



January 2021

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NO JANUARY MEETING

VAC ENDS FISCAL YEAR WITH INCOME NEARLY MATCHING EXPENSES

VAC Treasurer Chuck Koch presented the year-end budget report at the December VAC Board of Directors' Meeting. Income was 2.1 percent below the budgeted goal and expenses were 26.1 percent less than budgeted. There was a net reserve (gain) of \$61.32 for the angling year. The VAC's cash-on-hand balance was \$8,623.62 between our checking account and PayPal balance with another \$5,447.20 in an interest-bearing CD maturing in January 2021.

THE 2021 ANNUAL VAC BANQUET

The 2021 Annual Banquet has been POST-PONED due to COVID-19; we are considering the option of having the awards at the VAC Fish Fry. More details to come!

YOUR 2021 ANGLING YEAR DUES WERE DUE DECEMBER 1st

Annual Dues for the Virginia Anglers Club are now due. Payment can be made by PayPal as follows:

To pay Resident Member Dues (\$60) now, click here: http://tinyurl.com/vacdues

To pay non-Resident Dues (\$40) dues now, click here:

http://tinyurl.com/vacdues-nl

(Why not pay now while these links are now open in front of you??)

Cash and Checks made out to The Virginia Anglers Club will also be accepted.

Mail to:

Virginia Anglers Club POB 70520 Richmond, Virginia 23294





President's Message

JANUARY 2021

Hello and welcome to the new calendar year and all the fishing opportunities it brings. Without the Banquet this year, it'll be a couple more weeks before our first membership meeting on February 23 and once again, it's set up for online Zoom. Jerry Davis has lined up a great speaker to present on muskie fishing the Blue Ridge area. Fishing guide **Sam Scott from Blue Ridge**Musky will be joining us, and the Fly Fishers of Virginia have extended an invitation to all VAC members to join them at their monthly meeting (on Zoom, January 28 at 7pm) to enjoy a presentation by internationally acclaimed fly fisher Jeff Currier. Information on Jeff and this incredible opportunity can be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

Other committees have been problem solving and developing opportunities for the upcoming year.

Scale Certification: The Angling Rules Committee and Scale Certification team discussed how we were going to handle scale certification this year. Given the fact that when a scale certifies, it rarely fails the following year, they have decided to allow any scale certified in 2020 to extend its expiration date into the beginning of 2022. So, if your scale was certified last year, in 2020, it's still good today and through the current year. It was highly suggested that if you have digital scales to change the battery. An older battery can cause a lot of problems for digital scales, including weights that flash around different weight numbers and taking a while to settle. If you have a new scale, or scales not certified last year and need to get them certified, it is your responsibility to get them to one of the members of the Scale Certification Team, which can be as easy as meeting at Greentop. The contacts are Larry Allen, Ryan Noland and Buddy Noland.

The Expedition Team (sounds cool, doesn't it?) led by Frank Hart, met recently and lined up a couple of late Winter and Spring Expeditions. While open to all members, these fishing trips are great ways to meet other members (socially distanced), learn some new tactics to grow your angling brain and truly a great ways to chase freshwater species for those interested in their Freshwater Expert Rating. Details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. **Note: The Angler Rating is one of the first ratings a member can achieve. To obtain the rating of "Angler" you must enter ten (10) different eligible species caught in fresh and/or saltwater, each worth at least fifty (50) points. Any entry, if meeting requirements will automatically apply toward "Expert Angler" ratings.**

During the calendar year, the VAC conducts membership meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month nine times, from February through November, except July. The Board of Directors, Officers and Committee members meet on the second Tuesday of the month. A few years back, the BOD voted to meet every other month instead of every month. The Board now meets on even numbered months, February, April, June, August, October and December. This leaves the "ODD" months open. I believe this can become valuable times to have conversation about the VAC open to the membership.





...President's Message Continued

For example...

In the last newsletter, the first of these "ODD" month discussions was announced. On the second Tuesday of January 2020 (Jan 12) about ten members joined on Zoom and discussed Programs. Program Chairman Jerry Davis did a wonderful job presenting his research on potential presenters. Other members also kicked around some ideas and gave insight into some of the potential presenters. A report of this discussion can be seen elsewhere in this newsletter. One thing that is certain, and that is the VAC has great potential and reach for the first half of the year. With a definite "Zoom" format for the upcoming months, we could have a speaker from just about anywhere, reaching far beyond the sea and mountains of Virginia.

