



"You may not have had a good start, but you can have a good finish." Joyce Meyer

## Fish Tales from the Gulf

### Time for Sheepshead!

If you want to enjoy some good time fishing in the coast of the Big Bend, Sheepshead might be one of your options as they are considered one of the most important coastal trophy fish. Their most common habitat are coastal waters near structures such as oyster bars, seawalls and in tidal creeks. Most are in the 2-3lb range but often caught in excess 6-8lbs and even up to 10lbs or more. Typically, they move nearshore during March and April for spawning so now is the time to go and catch them. Their season is open all year round, and their minimum size limit is 12", with a daily recreational bag limit of 8 fish per harvester, and a vessel limit of 50 fish during March and April (spawning and aggregation season). You can have access and download the complete Sheepshead recreational fishing regulation at <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ChapterHome.asp?Chapter=68B-59>.

The legal gear permitted to catch Sheepshead include hook and line, cast net, seine, spear or gig. Experienced anglers like to use a rod 6-7ft medium action with a light touch so you can feel the delicate bite of a sheepshead. Also, I recommend a mid-sized spinning reel in the 12lb size range. You can use either mono or braid as your line. Because of the composition of a sheepshead mouth and all the teeth they have it is recommended to use a very small J hook instead of a circle hook (most likely used for any other sportfish).



Victor Blanco, Taylor County Marine Extension Agent



Victor Blanco took this photo at Buckeye Reef (22 miles offshore) during one of the Taylor County artificial reef monitoring program dives.

They are omnivorous feeders (eat anything they can catch) but mostly feed on crustaceans and small fish. While a big variety of baits will work, fiddler crabs are best, small live shrimp, sand fleas and oysters (but they might be difficult to keep on the hook). They will bite on the incoming or outgoing tide but tend to bite best on the outgoing tide. It is prohibited to harvest by or with the use of any multiple hooks in conjunction with live or dead natural bait; Also, snatching is prohibited.

Sheepshead might be confused with the Black Drum due to coloration and stripes pattern. However, remember that Sheepshead has a terminal mouth full of “human-like” teeth, a continuous dorsal fin and a forked caudal fin while the Black Drum has an inferior mouth, a two-segments dorsal fin and a truncated caudal fin.

**Victor Blanco**

Taylor County Marine Extension Agent  
UF/IFAS Extension and Florida Sea Grant



Sheepshead teeth are very human-like.



Yeah, NOT the sheepshead we are writing about! He is kinda cute though...



Nothing but smiles and sheepshead for these guys, fishing with Captain Brian Smith.

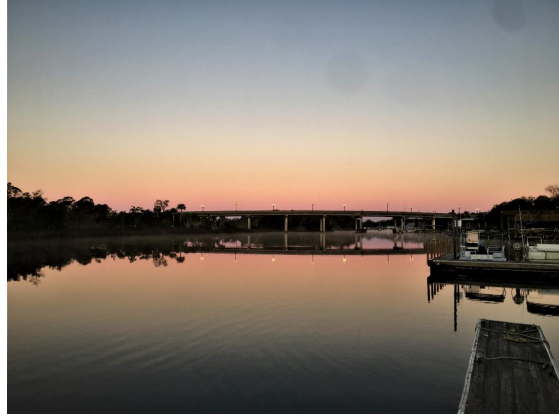


Jake Austin with catch and release redfish 28 and half inches long fishing with Captain Steve Kroll





Beau and Briar with beautiful fish they caught



The "office" view was especially beautiful this morning. Photo by: Leslie Carmichle



Captain Tony Mathis snagged his third Snook in 3 days, fishing with Captain Buddy Moorman

