



PATUXENT RIVER SAIL AND POWER SQUADRON
A UNIT OF DISTRICT 5



Mariner Trivia

Maritime Law...

'Jetsam' designates any cargo that is intentionally discarded from a ship or wreckage. Per Maritime Law, one who discovers these artifacts is...

A ~ Required to return it to the original owner (if known)

B ~ Required to collect it up and destroy it.

C ~ May be claimed by the discoverer unless the rightful owner makes a proper claim.

D ~ Must tie a buoy to it and leave it for the owner to find.

V24/I2 Answer: A

Change of Watch
2024



Come to this month's Member's Meeting at The Pier Restaurant in Solomon's @ 6:30 PM (Dinner @ 5:30 PM) and welcome our new 2024 Bridge & Committee Chairs. Let's all work together to build our Patuxent River Sail & Power Squadron back stronger and better than ever before!

We can't do it without **YOU!**

See page 2 for the New 2024/2025 Bridge

Some **BIG** news that you won't want to miss after COW at this month's meeting!

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March Meeting

14 March @ 1730
The Pier
14575 Solomons Island Rd. S.
Solomons, MD



PATUXENT RIVER SAIL & POWER SQUADRON

2024/2025

Meet our Incoming Bridge Officers and Committee Chairs

Commander

CDR Lenore Blevins, S

commander@abcsomd.org

Executive Officer

Lt/C Steve Bizzarro, P

executiveofficer@abcsomd.org

Administrative Officer

Lt/C Michelle Beatty

administrativeofficer@abcsomd.org

Assistant Administrative Officer

1st/C Jacinta Bottoms-Spencer, P

Education Officer

P/C John Torres, AP

educationofficer@abcsomd.org

Treasurer

Lt/C Chuck Beatty

treasurer@abcsomd.org

Secretary

Lt/C Michele Torres, P

secretary@abcsomd.org

Chaplain

P/R/C Kay Simpkins, AP

Newsletter Editors

Lt/C Michelle Beatty

Lt/C Chuck Beatty

prspeditor@gmail.com

WEBMASTER

P/C Dan Patke

prspwebmaster@gmail.com



Committee Chairs

VESSEL SAFETY

1st/Lt James A. Brueggemann JN-CN

MERIT MARK

Lt/C Michelle Torres, P

OPERATIONS TRAINING

P/C Kenneth T. Perigo SN-IN

ROSTER CONTACT

CDR Lenore J. Blevins, S

ELECTIVE COURSES COMMITTEE

1st/Lt James A. Brueggemann JN-CN

MEMBER BENEFITS

CDR Lenore J. Blevins, S

SAFETY

P/C Bob Killius, JN

PUBLIC CONTACT:

CDR Lenore J. Blevins, S

SHIPS STORE

P/R/C Kenneth T. Perigo SN-IN

ADVANCED GRADES COMMITTEE

P/C Bob Prior, JN -CN

Contact CDR Lenore Blevins "Attn: Committee Chair" @ **commander@abcsomd.org** to contact any of the Committee Chairs.

Brunch/Lunch/Dinner Destinations Past and Future





Maintenance Spotlight

The season is well underway. Your boat is performing well, and you are feeling confident you've done everything right for a memorable season of fun in the sun. Who doesn't love showing off their water baby? So, you invite all of your family and friends to enjoy a day on the water. You show up early Saturday morning and peel back the canvas to expose that shiny, freshly waxed gel coat. The varnished teak glistens in the morning sun as you proudly take in the view and marvel at your pride and joy. You begin your checks, and all above deck is looking ship shape, so you open the door to the cabin to continue your pre-adventure routine. The fridge is stocked, the water tank is full, and the holding tank has been pumped. Things are looking good. Company will begin arriving in an hour and you are ready to dazzle them with your boat handling skills.

