include Brevard (www.visitspacecoast.com), Engelwood/ Punta Gorda (www.pureflorida.com) and Citrus County (www.discovercrystalriver.com), all have more tagged redfish than any other counties.



A person wearing a black wetsuit with 'REALTREE' written on the sleeve is holding a large fish and a long ruler over water. The ruler is marked in inches and feet. The fish is a large, silvery fish, possibly a largemouth bass. The background is a dark blue gradient with red stars.

THE 2021 STAR AWARDS CEREMONY AND BANQUET

STAR 2021's grand finale is the STAR Awards Ceremony and Banquet on October 9! The competition winners will be awarded during the event and guests will enjoy dinner, open bar, entertainment, silent and live auctions plus a STAR T-shirt and Realtree Tervis Tumbler.

One of the evening highlights will be awarding the winners of the Youth Scholarship Division presented by Academy Sports + Outdoors. STAR will award \$100,000 in scholarships to 12 youth anglers who were drawn as winners from all the fish entries made over the summer. Many thanks to Realtree Fishing and Academy Sports + Outdoors for the sponsorship of the two \$25,000 scholarships and to the \$5,000 scholarship sponsors, Southeast Environmental Solutions, Florida's Sports Coast, Plantation Inn Redfish Classic, Tailin Toads & Eggnog Open, Flagler Sportfishing Club, Florida Cracker Invitational Fishing Tournament and Barnes & Thornburg LLP.

The ceremony, presented by Discover Crystal River will be held at the beautiful and expansive venue, Just Amuse Me (JAM) Entertainment Center located inside the Crystal River Mall in Crystal River, Florida. Many thanks to Sodium Fishing Gear who is supplying the Realtree Fishing Tervis tumblers and Plantation Inn on Crystal River for being the host resort. Please reach out to the resort to make your reservations as they will be offering a special room rate for STAR guests. Plantation on Crystal River, 9301 West Fort Island Trail Crystal River, Florida 34429 United States Phone: 352.795.4211 Toll Free: 800.632.6262.

Join us for a night of celebration that is guaranteed to be a great time for all! Tickets for the event will be available soon.



STAR 2021

continued from page 18

For the bluewater anglers, The Engel Coolers Open Off-shore Division features the danco sports Grouper division with the winner being awarded a 115 Yamaha motor, 240 quart Engel Cooler and danco premio pliers, the Cannon Kingfish division has a West Marine Inflatable boat with a 9hp Yamaha plus Cannon Uni-Troll 10 STX & Tigress Outrigger & Gear XD Top Mount Carbon Fiber Outrigger package being awarded to the winner. In the AFTCO Non-tagged Dolphin division the winner will be awarded a 115hp Yamaha

and Tigress Outriggers & Gear XD Top Mount package. The other divisions such as the Ladies, Native Watercraft Kayak, Power Pole Conservation division, Scuba Quest Lionfish division also offer amazing prizes. Most of the winners are determined by a random drawing of all entries in the division not by the biggest fish allowing anglers of all skill levels the opportunity to win. For those of you who do not fish or wish to have other ways to win, the Costa Kick Plastic Trash Division presented by Papa's Pilar Rum offers terrific prizes just for picking up trash for your local coastal waters.



NOW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 6 ...

The statewide 101-day competition does not end until Labor Day and it only takes one fish, one five-gallon bucket of trash and one day to win in the STAR competition but you need to be a CCA member, registered for STAR and go fishing or picking up trash!

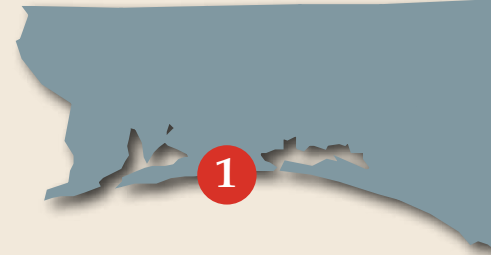
For more information on STAR, please visit www.CCAFLSTAR.com



Overall, it was an awesome opportunity to grow the CCA brand and advance our efforts in conservation and advocacy.