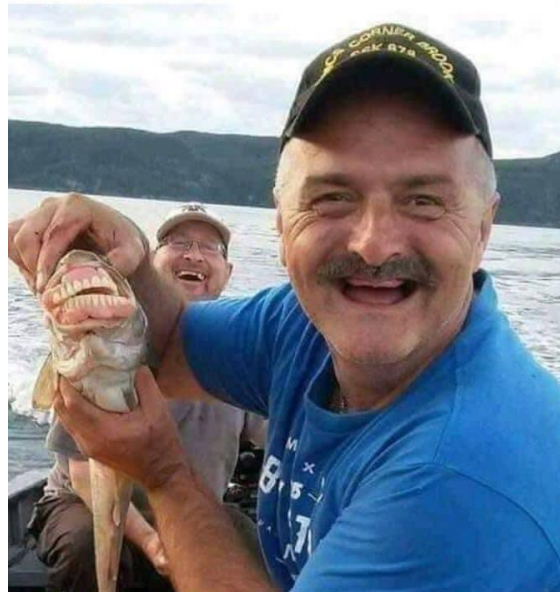


Saturday Surprise!



Fiddler crabs available at the Marina store.  
(Sheepshead love them!)

And that's when you know they've been Drinking  
to much Beer .



This guy could not find a sheepshead so he  
created one with his own teeth!

## Dockside Bar & Grille

There is absolutely nothing that Captain Rob Lewis, co-owner of the Steinhatchee River Inn & Marina, can't do! From fileting to cooking, he is a master! When Captain Brian Smith gave Rob some sheepshead, he also included his great recipe.

### Recipe for Potato Encrusted Sheepshead

Sheepshead filets (fresh from Big Bend Charters)

Season with Slap Your Mama

Flour seasoned with salt and pepper

both sides of the filet, then dip in Egg Wash

pack each side with Shredded Potato

A cast iron skillet on Med-High works great, grill until golden on each side.

Pairs well with a Cesar salad.

The whole family enjoyed this Sheepshead meal (picky eaters too). We were all part of the "clean plate" club that night!







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## Come Stay With Us

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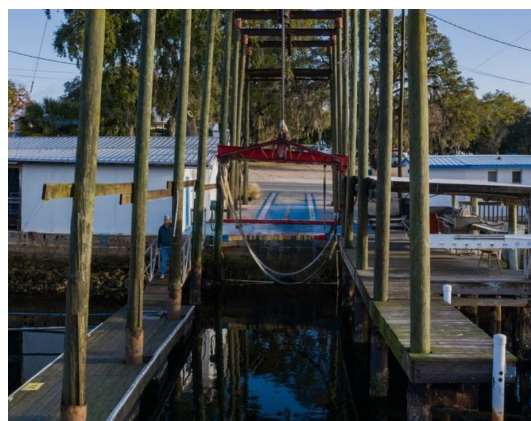
### Picnic Area

Did you know that April 23rd is National Picnic Day? #NationalPicnicDay We have lots of places to enjoy a picnic, on the water or in our beautiful gardens and pool area. Pack a lunch and head on over.



### Boat Hoist

The best in town! Gently lower your vessel into the water. Avoid the saltwater in your trailer and wheels. Return by 5 pm for a lift back onto your trailer. Charge is \$1/foot in and out. For example, if you have a 20 ft boat, the total charge for our lift service would be \$20. You can't beat that price and our hoist personnel are the best!



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### Deluxe Suite With 2 King Beds

Click [here](#) for a virtual tour!

Relax in your large and open designed suite featuring two king-size beds with a country quilt, a flat-screen TV, dining table, couch, mini fridge with freezer, coffee

maker along with coffee, microwave, and free WiFi.



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## Focus on Community

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### 20th Annual Community Fishing Tournament

Mark your calendar - March 20th - for the the 20th Annual Steinhatchee Community Fishing Tournament. The Captain's meeting and the weigh-in are both held at the Steinhatchee Community Center. The entry fee for this tournament is \$50.00 per angler.

**[More Information...](#)**



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## Fishing & Festival 2022 Package

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**Last call!** The response has been overwhelming and we look forward to meeting our lucky package participants!



4 Night, Fishing and Festival Package 2022  
for Two lucky People!

Thursday, February 17 arrival - Fish on Friday  
Feb 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022 with a

Charter Captain for ½ day (4-5 hours)

VIP Hotel Accommodations in the

Heart of the Festival

Overlooking the Band

2 wristbands to attend the Festival

\$1400 plus taxes

Call Ms. Barb for details on deposit and payment  
(352)498-4049

## Happy Birthday, Rob!

### Celebrating March 11th

Happy Birthday Rob,

May you have a healthy and joyous year  
ahead.