You venture to the only head on the boat just to be sure all is as it should be. You hold the towel rack in anticipation of the explosive rush of air and water you've come to enjoy so much after some quiet time on the throne, then you press the foot pedal on the sparkling clean VacuFlush toilet as you have countless times before. But this time, the water disappears lazily into the labyrinth of marine plumbing below the beautifully polished teak and holly floor. Perplexed and in a mild panic, you ponder what might be amiss as time draws near for the arrival of your party. You can hear the familiar sound of the vacuum generator as it tries to pump wastewater to the holding tank but after one minute, two minutes, three minutes the pump is still running. As you sadly hang your head and meander to the breaker panel to disable the system, you remember a conversation you had with yourself during spring recommissioning: "I don't know when the duckbills were changed last, maybe I should add it to the list. Nah, it'll be fine. It all worked great last year." Though the day isn't a total loss, there won't be any bathroom breaks on board because the head is out of commission.

In the last edition of Maintenance Spotlight, we were deep in the belly of the boat talking about bilge pumps. In this edition we explore more of the necessary evils of owning a vessel with all the comforts of home.



New Duckbill Valve

Most boat yards and marine mechanics charge extra to service the septic system. The process of replacing them is relatively easy but depending on the installation, they can be difficult to get to. Regardless, it's a crappy job (literally), no matter how you look at it! If you're lucky enough to have easy access, it's just a matter of disconnecting a couple hoses, unscrewing a couple fittings, and removing the four bolts that hold the pump body to the tank. Wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE, rubber gloves and goggles highly recommended). Keep in mind what travels through this equipment, you may want a respirator if you're squeamish. Remove the duckbill valves from the tubes, install new ones in the same orientation as the old ones, and close up.

Duckbill valves are small, inexpensive, and vital to the proper operation of your VacuFlush head system. They are the typical culprit when dealing with a VacuFlush system that isn't operating properly. As with most moving parts of a boat these valves are subject to wear and get weak over time.

Eventually they fail due to their inability to maintain their original shape. There are two duckbill valves located in each of the plastic tubes on either side of the pump body (pictured). The valves are simply a molded rubber part shaped like a ducks bill. This is what holds the suction or vacuum, on one side and pumping toward the tank on the other. OEM valves can cost upwards of \$50 but you can find after market for around \$20 for four of them.



Vacuum generator assembly

Most boat yards and marine mechanics charge extra to service the septic system. The process of replacing them is relatively easy but depending on the installation, they can be difficult to get to. Regardless, it's a crappy job (literally), no matter how you look at it! If you're lucky enough to have easy access, it's just a matter of disconnecting a couple hoses, unscrewing a couple fittings, and removing the four bolts that hold the pump body to the tank. Wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE, rubber gloves and goggles highly recommended). Keep in mind what travels through this equipment, you may want a respirator if you're squeamish. Remove the duckbill valves from the tubes, install new ones in the same orientation as the old ones, and close up.



Pump body assembly. Duckbill valves are located inside the black tubes on each side

It's certainly possible to stop there. Personally, if I am getting in this deep, I'm going to remove the entire assembly from the boat, disassemble and clean everything. It's just good maintenance practice. Soaking all the parts in white vinegar and water is great for descaling and deodorizing the system. It is possible to have a properly functioning duckbill valve fail due to debris getting stuck in it. The symptoms are the same regardless and again, if I'm getting in that deep to deal with a clog, I'll spend the \$20 and replace them all. It's cheap insurance! Good luck and may you always have to hold the towel rack when you push the pedal.