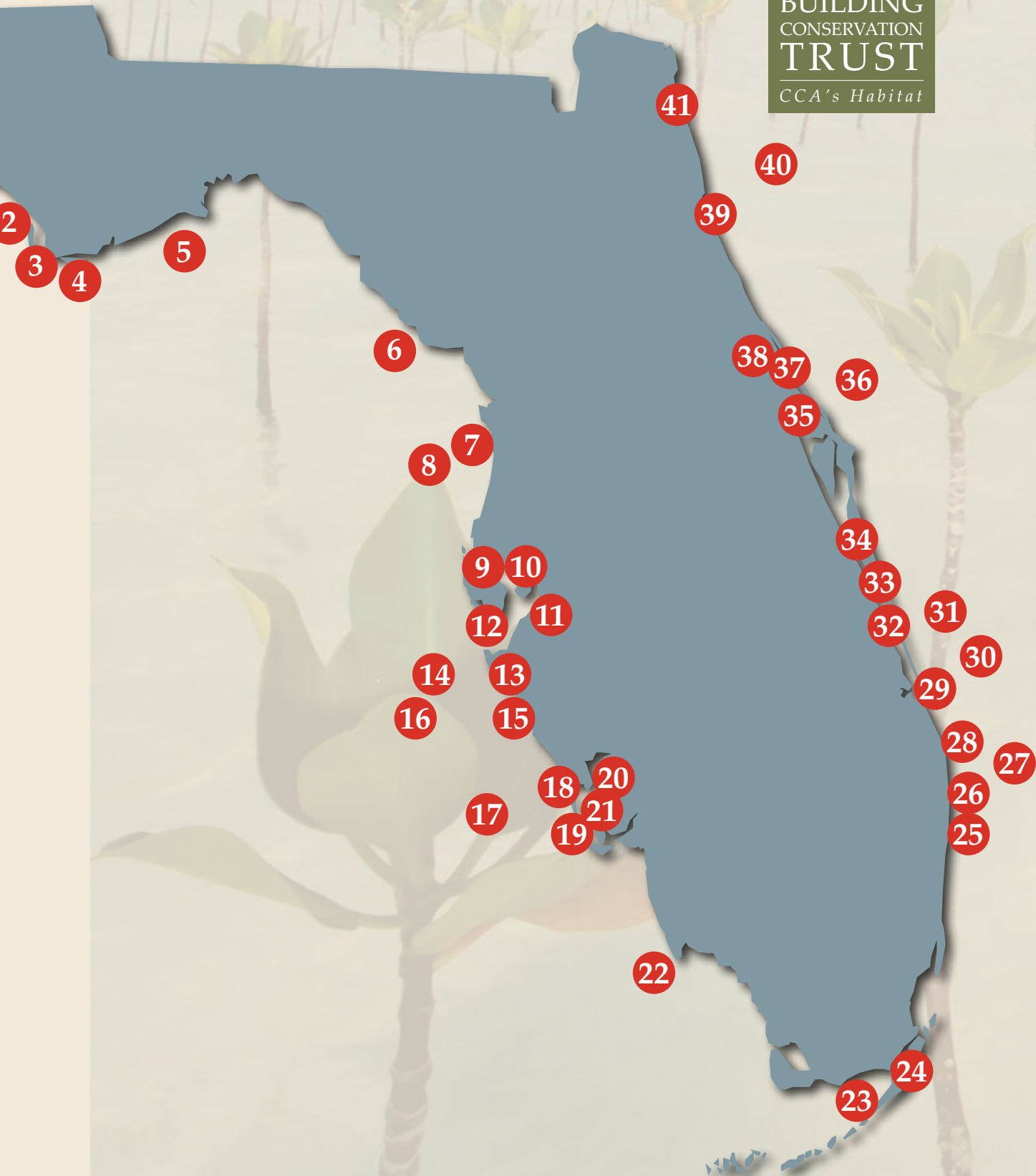


COMPLETED HABITAT PROJECTS

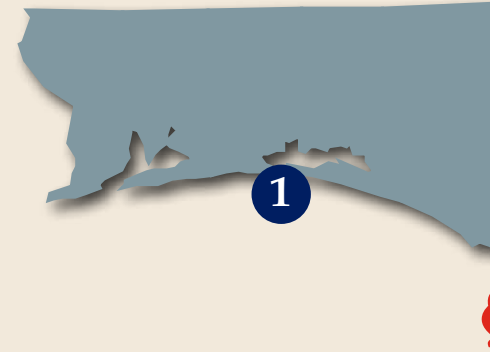


Since 2010, and in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust, CCA has contributed \$820,000 which has been leveraged with our partners to over \$4,900,000 in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!