*Your salty crew, friends & family*



# Questions? We Have Answers!

We have a panel of experts standing by to answer any questions you might have about fishing, scalloping, or the Steinhatchee area. We are also taking any comments you have, on ways to improve our newsletter, or perhaps there is something you would like for us to stock in the Marina store. Just shoot us a quick **email** ([riverinnandmarina@gmail.com](mailto:riverinnandmarina@gmail.com)) and we will not only answer, but we may also include it in next weeks newsletter. We are only as good as our readers and guests!

## Our Charter Captains are the Best!

### [Directory of Charter Captains](#)

*Reserve a charter for an unforgettable lifetime experience.*

#### **Captain Mike Baker Charters**

Offering a complete guide service for fishing, Captain **Mike Baker**, USCG certified. A full-service charter business for scalloping, trout fishing, red fishing, or whatever you desire. Call (352) 433-6301 or email [captmikerbakerfishing@gmail.com](mailto:captmikerbakerfishing@gmail.com).

#### **Her Tanning Bed Charters**

If you are interested in Scalloping or Fishing inshore, Captain **Don Campbell** can help you have the adventure you are looking for. Call 352-303-6498.

#### **Salt Addiction Charters**

A USCG Licensed Captain and Flats Guide, Captain **Mike Farmer** is available for inshore fishing and scalloping charters. Call 352-210-1551.

#### **Fishing With Captain Jim**

A USCG licensed Florida flats guide, Captain **Jim Henley** is available for inshore fishing and scalloping charters. He is the only Captain with a 100-ton Master, and holds a tow license. Call 423-330-0101.

#### **TJ's Charters**

Fish the Flats with USCG licensed Captain **Tony Jackson**. Call 386-688-0874.

#### **Captain J's Charters**

USCG licensed, Captain **Rick Julius** is waiting to take you on the adventure of a lifetime, fishing the flats out of Steinhatchee, Florida. Call (352) 745-0968.

#### **Steinhatchee Flats Fishing**

USCG licensed, Captain **Dicky King** offers inshore fishing and scalloping charters out of Steinhatchee, Florida for families, novices, and expert anglers. Call (850) 371-9164.

#### **Pepperfish Key Charters**

USCG licensed Captain **Steve Kroll** is your host and guide for a great day of near shore and flats fishing on the beautiful Big Bend region. Call 352-222-4085.

#### **YKnotFish.Com**

Fishing charters targeting redfish, trout and scallops in season. Over 40 years' experience fishing the Gulf. Multiple captains available. USCG licensed, Captain **Tony Mathis**. Call 904-545-0433 or email [Tony@yknotfish.com](mailto:Tony@yknotfish.com).

#### **My Fishing Buddy Charters**

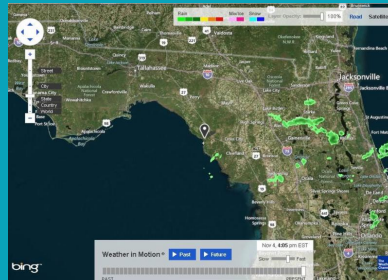
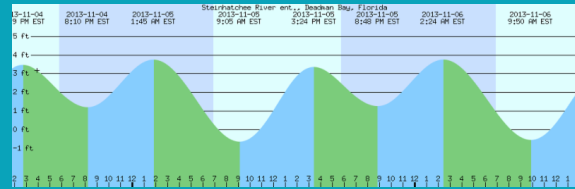
USCG licensed, Captain **Buddy Moorman** offers inshore fishing and scalloping charters out of Steinhatchee, Florida . Call (352) 812-3318.



### **Big Bend Charters**

For your inshore and offshore fishing needs and scalloping, call USCG licensed and insured, Captain **Brian Smith**, (877) 852-3474. Capt. Brian has been offshore fishing the Gulf for over 25 years, 17 years out of Steinhatchee. Offshore fishing includes grouper, amberjack, snapper, kingfish, seabass and cobia. Offering trips from 6-12 hours!

## Weather & Marine Forecast Center



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STAY CONNECTED