The next informal VAC discussion will be on March 9, at 7pm, and the topic for that meeting will be disclosed soon. With the building excited within the club to achieve the different ratings, expert statuses, and submitting catch cards, it'll likely be a discussion from somewhere in that realm.

Synergy is happening ... so keep your eyes out! The combination of great new members working with long time members, and committee members excited about the club and what it can offer ... more and diverse fishing expeditions, programs and ideas are happening at a wonderful rate, so keep your eyes on the e-Casts, Facebook and Newsletter. I hope you and your family are healthy and navigating through the winter, fishing some, thinking crappie thoughts and checking all your tackle (twice).

Mike Ostrander Virginia Anglers Club President

Important! 2021 VAC Scale Certification

Due to the pandemic, the following is in effect for the upcoming year:

All scales certified in 2020 are valid through 2021.

If you have an electronic scale, please change your batteries before weighing fish this year. If you have new scales, or scales that need certifying (not certified in 2020) it is your responsibility to get your scales to a weigh master.

Please contact the following to arrange for your scales to be certified.

Larry Allen: allenhouse 75@comcast.net

Ryan Noland: ryan.n.noland@usa.dupont.com

Danny Noland: danny6749@aol.com





PROGRAMS

January 28th - The Fly Fishers of VA have invited the VAC to join them on a ZOOM meeting the info is below;

Here's the Zoom link for January 28th. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87612877910

There will be a short business meeting starting at 7pm followed by a presentation by internationally acclaimed fly fisher Jeff Currier.

His topic will be: Fly Fishing Warmwater - Bass, Pike, Carp and More

Jeff has been fly-fishing the world for over forty years. Jeff's adventures to more than sixty countries on six continents and more than 400 fly caught species and counting; make him one of the foremost authorities in fly fishing. Wherever he goes, Jeff brings a sense of humor, enthusiasm, approachability and plenty of experience.

Jeff has been in the fly-fishing industry for over thirty years. He began behind the counter at a fly shop in Jackson, Wyoming then went on to manage the shop for twenty years. He has taught the basics of fly fishing and guided anglers all over the Yellowstone area and throughout the world in both fresh and saltwater. He is presently on the Professional Advisory Staff for R.L Winston Rod Co., Bauer Reels, Simms Fishing Products, Scientific Anglers, Fly Fishers International, Costa, Yeti, Kate's Real Food, and Yellow Dog Flyfishing Adventures. Jeff has met thousands of anglers from novice to advanced. His greatest joy is to help folks catch fish by supplying simple advice.

You can learn more about Jeff at his website: www.jeffcurrier.com

February 23 General Membership Meeting – The speaker for this meeting via Zoom will be Sam Scott of Blue Ridge Musky Outfitting. Sam owns a guiding service in the Arcadia / Buchanan, Virginia area of the Shenandoah Valley just off of I-81. He and his guides take clients on the New and James Rivers and nearby lakes seeking musky and smallmouth using either fly or conventional tackle. His shop also offers custom made rods, nets and baits. Sam's web site is www. blueridgemusky.com. Information to join the meeting at 7 PM 2/23 on Zoom will be supplied to members just prior to the meeting. **"See" you then!**

REMINDER - THE VAC HAS A FACEBOOK PAGE NOW - GO TAKE A LOOK

You can visit the VAC Facebook page for a look by clicking on: https://www.facebook.com/vaanglers/

PREVIOUS PROGRAMS

The ZOOM video links from previous membership meetings are located on web page under the Videos tab (Speaker and Educational Videos).





EXPEDITIONS

February 6th - Muskie (surface fish) expedition to the Upper James River, Lynchburg VA. If you are interested in attending, please contact Frank Hart at 859-808-0431 for additional details.

February 27 & 28 – Yellow Perch Tournament! Fish the Chickahominy, Mattaponi, or your favorite spot. Locations to launch, Rock-a-Hock Campground 1428 Outpost Rd, Lanexa, VA, or Aylett boat ramp (King William County) at Rt.360 & Rt.600. More details to come!

