

VIRGINIA SALTWATER Fisherman's Journal



Get Hooked! Report at

www.vasaltwaterjournal.com

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.

The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing

experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

Individual measurement of caught, and released, on the most highly prized fish, such as red drum, striped bass, and summer flounder, provides a greater benefit to everyone. This past year, data from volunteer angler surveys were an important component in the calculation to reduce size limits for summer flounder in Virginia. However, Virginia data from Virginia anglers have not yet reached the level needed to stand alone. If the ability to reduce the size limit occurs in the future, the catch-and-release information on undersized summer flounder would be of great benefit.

Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions, and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal" and is found at www.vasaltwaterjournal.com.