- by Chuck Beatty





Patuxent River Sail and Power Squadron Calendar 2024

Date/time correct as of press time;
watch your email or Facebook for any changes or visit the squadron web site:
<https://www.usps.org/localusps/patuxent>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Contact</u>
14 MAR	1730	PRSPS Member Mtg @ The Pier, Solomon's	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S commander@abcsomd.org
20 ~ 24 MAR	1600	D5 Spring Conference Ocean City, MD Bob Blevins D5 Commander!	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S Administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
4 APR	1830	Executive Committee Meeting @ TBA	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S commander@abcsomd.org
6 ~ 7 APR	TBA	SOMD Fishing & Outdoor Adventure Fair St. Mary's Fairgrounds <i>(Volunteers Needed, 2hr slots)</i>	Lt/C John Torres, AP educationofficer@abcsomd.org
11 APR	1730	PRSPS Member Mtg @ PAX River Ale House 46590 Corporate Dr. Lexington Park	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S commander@abcsomd.org
12 ~ 14 APR	1000	Bay Bridge Boat Show Bay Bridge Marina, Stevensville, MD	https://annapolisboatshows.com/bay-bridge-boat-show/
13 APR	TBA	Boating Season Kick-off Picnic TBA ~ Possibly in conjunction with Boat Show?	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
2 MAY	1830	Executive Committee Meeting @ TBA	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S commander@abcsomd.org
9 MAY	1730	PRSPS Member Mtg @ TBA	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S commander@abcsomd.org
19 MAY	1200	Blessing of the Fleet Solomon's, MD	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
19 MAY	1400	Vera's Luncheon <i>(by Boat or Land)</i> St. Leonard, MD	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
20 - 25 MAY		National Safe Boaters Week	
MAY	TBA	MD Boater Safety Course	Lt/C John Torres, AP educationofficer@abcsomd.org



Patuxent River Sail and Power Squadron Calendar 2024 *(Cont'd)*

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<https://www.usps.org/localusps/patuxent>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Contact</u>
MAY	TBA	Tentative Looper's Meeting	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
MAY	TBA	PRSPS Cruise #1 Let us know where you want to go!	<u>Cruise Host Needed</u>
6 JUN	1830	Executive Committee Meeting @ TBA	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S commander@abcsomd.org
9 JUN	0700	Great Chesapeake Bay Swim <i>Boats & Jet Skis needed</i>	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
13 JUN	1730	PRSPS Member Mtg @ TBA	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S commander@abcsomd.org
14 - 16 JUN	1200	Antique & Classic Boat Festival St. Michaels	
4 JULY	1200	Solomon's 4th of July Boat Parade - Mill Creek	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
4 JULY	TBA	Fireworks Float/Over Nighter Location TBD	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
11 JULY	1730	PRSPS Member Mtg @ TBA	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S commander@abcsomd.org
25 - 28 JULY		Summer Rendezvous Solomon's, MD	Lt/C Lenore Blevins, S commander@abcsomd.org
10 AUG	1700	Summer Picnic/Pool Party Calvert Marina	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
24 AUG	1200	PYRO JAM TBA	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
27 - 29 SEP	TBA	Fall Cruise Oxford	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org
14 DEC	TBA	Christmas Party/Boat Parade Location TBA	Michelle Beatty administrativeofficer @abcsomd.org



SPRING BOAT MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

As the boating season approaches, is your boat ready to go? Here are some common tasks you may need to perform. By West Marine Staff, Last Updated: 2/26/2024



Make sure your first launch in spring is trouble free with this spring maintenance checklist. We'll walk you through common task depending on what type of boat you have and where you store it.

- [Getting Started Checklist](#)
- [Boats Ashore](#)
- [Outdrives and Outboards](#)
- [Engines and Related Systems](#)
- [Sailboat Rigging](#)
- [Trailers](#)
- [Product List](#)

Getting Started

You should regularly inspect your safety gear and do a detailed inspection at the start of season. If your inflatable PFD indicator is red, you need to rearm it with a [PFD rearming kit](#) like the one above.

- If necessary, reinstall batteries. Top up lead acid batteries with distilled water. Fully charge batteries. Clean, tighten electrical connections, especially terminals of battery cables. Coat battery terminals with insulating film of grease, or apply protective battery terminal spray.