How to Join a Zoom Meeting

Email link:

- 1. You will receive an email invitation from the meeting host
- 2. Click on the link in the email (join via PC, Mac, iOS or Android)
- 3. You will be directed to the meeting

2021 VAC ANGLING RULE CHANGES

The Angling Rules Committee presented the new rule changes to the Board of Directors on 10/13/2020. The rule changes are based on input from VAC club members. The BOD has approved the rule changes and they will go into effect beginning with the 2021 angling year.

- Add kingfish (sea mullet, roundheads) to the list of saltwater species.
- Modify the length for shark release from 6' to 5' (fork length) to receive a release basic weight of 60 lbs.
- Reduce the basic weights for snakeheads.
- Reduce the basic weights for spotted seatrout.
- Modify the wording for the Youth Award to include the restriction that it applies to only nonclub youth. See the following:

"Trophies will be awarded at the end of each angling year to any youth (non-club members), under age 18, fishing with a club member . . . "

If you have questions concerning angling rule changes? Email your questions to Fred Cousins (cousinsf1@verizon.net).

VAC Angling Rules Questions?

Do you have a question concerning angling rules? If so, email your questions to Fred Cousins (cousinsf1@verizon.net). Fred will address questions during the next general membership meeting





Conservation and Legislation

What is a Podcast and why listen?

A podcast is a digital recording/audio file made available for you to listen to right away or download and listen to at your convenience. You can listen to podcasts on your home computer, iPad, or smartphone.

Podcasts are available on conservation, angling legislation, fishing, camping, hunting and the list goes on and on. They are made by individuals, companies, storytellers, TV networks, etc.

The Virginia Anglers Club Conservation & Legislation team of John Page Williams and Joe Revercomb will be including a "Podcast of the Month" in the VAC newsletter. You can click the provided link, and listen to the podcast, or download the podcast and listen at a later time. It will cover aspects regarding Conservation & Legislation and may be local, regional or of national interest.

December 2020's Podcast of the Month was Mark Kurlansky on Saving Salmon. If you missed it, click the following link and check it out ...

Ep. 217: Mark Kurlansky on Saving Salmon | MeatEater Podcasts

Look for more in the future and if you are already a podcast listener, and have any suggestions, please send them to Joe Revercomb at joerevercomb@gmail.com.

Mike Ostrander

2020 Membership Review

2020 posed a number of new challenges for our club; however, recruitment and participation remained strong and exceeded 2019 levels. The total membership in the VAC at the end of November was 104 Members. The membership divided among classes is: Resident = 98, Non-Resident = 7, Complimentary = 7, Life (active living) = 4 and Honorary = 1. Eleven new members joined the VAC in 2020 and is a significant increase from six new members in 2019 and well above the historical average. New memberships keep the VAC a diverse and viable angling club. Please look among your angling buddies for potential new membership candidates. I encourage each of you to join me and invite at least one guest to our program meetings for 2021. While Zoom meetings are not ideal, they are an effective and easy way to share all the great information our club has to offer. Many thanks for everyone's continued support in 2021.

Sincerely, Frank Hart Membership Chair



DWR's F1 Largemouth Bass Stocking Program FAQ



F1 largemouth bass fingerlings

By Scott Smith, DWR Regional Fisheries Manager Photos by Meghan Marchetti/DWR

What are F1 largemouth bass?

F1 largemouth bass (also sometimes referred to as "tiger bass") are the first-generation cross between two subspecies of largemouth bass—the Northern largemouth bass (Micropterus salmoides salmoides) and the Florida largemouth bass (M. s. floridanus). These fish are called "intergrades," instead of "hybrids," because they are not a cross of two different species, but rather two different subspecies. By intentionally crossing the two pure subspecies, F1 fish are produced. This is important, because it has been documented that only the first generation cross (F1s) exhibit enhanced growth rates. Thus, the idea is to stock fish that can outperform the wild fish in our lakes, with respect to growth (and maybe ultimate size as well).



Virginia Anglers Club





What kind of largemouth bass does Virginia have?