1. CCA/South Walton Artificial Reef Association, Inc. Reefs
2. CCA Reef/MBARA
3. CCA/Ocean Aid 360 Apalachicola Ghost Trap Rodeo
4. CCA/FDEP/Duke Spartina Grass Replanting
5. CCA/BCT Billy's Barge Artificial Reef
6. NCBS Lone Cabbage Reef Fish Monitoring
7. CCA/UF/IFAS Centipede Bay Oyster Reef Restoration
8. CCA/Hernando Co. Ghost Ship Reef
9. CCA/BCT/Tampa Bay Watch Fantasy Island Oyster Restoration
10. CCA/BCT/Tampa Bay Watch 2D Island Oyster Restoration
11. CCA/FWC Suncoast Youth Conservation Center Saltwater Pond
12. CCA/Ocean Aid 360 Tampa Ghost Trap Rodeo
13. CCA/UCF De Soto National Memorial Living Shoreline Stabilization
14. CCA/BCT Sean Gucken Memorial Reef
15. CCA/Sarasota Bay Watch Clam Restoration
16. CCA/FWC Larry Borden Artificial Reef – Manatee County
17. CCA/Lee County USS Mohawk CGC Reef – Veterans Memorial Reef
18. CCA/BCT/Lee County Punta Rassa Oyster Restoration
19. CCA/BCT/Lee County San Carlos Bay Oyster Restoration
20. LBHS Prop Scar Restoration and Sea Grass Project
21. CCA Turtle Bay Oyster Reef Restoration
22. Naples Bay Oyster Restoration Project
23. CCA Florida Bay Seagrass Restoration
24. CCA/UNF Florida Bay Turtle Grass Research Project
25. CCA/No Shoes Reef 4
26. CCA/BCT Goggle Eye Reef
27. CCA/BCT Andrew “Red” Harris Foundation Reef
28. CCA/BCT Andrew “Red” Harris Foundation “No Shoes” Reef
29. CCA/Florida Oceanographic Society Seagrass and Oyster Restoration
30. CCA/MCAC Brause Girls Reef
31. CCA Curtis Bostick Reef
32. CCA/Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Seagrass Restoration
33. CCA Indian River Lagoon RISSA Seagrass Buoys and Oyster Restoration
34. CCA Spotted Seatrout Acoustic Study
35. CCA/UCF/NPS Canaveral Nat'l Seashore Indian Midden Living Shoreline Restoration
36. CCA/BCT Lady Philomena Cargo Ship - Volusia County Reef Site No. 12
37. CCA/UCF Tomoka State Park Indian Midden Living Shoreline Restoration
38. CCA/Heineken/UCF Tomoka State Park Indian Midden Living Shoreline Restoration
39. CCA/City of Fernandina Living Shoreline Oyster Restoration
40. CCA/BCT Starship Reef
41. CCA/BCT Jacksonville River Reef



ONGOING & UPCOMING HABITAT PROJECTS



Since 2010, and in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust, CCA has contributed \$820,000 which has been leveraged with our partners to over \$4,900,000 in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!

1. CCA/Choctawatchee Bay/Toadfish Living Shoreline Restoration
2. CCA/FDEP/Duke Energy/Conservation Corps Spartina Grass Replanting
3. Dr. Bart Carey Memorial Reef
4. CCA/Epic Tails Charters/Watergoat Project
5. CCA Phoenix Reef
6. CCA John Michael Baker Memorial Reef - Broward County
7. CCA Broward Chapter Pilot Oyster Project
8. CCA Bob Burton Memorial Reef
9. CCA/Sandoway Marine Park Vessel Deployment
10. CCA/FWC/Wildlife Florida IRL Eelgrass Restoration
11. CCA/BTT/IRL Land Trust Tarpon/Snook Impoundment Tagging
12. CCA/Addictive Fishing/FWC/UF Indian River Lagoon Clam Restoration
13. CCA/Brevard County Artificial Reefs
14. CCA/UCF Mosquito Lagoon Oyster Restoration
15. CCA Oyster Shell Recycling Program



HOW DO WE RESTORE OUR WATERS?

Citrus groves have existed in Florida for over 450 years, the cattle industry for over 350 years, and over 250 years ago, sugar, citrus, rice, and indigo plantations were established here. Steamboats began transporting settlers to Florida in the early to mid-1800's and naturally, railroads and new development followed. New industries such as timber, truck farming, phosphate and tourism greatly expanded. Florida was a major site for military training and shipbuilding during World War I and II. By 1950, Florida had grown to be the twentieth largest state in the nation in terms of population and then quickly jumped to the fourth largest by 1990. Florida is now third-most populous state and the boom continues with almost 1,000 people reportedly moving to the state each day. Not surprisingly, 77% of Florida's nearly 22.5 million residents live in or near coastal areas.