- Open and close seacocks; handles should move freely. Hoses should be double-clamped with stainless-steel hose clamps. Replace any that look rusted.
- Inspect the raw-water intake strainer to be sure it has not cracked, and is clean and free of corrosion. Make sure the strainer's top fits snugly.
- Check running lights. Clean/tighten connections or replace bulbs to assure that all are operating properly.
- Check VHF and GPS antenna connections by disconnecting and spraying with moisture-displacing lubricant, then reconnect and test.
- Look for indications of leaking at trim cylinders and hoses as well as at hydraulic steering pumps and rams. Replace the O-ring or gasket if leaking.
- Make sure the stuffing box or shaft seal is completely dry when the boat is at the dock.
- Inspect portlights, hatches, and deck fittings for dirty or displaced caulking, water trails, dirt, and green corrosion, any of which signals a leak that needs to be recaulked.
- Test bilge pump and high-water switches and alarms.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, LPG and gasoline fume detector.
- Check flares (expiration date) and fire extinguishers (charge), and replace/recharge as necessary. Check and service safety gear such as life jackets, and MOB gear.

Boats Ashore

Inspect all [anodes](#) on your boat and replace any that are close to half-deteriorated.

- Inspect props for dinging, pitting, and distortion. Make sure cotter pins are secure. Grip the prop and try moving the shaft — if it's loose, the cutlass bearing may need to be replaced.
- Replace plastic fittings near the waterline with bronze or Marelon.
- Inspect the anodes on the shaft, outdrive, and trim tabs. Replace any that are close to half-deteriorated.
- Check to make sure the rudderstock hasn't been bent.

After the boat is launched, be sure to inspect around the rudder and all thru-hulls for leaks, and check the stuffing box



Cont'd on pg 7



Outdrives and Outboards

- Inspect rubber outdrive bellows for cracked, dried, and/or deteriorated spots (look in the folds). Replace suspect bellows.
- Replace deteriorated outdrive zincs.
- Check hydraulic trim fluid. If you didn't change it last fall, change it now.

Check lower-unit lube level. Creamy oil indicates water (and a bad seal). Many manufacturers recommend changing the oil every year.

Engines and Related Systems

- Flexible gasoline lines should say "USCG Approved, J1527." Replace any that don't.
- Are fuel hoses supple, with no cracks, bulges, or soft spots? Do the lines smell like gasoline (wipe the lines with a clean rag and then smell the rag)? Did you also use a rag to detect odors at connections?
- Cooling hoses should fit snugly and be solidly clamped.
- Replace any hose clamps that show signs of corrosion.
- Replace fuel filters.
- Clean or replace the air filter.
- Change engine oil unless done in the fall (preferable). Check fluid levels: transmission, hydraulic steering fluid, and coolant.
- Check belts for tension and wear.
- Check raw-water and freshwater pumps for seepage, which indicates a gasket needs to be replaced.
- Replace raw-water impellers if they are more than a year old.
- Examine exhaust manifolds for signs of corrosion and water seepage that indicate blockage. If you suspect a problem, remove the manifold.
- Replacing the (inexpensive) gaskets at the heat exchanger every year helps prevent corrosion at the housing and also lets you look for gunk that can clog the stacks.
- Test bilge blower and inspect hose.
- Inspect outer jacket of cables for cracks and swelling, either of which indicates the cable must be replaced. Use waterproof grease at the ends. Oil every year.

Sailboat Rigging

- Inspect swage fittings for rust and cracks. Running rigging should be supple and free of chafe.
- Run a rag over stays and shrouds to find "fishhooks" that indicate the wire needs to be replaced.
- Ensure that spreaders bisect the shrouds. Ends should be protected to prevent chafe.
- Remove tape at turnbuckles and lubricate threads (preferably with Teflon). Run a water hose over chainplates to check for leaks. Look for rust streaks inside and out. If necessary, remove them and recalk.

Trailers



Inspect your **trailer tires** at the start of season and replace them if the sidewalls or cracked or the tread is worn down.

- Inspect tire treads and sidewalls. Cracks on sidewalls, or lack of tread, indicates the tire may be replaced. Use

a gauge to check pressure. Don't forget the trailer's spare tire.

- Sand and paint rusted areas.
- Inspect bearings. Repack as necessary.
- Test tail and back-up lights. Replace burned-out bulbs and chafed wires. Corroded terminals should be cleaned. Make sure the white ground wire is securely attached to the trailer's frame. Test the winch, manual or electric to ensure it's working properly.