We have done an extensive amount of genetic testing in Virginia's lakes. What we've found is that our largemouth bass populations are made up of fish with both Northern and Florida genetic traits. When we've looked at the frequency of Northern and Florida genes in our bass populations, we typically see anywhere from 40% to 60% Florida genes. All of our populations appear to be mixed. However, our wild fish are not first-generation crosses between pure Northern and Florida strains. Instead, they are what geneticists call an Fx generation. This simply means that it's a fish that has both Northern and Florida ancestry, but isn't the direct offspring of pure parents. You can think of it as the difference between a labradoodle and a mutt that has some lab and some poodle in its ancestry. The key to all of this is that by stocking F1 fish, we are not introducing any new genetic material into our populations, and we aren't doing this in an attempt to change the genetic composition of the populations.

Where does the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) get F1 largemouth bass?

Currently, we do not have the hatchery infrastructure or a source of pure Northern/Florida broodstock required to produce F1 fish. Therefore, we are purchasing these fish from a private source that meets our fish health protocols (so we don't introduce any new diseases into our waters). Because we have to purchase these fish, the entire program is only affordable if we can achieve results with a relatively small number of fish. Thus, the plan is to stock these at a low density, because that's the only way it would be sustainable on a bigger scale (should the project prove to be successful).

Additionally, this is a good time to remind folks that stocking fish into public waters in the state is illegal without an authorization from DWR. We follow a very stringent set of protocols when we decide to stock fish, and this is not something to be taken lightly. Stocking the wrong fish in the wrong place can have serious consequences to the ecosystem. Because of this, we consider all potential stockings very carefully, evaluate the possible outcomes using the best available data, and make sure the fish we're stocking come from a healthy source (so we don't introduce any new diseases). Stocking any fish has consequences of some sort and requires careful planning and evaluation. Many ecosystems have been irreparably harmed by people stocking fish (intentionally and unintentionally), and should never be done without considering all the possible outcomes.

Where is DWR stocking F1s?

Over the years, we have stocked F1 largemouth bass in several places. These include resources like Back Bay, the Chickahominy River, the tidal Rappahannock River, and several small impoundments. This current experimental stocking program is focusing on a set of large reservoirs. We are stocking these fish into Smith Mountain Lake, Claytor Lake, Lake Anna, Lake Chesdin, and Beaverdam Swamp Reservoir. Because this experiment is directed toward large reservoirs, it will be separated from any other work we might do with F1 fish on small impoundments (under 500 ac) or tidal waters. Those resources will be treated separately on a case-by-case basis.



Why is DWR stocking F1s?

Studies have shown F1 intergrade fish have potential to grow faster and reach larger sizes than pure Northern strain fish, Florida strain fish, or other crosses beyond the first generation (e.g., the offspring of two F1 fish would be F2 fish, and these don't show enhanced growth rates). However, that first generation cross (F1s) do tend to grow faster (and maybe get larger) than largemouth bass currently swimming around in our lakes. The idea behind stocking these fish is we want to try to enhance the trophy fishery component in our big lakes. If we can get fish to a trophy size



Stocking F1 largemouth bass fingerlings into the Chickahominy River.

faster, then theoretically there will be more trophy-sized fish in the lake. Additionally, if F1 fish can get a little larger than wild fish, we might see some bigger fish coming out of these lakes as well. We don't know it will work this way, which is why we are doing this on an experimental basis.

Why are some water bodies stocked with F1s, while others aren't?

The biggest reason is that we don't know if this will work. We currently do not have the hatchery resources to produce our own F1 largemouth bass, so we have to purchase them from the private sector. This isn't particularly cheap. If the stockings do work, then we'll look to expand the program to other lakes. If it doesn't work and our results do not meet our goals for the program, then we will have learned what we needed at a reduced cost for the study. We are doing this on enough lakes (five of them) to get a good picture of the success rate, while still being relatively conservative with our budget. In short, we are stocking just enough lakes to make this a viable experiment, and not wasting money with overkill.

We've picked a wide enough variety of lakes across the state to get a good picture of how well this might work, and allow us to plan for future efforts should it prove successful. Conversely, if the whole thing doesn't work, we won't have spent license money where we didn't need to. Ultimately, this pilot program should allow us to evaluate the success of this management tool. If we achieve our goals for the program, then we can look to expand it in the future.