(continued on page 31)

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RECIPE & PHOTO BY
HEATHER PETEREK

tripletail with crawfish cream sauce

INGREDIENTS

CRAWFISH CREAM SAUCE:

½ tsp cornstarch
½ c and 1 tbsp heavy whipping cream
1 stick unsalted butter
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 c green onion, chopped
1 lb crawfish tails, peeled, cooked
¼ c grated Parmesan cheese
½ c fresh parsley, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

TRIPLETAIL:

4 tripletail fillets
½ tsp Cajun seasoning
1 tsp paprika
1 tbsp unsalted butter
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

DIRECTIONS

CRAWFISH CREAM SAUCE:

Mix cornstarch and 1 tablespoon heavy whipping cream and set aside. In a small sauce pan melt butter over medium-low heat. Add garlic and onions and cook about 5 minutes. Add crawfish tails and cook an additional 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the ½ cup of heavy whipping cream and cook an additional minute. Stir in the cornstarch/cream mixture, mix thoroughly and cook an additional 5 minutes. Drop heat to low, add cheese, parsley and a pinch of salt and pepper to taste. Cover and keep warm while you cook fish.

TRIPLETAIL: Season both sides of all fillets evenly with the Cajun seasoning and paprika. Heat butter and oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until butter is melted and oil is hot. Sauté fillets about 4 minutes per side or until cooked through and golden-brown.

TO SERVE: Plate fillet over a hearty pasta like a tortellini or serve alone with a side of vegetables. Top with a generous portion of crawfish cream sauce.
SERVES 4.



pair it

Acrobat
Oregon
Pinot Gris



Water Quality*continued from page 28*

With this kind of land use and growth also comes roadways, houses, buildings, factories, paved areas, dredging, filling, dikes, dams, crops, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, solvents and petroleum products, just to name a few. And most of these activities didn't fall into any type of local, state or federal regulation until the mid-1900's. The first major U.S. law addressing water pollution was the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1948. Growing concern for water pollution during this time led to the Clean Water Act of 1972.

When you have this kind of development over the course of not just decades but centuries, it doesn't all just disappear as we are finding out. The more recent issues which are common all over the

state of Florida are things such as the legal and illegal discharges to our waters, leaks and spills from outdated infrastructures, outdated wastewater treatment plants, septic tanks, untreated stormwater runoff, water shortages, and commercial and residential fertilizers. From Apalachicola to Charlotte Harbor, Lake Okeechobee, Tampa Bay, the Indian River Lagoon, and Biscayne Bay, no coastal water body is unaffected. And let's not forget Florida's annual average rainfall is about 54 inches, the fifth most in the nation. The rains wash everything downhill toward water bodies, whether it be groundwater, canals, retention ponds, rivers, lakes, streams or oceans.

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HOW
DO WE
RESTORE
OUR
WATERS?

Water Quality*continued from page 31*

HOW DO WE RESTORE OUR WATERS?

Some of the pollution accumulates in the sediment on the bottom of these water bodies while some of it suspends and moves around in the water column. We tend to forget about it at this point (out of sight, out of mind). But then mother nature sends us a blunt reminder that it is in fact still there, and that we are still flushing it into our water bodies. A tropical storm, hurricane, drought, heat wave, or even a freeze can exacerbate the current and historic pollution in the water and on the bottom, acting as a catalyst of sorts. From here we all know too well what happens. The “naturally occurring” algae gets over-fed, mother nature steps

in, and a bloom and sometimes a fish kill ensues. It makes sense that with a growing population, more severe storms and weather events from climate change and sea level rise, our algae blooms are getting worse and much larger. It doesn't matter if the algae are red, green, brown or blue-green, they all love to eat the excessive nitrogen, phosphorus and other pollutants that we are feeding them. Instead of remaining important “natural occurring” microscopic organisms, they grow quickly and can become lethal to plants and animals in the water and on land.

(continued on page 35)



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\$1 is donated to the Coastal Conservation Association for EVERY box of Coast Vodka purchased at ABC.