Common Spring Boat Maintenance Products

- Marine Batteries
- Anodes
- Caulk
- Air filter
- Fuel filter
- Power steering fluid
- Transmission fluid
- Hydraulic fluid
- Distilled water
- Lubricants
- Stainless steel hose clamps
- Rigging tape
- Outboard Motors

DON'T FORGET TO SCHEDULE YOUR VSC BEFORE BOATING SEASON BEGINS!

Vessel Safety Checks - A free yearly Vessel Safety Check (VSC) is an important safeguard to a safe day on the water. There are no consequences if your boat doesn't pass. Our goal, in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, is simply to make boating as safe as possible for you, your family and your friends.





Member Activities



Member Brunch

2/17/24

We had a great turn out with 24 members! Thank you for showing up.



NEEDED: 16' - 23' Center Consol type boats for 'On The Water Training' during the Summer Rendezvous in Solomon's July 25 - 28. Please

contact:

Lt/C John Torres, AP

educationofficer@abcsomd.org



Member Vessels



Boating season is almost upon us! Will you be ready? Ron Tucker isn't wasting any time, Good ol' Dit Dah Dit Dah is getting a hard top! Way to go Ron!

What's Missing?
Your Vessel!

If you would like to see your vessel featured here, submit your pictures to prspeditor@gmail.com





THE COFFER

(Classifieds)

Flotsam

Items floating in the sea that can be claimed by the owner or bought by the finder if owner agrees. (Items For Sale)

This new area of the newsletter will be dedicated to member treasures that are ready to find new homes and are FOR SALE. Please send pictures (optional), description, \$\$\$ & contact information to prpseditor@gmail.com to be included in future issues of True Readings.

Jetsam

Items floating in the sea that are FREE to the finder unless owner claims it. (Freebies)

This new area of the newsletter will be dedicated to member treasures that are ready to find new homes and are FREE. Please send pictures (optional), description, & contact information to prpseditor@gmail.com to be included in future issues of True Readings.



Boatswain

*In charge of keeping the ship in shape.
(Services)*

This new area of the newsletter will be dedicated to member SERVICES. If you have a service that could benefit our members (or the community) please send description of services available & contact information to prpseditor@gmail.com to be included in future issues of True Readings.

SEWING SERVICES

Small sewing & canvas repair services. Beginners looking to gain experience. VERY good prices as we learn this new trade. Contact Michelle Beatty to discuss details. 717-387-1315

Dive & Handyman Services

Contact Ron Tucker @ 443-624-3012



Incoming District Commander

Our very own
Robert 'Bob' Blevins
is stepping up as our District
5 United States Power
Squadrons Commander
this month at the D/5 Spring
Conference.

Incoming District Commander

Upcoming USPS National and District 5 Events

Put these on your calendar now and keep an eye on the D/5 web site (www.uspsd5.org) throughout the year for details and updates on these and other events.

District 5 Spring Conference

Holiday Inn – Ocean City in
(as you may have guessed) Ocean City, MD
20-24 March 2024

Summer Cruise

Chesapeake Bay
19-25 Jul

Summer Council/Rendezvous

Safe Harbor Zanhizers/Spring Cove Marina
25-28 Jul, 2024, 1900

USPS Governing Board

Pittsburgh, PA
25-29 Sep

Fall Conference

Maritime Institute
7-10 Nov

2024 Summer Council/Rendezvous

The upcoming Summer Council/Rendezvous at Solomon Island is 25 -28 July. We are working with two marinas and one hotel. Safe Harbors Zahnisers (410-326-2166) is our host marina with Spring Cove (410-326-2161) contributing. Slips are going fast as well as the block of rooms at the Holiday Inn Express (240-237-1463). On all reservations, mention you are with the United States Power Squadron Summer Rendezvous for the discounted rate)..

