

FISHING PROSPECTS FOR MAY

Water temperature will be the key in May. As the water temperature increases into the 80s and the wind dies down fishing in general should pick up dramatically. The warmer temperature and clearer water from less wind will improve the fish's appetite and should make for some great days on the water. During this transition period fishing can be spotty as the fish move around to find the water temperature and water clarity they like. So in general look for clean moving water and "follow the bait".

For the latest information on license requirements, open seasons, sizes and possession limits check the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission website for at www.myfwc.com.

SNOOK

In our area (Everglades National Park, Gulf of Mexico, and Monroe County) the snook season is closed until September 1. Catch and release of snook is permitted so minimize the handling of any snook caught and return them to the water as quickly as possible.

The larger snook are getting ready to spawn and will be found in the passes and deeper runs. Snook will also be found in the backwaters and along beaches and islands whenever schools of bait are present. When the glass minnows show up along the beaches, look for the snook to be close behind. When fishing around glass minnows I like to use an all white 'DT'. Night fishing under dock lights can also be productive at this time of year.

REDFISH

While snook and tarpon will get all the press in May there should also be plenty of redfish action around oyster beds. Unlike snook that prefer water temperatures in the 80s, redfish prefer water temperatures in the mid 70s. So later in the month as the water temperatures rise expect the reds to move into deeper water. Shrimp and crab patterns are the most commonly used flies for redfish, but at times small baitfish patterns will also work.

TROUT

Trout fishing should remain good during the month. Check the grass patches just outside of the passes, especially when the wind is calm. Shrimp and baitfish patterns work well for trout. Chartreuse and white clousers also work well.

TARPON

The annual migration of tarpon should be well underway this month. Opportunities to cast to 100 pound or larger tarpon will be available. Note I said opportunities to cast to, I said nothing about hooking or landing. Early morning in river mouths and passes are good places to target tarpon. The wind or lack of it will play an important role in searching for tarpon. When it is warm and calm the tarpon should be relatively easy to find. However, if the wind is blowing the tarpon will hard to come by. For tarpon the toad is the fly of choice, in chartreuse of course.

Sharks

Not for the faint hearted, but May is also when sharks show up. So when you are targeting tarpon keep an eye out for sharks.