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Water Quality*continued from page 32*

While this is a snapshot of how we got here, how do we fix our issues and restore our waters? How do we slow down or even stop the pollution and the blooms? It all boils down to a few very important steps. We must fix our issues on land first, find the funding to do so, and elect the right officials who are more concerned about our waters than their votes. We need to stop all wastewater discharges to our coastal waters with appropriate fines and penalties for violators, upgrade wastewater treatment plants to advanced wastewater treatment technology, convert coastal septic tanks to sewer systems, upgrade outdated stormwater systems, remove muck and pollution from the bottom of our waterways, continue habitat restoration work, increase public education, enforce summer

fertilizer restrictions and impose fines to violators for starters. And as anglers, we all need to do our part in protecting and preserving what we have left. Gently handling fish and practicing catch, photo and release is a great start. Getting more involved with the issues by emailing and calling local, state and federal officials will make a difference as will speaking at public meetings.

Finally, we all need to stop scratching our heads and asking how did this happen and how do we fix it? We already know the answers to those questions. The red tide, algal blooms and fish kills are not over and will likely get much worse before they get better. But with all of us working together, we can make a difference and right our wrongs. The future of Florida depends on it.

An aerial photograph showing a long wooden pier with several small boats moored along its side. The water is a vibrant green, suggesting a healthy ecosystem or perhaps a specific type of algae. In the background, a larger white boat is visible on the water. The sky is blue with some white clouds. The text 'THE FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT.' is overlaid in large, semi-transparent white capital letters across the center of the image.

THE FUTURE
DEPENDS ON
IT.

Tom Emge



Several years ago CCA Florida began recognizing our members in SeaWatch Magazine who have gone above and beyond with regard to habitat restoration. In this edition, we are recognizing CCA Life Member Tom Emge from the Space Coast Chapter.

The oldest of 7 siblings, Tom was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and moved to Indiana at the age of 3. The son of a mechanical engineer, Tom followed suit and went to the University of Evansville and graduated with an electrical engineering degree. His degree brought him to Melbourne, Florida in 1981 to work with Pan American World Services at Patrick Air Force Base. He worked at Patrick AFB, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station and at a few of the down range stations like Antigua, Grand Turk and Ascension Island. After three years with Pan Am, he left Florida for another opportunity in Texas, but always said that he would come back. After 21 years in Texas and various other places, he did just that and purchased a home in Melbourne. He began doing contract engineering work in Texas and continued that for about 15

years and retired happily in 2015. Tom's favorite hobby is wood working, but he also likes to cook and bake sourdough bread and crackers. Fishing with his good friend Mark Godfrey is a close second.

Tom first joined CCA Florida in 2013 while he was still working as an engineer, and in 2017 he joined as a Life Member. He joined to support CCA's efforts to improve our lagoons and reef life. "The Indian River Lagoon, which is where I spent some of the early 1980's learning to fish, is nothing like it was then. Like I tell some people, rather than complain about it I thought it made more sense to try to do something to bring it back," he said.

Tom first got involved in habitat restoration work in December of 2016 when CCA put out a call for volunteers for a University of Central Florida (UCF) and CCA habitat restoration project. "I RSVP'd for the event and I have been doing it ever since. I find working with the UCF Coastal & Estuarine Ecology Laboratory (CEELAB) leads, their fantastic students and all of the community volunteers personally rewarding, physically taxing and just an all-around fun thing to do.

I love the leads and I love the students who are the greatest. The students are a blast to work with. You couldn't ask for a better group of enthusiastic, bright and capable people," Tom said.

Tom's activity with CCA has been mostly volunteering with oyster reef restoration and shoreline stabilization efforts with the UCF CEELAB with Dr. Linda Walters, Dr. Melinda Donnelly and Dr. Paul Sacks. They have a very active program and keep Tom very busy. Dr. Walters, Pegasus Professor of Biology at UCF, refers to him as "Tom the Bomb." And the Marine Discovery Center (MDC) where Tom often volunteers on UCF and CCA projects, refers to him as "Super Tom." Two titles that he has earned through his hard volunteering work, time commitment, and his desire to restore the Indian River Lagoon.