Do F1 largemouth bass have the potential to harm established bass fisheries?

We don't think so. From a genetic standpoint, all of our largemouth populations are a mix of Northern and Florida genes (in various proportions). Based on the rather extensive amount of genetic testing we've done; we don't have any "pure" largemouth populations anywhere in the state. So, we don't expect any genetic impacts to our largemouth bass from these stockings. Beyond that, we also do not anticipate any negative impacts to established fisheries based upon competition between stocked and wild fish. We are deliberately stocking low numbers of F1 fish, which is the only way this program is affordable and sustainable. Given that we are stocking at low densities, we don't expect any competitive impacts with wild fish.

Will I catch more bass in lakes where you've stocked F1s?

Probably not. The idea behind this program is to target the trophy end of these fisheries. The better growth rates of F1 fish may show up as more 5+ lb. bass, but we're still talking about a relatively small number of fish when you look at the entire lake population. As far as overall catch rates go, we are not stocking enough fish to really notice much of a difference in the numbers of 12"-18" fish. So, while we may see an increase in the numbers of really big fish, modest increases of average-sized fish won't be detectable for most anglers.

How long will it take to determine whether this program worked or not?

Because we're talking about trying to change the trophy aspect of these fisheries, we're looking at 5-10-year-old fish. Thus, it's not something that we can evaluate in a couple of years. Under perfect conditions, we might start seeing some results in as few as five or six years, but it will be 10 to 12 years before we get a really good idea of whether this worked or not. Basically, it's a long-term project that will require many years of monitoring on our part to evaluate its success or failure.

How can I tell the difference between a stocked F1 largemouth and a wild largemouth?

The short answer is that you can't tell the difference without access to a good genetics' lab. Visually, the stocked fish are indistinguishable from the wild fish. We take a small piece of fin from any fish we want to test and send that to a genetics laboratory for analysis. The only way to identify the stocked fish is with genetic testing, which looks at the ratio of Northern and Florida genes. Beyond that, there is no way to tell the stocked fish from the wild ones.

Virginia Anglers Club



Update on 2021 General Membership Meetings and Speakers



On Jan 12 several members of the VAC's leadership team met via Zoom to get a sense of what the club might do for programs and specific speakers for the coming months. It is very likely that due to the virus we will be meeting by Zoom for the foreseeable several months before we can re-start face-to-face meetings. Therefore, all members that don't already have virtual Zoom capabilities are encouraged to make provisions for them to gain as much as possible from our programs. As an alternative, you may also join in a meeting via a phone call using a number given just before each meeting date.

Several options and speakers for coming programs were discussed on Jan. 12. We are going to attempt to get a mix of speakers, fishing locations and types of fish for the programs. Arrangements have to be made first but hopefully this will include fresh and saltwater fishing in and nearby Virginia. In addition, we will try some other options outside of the state with some "far" outside of the state. Besides direct fishing programs we may also be able to set-up one or two programs, for example, on DIY rod or bait building or fly tying; info on the Master Angler program or a speaker from the Virginia game department (DWR) talking about their programs and specific fishing locations.

If any member can suggest possible other topics and willing speakers – initial ones will have to be by Zoom – that would be greatly appreciated. We especially need more suggestions related to saltwater fishing. Any suggestions should be sent to Jerry Davis at www.jadavisz@verizon.net (don't forget the Z) or by phone at 804-967-9750. **Thanks for your help.**

Trinity Episcopal Fishing Club

Linking the VAC to the fishing club at Trinity Episcopal School

VAC member Lee Huss is a teacher/advisor for the TES Fishing Club, and they have been formally invited to attend our monthly Zoom meeting in February. Our members have a great deal of knowledge that we can share with the next generation of fishermen and ladies.