Tom's continued involvement with habitat restoration also has a lot to do with the community and the groups involved. "The community volunteers are there because they want to be there and help out. The

(continued on page 38)



continued from page 36

volunteers come from, well, the community and community organizations like CCA. Greg Harrison from the Orlando Chapter of CCA is great to work with and captains a pontoon boat for hauling supplies and volunteers as well as pitching in as labor. The MDC in New Smyrna Beach has a deep network of volunteers and they do a lot to produce the materials we use in the efforts. Jessy Wayles and her compatriots at MDC are amazing and very active. They not only produce the materials but are there to help get us to the end on deployment and any other activity they can get their hands dirty with. And working with an organization like UCF CEELAB that puts all this together and lets you help. Wow, how can you beat that?" he said.

In 2020, he joined in on the Ma-

rine Resources Council International Coastal Cleanup Day which was an effort to pick up trash along the causeways of the Indian River Lagoon around Melbourne. It's no surprise that he has already signed up for it again September 2021. Moving forward, Tom would like to see the central portion of the Indian River Lagoon from Cape Canaveral to Sebastian get more attention. "The Lagoon here is not in good shape as can be attested to by the annual report produced by the Marine Resources Council (MRC) in Palm Bay, Florida. I am also a member of this organization. I read recently that Melbourne has installed baffle boxes to remove storm water debris and pollutants like nitrogen and phosphorus and plans more installations. This is a step in the right direction in my opinion. I hope this can

help with the algae blooms and the die off of grasses that feed the Manatees," he said.

Tom finished by saying, "CCA's support of efforts such as those of UCF is only going to get more important as the climate continues its inexorable warming. As science continues to investigate solutions to habitat loss I expect CCA will keep up with these developments and tailor their efforts to support appropriate solutions deployment."

And as far as the fishing goes, Tom likes bottom fishing the best. While he doesn't really have a favorite species of fish to catch these days, "any keeper is good," he said. On that note, and with regard to habitat restoration, we'd have to agree that Tom is also a keeper!







gotta fish

We love our **Summer**
our members ... w
of fun, fishing and g



Fishing
Summer Snapshots of
what a summer
great memories!

REGISTER FOR THE CONSERVE FLORIDA'S FISHERIES LICENSE PLATE



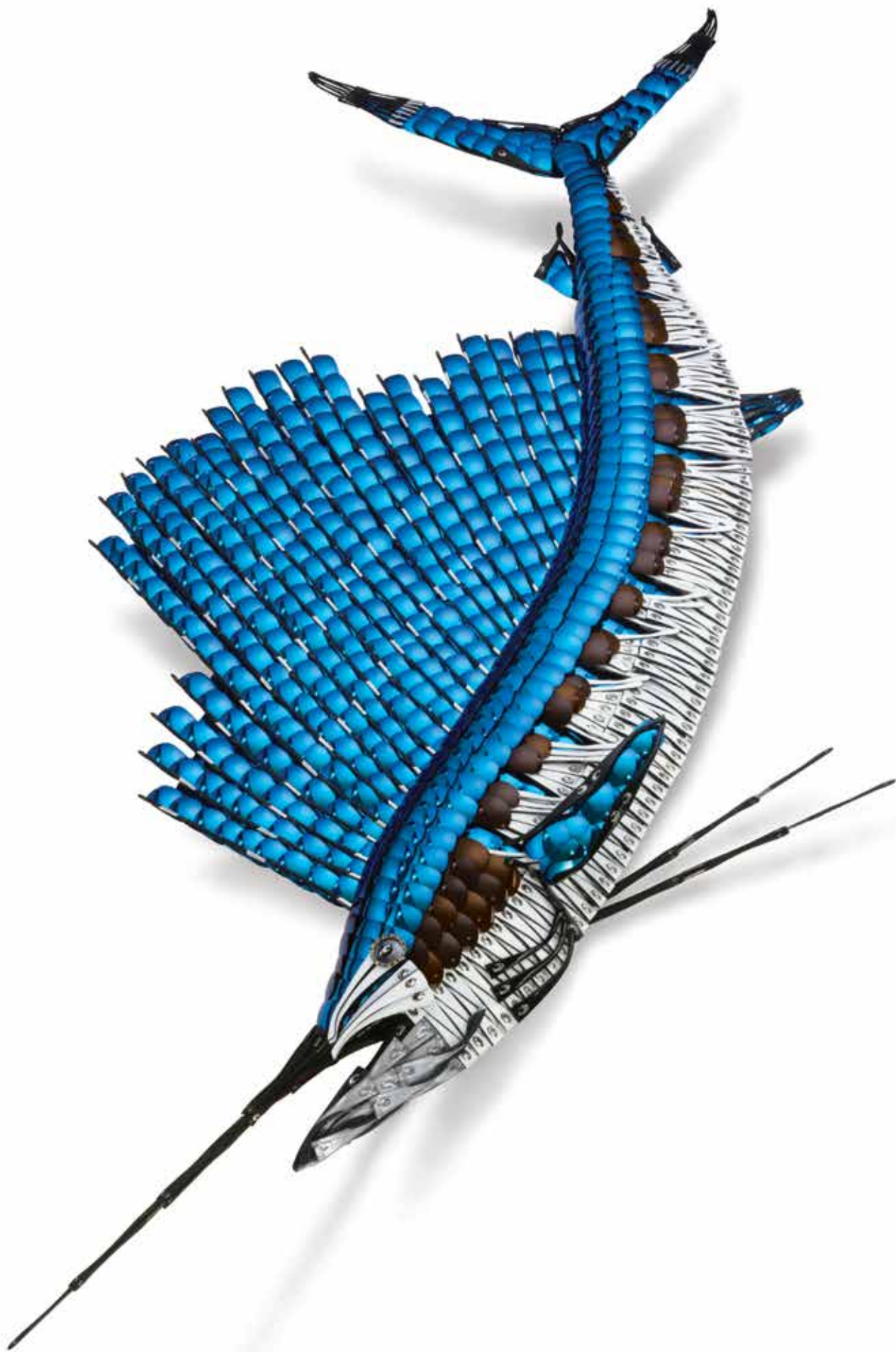
- › Show your support for Florida's fisheries, coastal habitats and marine resources on the road with a "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" specialty license plate!
- › The "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" license plate voucher will be available at local DMV offices across Florida's 67 counties
- › Funds from the sale of this license plate support protecting and enhancing saltwater marine resources, expanding habitat restoration efforts, developing saltwater fisheries conservation and enriching coastal environmental education.
- › Designed by Capt. Mike Goodwine of Blackneck Adventures and graphic designer Jesse Starr
- › Special thanks to Rep. James "J.W." Grant and Sen. Aaron Bean for their support and helping advance the "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" license plate