"Trinity Episcopal School is a co-ed private school located in Richmond, Virginia. The school has 8-12th grade with 8th grade having around 20 students and the rest of the grades have about 120 each. Trinity takes education very seriously and has a variety of different co-curricular activities including the fishing club. The mission of the club is to teach and educate students about the different types of fishing in Virginia and teach about the impact humans have on the environment and the effect that can have on fishing. This is very important to the club because it goes hand and hand with fishing. Fishing relies heavily on well maintained and regulated conditions so that fish do not become overfished or die due to changes in the environment that are not healthy for them. At the moment the Trinity fishing club has around 30 members. And has plans for some future trips in the spring including some trips to fish for flathead catfish in the James River and possibly plan a trip to shore fish in Virginia Beach. Along with fishing ponds in the Richmond area. The club has meetings every two weeks. These meetings are used to educate the members on some of the goals of the club. We will have meetings about the way to help maintain the James River as a fishery along with fishing techniques for different types of fish."

TES President



FISHING BUDDY







A daughter's love is when her Dad really wants to go fishing one more time this year and it is super chilly, and breezy, out at the lake but she goes along just for him. Spent a few hours told some tales and had some laughs.

John Farrell

Fish of the Month (December)

Freshwater (points)

A. Bagwell
Trout, Rainbow 5lbs oz
4 spin 261pts

Freshwater (weight)

S. Knox
Catfish, Flathead
31lbs 0oz

Saltwater (points)

None Recorded

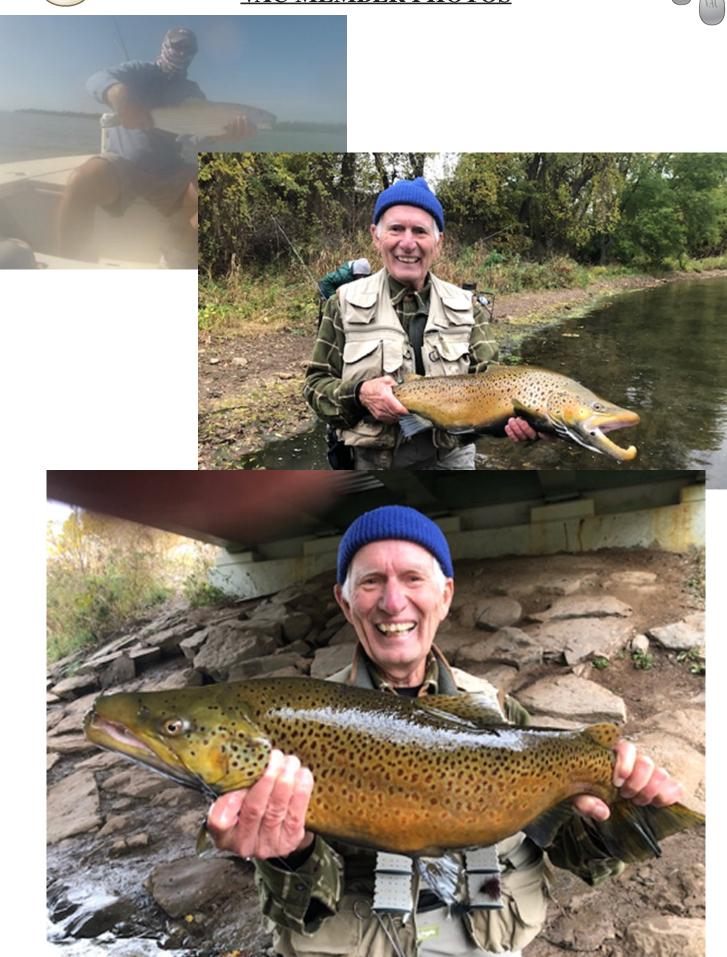
Saltwater (weight)

None Recorded

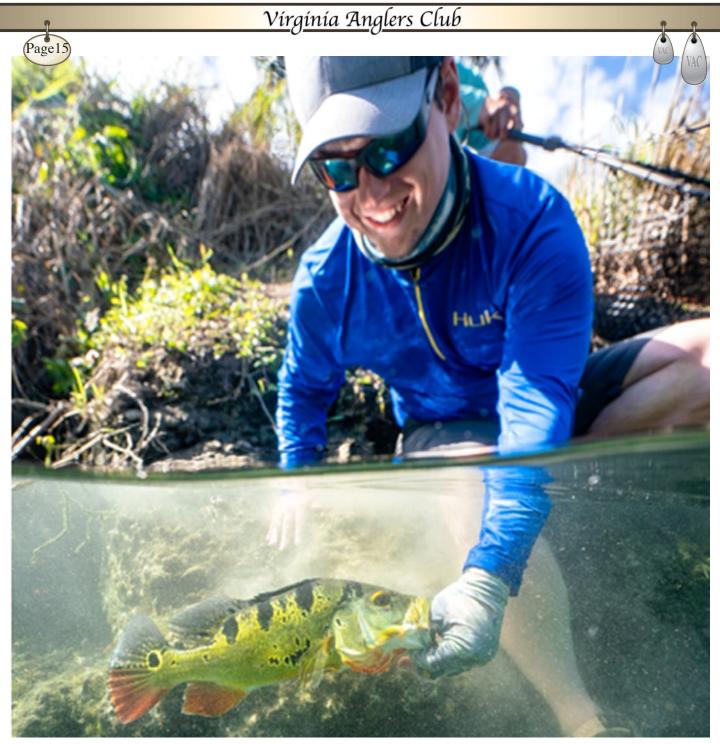


VAC MEMBER PHOTOS





Virginia Anglers Club













ANNUAL AWARDS 2021

	PRESIDENT'S AWARD FRESHWATER											
Species	Name	Weight	Line	Division	Points	Date	Location	Bait				
PICKEREL, CHAIN	R HART	3-10	4	SPIN	266	2021-01-16	COHOKE MILL POND, VA	Blade Bait				

			PRESIDE	ENT'S AWARD	SALTWATER			
Species	Name	Weight	Line	Division	Points	Date	Location	Bait

	DIVISION AWARDS FRESHWATER											
Species	Name	Weight	Line	Division	Points	Date	Location	Bait				
CATFISH, FLATHEAD	S KNOX	31-0	20BR	GEN	183	2020-12-04	JAMES RIVER, RICHMOND, VA	Cut Shad				
PICKEREL, CHAIN	R HART	3-10	4	SPIN	266	2021-01-16	COHOKE MILL POND, VA	Blade Bait				
TROUT, RAINBOW	R HART	3-7	6	FLY	153	2020-12-29	CEDAR SPRINGS, VA	San Juan Worm				

			DIVIS	ION AWARDS S	ALTWATER			
Species	Name	Weight	Line	Division	Points	Date	Location	Bait

	"HIGHEST POINT" SPECIES AWARDS FRESHWATER											
Species	Name	Weight	Line	Division	Points	Date	Location	Bait				
CATFISH, FLATHEAD	S KNOX	31-0	20BR	GEN	183	2020-12-04	JAMES RIVER, RICHMOND, VA	Cut Shad				
PICKEREL, CHAIN	R HART	3-10	4	SPIN	266	2021-01-16	COHOKE MILL POND, VA	Blade Bait				
TROUT, RAINBOW	A BAGWELL	5-12	4	SPIN	261	2020-12-13	PRIVATE POND, VA	2" Tube				

	"HIGHEST POINT" SPECIES AWARDS SALTWATER										
Species	Name	Weight	Line	Division	Points	Date	Location	Bait			

"HEAVIEST" SPECIES AWARDS FRESHWATER											
Species	Name	Weight	Line	Division	Points	Date	Location	Bait			
CATFISH, FLATHEAD	S KNOX	31-0	20BR	GEN	183	2020-12-04	JAMES RIVER, RICHMOND, VA	Cut Shad			
PICKEREL, CHAIN	R HART	3-10	4	SPIN	266	2021-01-16	COHOKE MILL POND, VA	Blade Bait			
TROUT, RAINBOW	A BAGWELL	5-12	4	SPIN	261	2020-12-13	PRIVATE POND, VA	2" Tube			

	200		"HEAVIEST"	SPECIES AWA	RDS SALTWAT	ER		
Species	Name	Weight	Line	Division	Points	Date	Location	Bait

NEW CLUB RECORDS FRESHWATER											
Species	Name	Weight	Line	Division	Points	Date	Location	Bait			
CATFISH, FLATHEAD	S KNOX	31-0	20BR	GEN	183	2020-12-04	JAMES RIVER, RICHMOND, VA	Cut Shad			
TROUT, RAINBOW	A BAGWELL	5-12	4	SPIN	261	2020-12-13	PRIVATE POND, VA	2" Tube			