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BLACKENED REDFISH *with Roasted Corn Avocado Salsa*



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INGREDIENTS:

SALSA:

2 fresh corn cobs with husks
1 stalk green onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
Juice of 1 large lime
1 14.5oz can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 tbsp fresh mint, chopped
1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
½ c crumbled queso fresco
1 large avocado, diced
Salt and pepper to taste

REDFISH:

2 large redfish filets
2 tbsp Dijon mustard
½ tsp lemon pepper
½ tsp onion powder
½ tsp garlic salt
½ tsp cayenne pepper
3 tbsp all-purpose flour
Canola oil for cooking
2 tbsp salted or unsalted butter

PREPARATION:

SALSA:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Remove husks from corn cobs and place on a cookie sheet. Roast for 20-25 minutes. Remove corn from oven, cut kernels off cob and place in a large bowl. To same bowl, add green onion, garlic, lime juice, black beans, mint, basil and stir to combine. Gently stir in avocado and queso fresco. Season with salt and pepper to taste and set aside.

REDFISH:

In a small bowl, combine the lemon pepper, onion powder, garlic salt, cayenne pepper and flour.

Lay redfish filets out on a cookie sheet or cutting board and coat both sides with the Dijon mustard. Then coat both sides with the blackening mix (use it all). Let sit 5 minutes to marinate.

Add enough canola oil to a large nonstick skillet to coat the bottom. Heat on medium-high until oil is hot. Add the filets and cook about 4 to 5 minutes per side, or until desired blackened crust is achieved.

Remove pan from heat and top each filet with 1 tablespoon butter.

TO SERVE:

Plate a heaping serving of salsa on the plate, top with the blackened filet and top with additional salsa. **SERVES 2.**



CONSERVE FLORIDA'S FISHERIES SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATE ACHIEVES 3,000 PRE-SALE REQUIREMENT GUARANTEEING STATEWIDE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Proceeds from Specialty Redfish Tag will Protect and Enhance Florida's Marine Environments

Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida), the state's leading organization dedicated to marine fisheries conservation, education and advocacy, announced its "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" license plate will officially go into production as it fulfilled the minimum 3,000 pre-sale vouchers, required by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV).

The "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" plate was one of 41 approved plates under House Bill 1135, as signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis in October. Organizations were granted a two-year period to meet the minimum pre-sale mandate and CCA Florida completed the requirement within 12 weeks.

"After three years of working with Florida's lawmakers, the chance to see CCA Florida's license plate is now a reality," Director of Advocacy Trip Aukeman said. "We are passionate about protecting Florida's fisheries, and now, we can show that support off the water and on the road. Purchasing a Conserve Florida's Fisheries specialty plate is an investment to protect

our marine habitat today and generations to come."

The redfish tag features lush mangroves accompanied by a vibrant redfish tail, designating it the "redfish tag." Funds from the sale of this license plate support protecting and enhancing saltwater marine resources, expanding habitat restoration efforts, developing saltwater fisheries conservation and enriching coastal environmental education.

The redfish tag license plate voucher is \$32.50 and available online at redfishtag.com or in-person at local Tax Collector's Offices across the state. Vouchers can be purchased for car, trucks, boat trailers or any motorized vehicle and will be redeemable for the plate once printed.

CCA Florida appreciates the support of Rep. James "J.W." Grant, Sen. Aaron Bean, Sen. George Gainer and Rep. Chris Latvala for helping advance the "Conserve Florida's Fisheries" license plate. The redfish tag was designed by CCA Florida member Capt. Mike Goodwine of Blackneck Adventures and graphic designer Jesse Starr.

CCA Florida is committed to enriching Florida's marine resources for today and generations to come.

**Contact: Mary Hillyer Peelen | 407.617.0604
mhpeelen@ccaflorida.org**

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Muddle 10 Blackberries in A
Separate Glass

Add to Pitcher

Fill Pitcher with Ice

Add in 2 halved lemons

Add in a handful of blackberries

Pour in 14 oz Old St. Pete
Tropical Gin

Pour in 7 oz Lemon Juice

Pour in 10.5 oz Blackberry
Simple Syrup

Stir and Serve!



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Fill Canister with Ice

Add in 3 halved lemons

Pour in 59 oz Sweet Tea

Pour in 52 oz Lemonade

Pour in 1 L Banyan Reserve Vodka

Stir and Serve!

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Friday Prize Day is your chance to kick off the weekend as a winner! Tickets are just \$20, only 100 available and one (1) winner will be randomly selected!

Winner will have his or her choice of ONE , AMAZING prize from the week's selection!
Winner to be drawn when all 100 tickets are sold or the following Friday (whichever comes first)!

\$20 per Ticket | 100 Tickets | One Winner

**Space Coast Chapter
Banquet and Auction
Thursday, September 2**

**Gainesville Banquet
and Auction
Thursday, September 9**

**South Palm Banquet
and Auction
Thursday, September 16**

**Martin County Pig Roast
Friday, September 17**

**Sarasota Banquet
and Auction
Friday, September 24**

**Fort Myers Fun-a-ment
Sunday, October 3**

**Pensacola Banquet
Thursday, October 7**

**Orlando Chapter Banquet
& Auction
Thursday, October 7**

**North Palm Banquet
Thursday, October 14**

**Peace River Chapter
Banquet and Auction
Thursday, October 21**

**Polk Chapter BBQ
Thursday, October 28**

**St. Augustine Chapter
Banquet and Auction
Thursday, October 28**

**Dade Banquet and Auction
Thursday, November 4**

**Jacksonville Banquet
and Auction
Thursday, November 4**

**Eagles Chapter Banquet
and Auction
Saturday, November 6**

**Clermont Chapter Banquet
and Auction
Wednesday, November 10**

**Pinellas Chapter Banquet
and Auction
Thursday, November 11**

**Knights Chapter Banquet
and Auction
Friday, November 12**

**Tortuga Music Festival
November 12-14**

**Treasure Coast Banquet
and Auction
Thursday, November 18**

**Forgotten Coast Banquet
and Auction
Thursday, November 18**

**Lake Mary Banquet and
Auction
Thursday, December 2**

**South Walton Banquet
and Auction
Thursday, December 2**

**Black Diamond Golf
Tournament
Monday, December 6**

For additional information, please contact
Amanda Krpan at akrpan@ccaflorida.org.



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Fill Canister with Ice

Add in 2 halved oranges

Pour in 52 oz Orange Juice

Pour in 48 oz Pineapple Juice

20 oz Oak & Palm Coconut Rum

20 oz Oak & Palm Spiced Rum

10 oz Tippler's Orange Liqueur

5 oz Grenadine

Stir and Serve!



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