Plans are underway for on-the-water training for the IN course, First Aid Course, Sail Regatta and Power Boat navigation contests, land Geo locations and scavenger hunts, games on Friday night with prizes given out at the Saturday banquet. Chief Commander Ralph Benard is leading a southbound cruise to Solomon's and Jim Zeigler from ABC Richmond is leading a northbound cruise from the lower parts of the Bay to Solomons. Looks like there will be a good turn out. Let's be ready to welcome our District Squadrons to our home here in Solomon's, MD. Get on the water, and have a great time!

The Spring 2024 Mark 5 Newsletter is available for download. Access it at <https://abc-midatlantic.org/squadrons/6243/mark5.pdf>



Members needed to man the booth in 1 ~ 2 hr blocks during the fair. Earn Merit Marks while having fun!

Southern Maryland Fishing & Outdoor Adventure Fair 2024

St. Mary's County Fairgrounds
Leonardtown, Maryland

April 6 – 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM
April 7 - 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM



Fishing & Outdoor Vendors

Rods/Reels, Lures, Umbrellas, Tackle,
Outdoor Sports Gear, Paintings, Crafts & More

**Featuring
Speakers**

Food

Wine Tasting

Kids Casting Contest

50/50

Door Prizes



Admission \$5 Cash at Entrance
Kids age 12 and under Free

Maryland Boater Safety Course

Class Starts, Saturday 09:00 AM

Exam and Certification, Sunday 09:00 AM

America's Boating Club

**Register at: 240-561-8910 or
contact@abcsomd.org**



Sponsored by the
Southern Maryland Recreational Fishing Organization, Inc.
[Facebook](#)

**Vendor Registration at:
flypax@md.metrocast.net**



Southern Maryland Fishing Outdoor Adventure Fair 2024
Volunteer Openings

Please consider volunteering to cover the PRSPS table at this event. You will not be alone and it is great fun. Walk around before or after your 2 hour shift & enjoy all the displays and booths. Merit marks are earned for your time helping to spread the word about PRSPS and the safe boating classes we offer.

Where:
St. Mary's County Fairground
Leonardtown, MD

When:
April 6 ~ 8:00AM – 3:00 PM
April 7 ~ 8:00AM – 2:00 PM

SHIFTS

April 6

0730 - 0930

- ◆ Brian Storey
- ◆ Jacinta Bottom Spencer

0930 - 1130

- ◆ Jim Bruggemann
- ◆ _____

1130 - 1300

- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

1300 - 1500

- ◆ Michelle & Chuck Beatty
- ◆ Karen & Steve Bizzarro

April 7

0730 - 0930

- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

0930 - 1130

- ◆ Kay Simkins
- ◆ Ken Perigo

1130 - 1300

- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

1300 - 1500

- ◆ Brian Storey
- ◆ _____

Last Updated 17 Feb 2024



Trout Fishing in Maryland: Youth-Only Day, Season Opener

The state's first-ever [Youth-Only Trout Fishing Day](#) for children under 16 years of age will take place on March 23, one week before opening day for all trout anglers. The state's put-and-take trout areas under closure at that time will be open to youth from 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Then on March 30, all Closure 1 and Closure 2 areas will be [open to trout anglers starting at 6:30 a.m.](#) The Department of Natural Resources is stocking thousands of hatchery-raised brown, golden, and rainbow trout across the state in preparation.

Maryland Natural Resources <MDDNR@public.govdelivery.com>



Maryland Pursuing Actions to Control Invasive Catfish after Federal Fisheries Disaster Declined

January 4, 2024

Last month, the U.S. Department of Commerce notified Maryland Gov. Wes Moore that it has declined Maryland’s request for a federal commercial fisheries disaster declaration that was sought to help address the economic and ecological damage caused by the spread of invasive catfish and snakeheads in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Maryland made the unique request in March as a way to highlight and mitigate the harm that invasive Chesapeake blue catfish, flat-head catfish, and snakehead have on economically important Bay species such as blue crabs and menhaden, which the invasives eat. Under federal law, fishery disaster requests can be granted after a state experiences a large, sudden, and unexpected decrease in fish stock that causes a significant loss in a commercial fishery. Commerce ruled that blue catfish have not had sufficient impact on commercial fishery revenues to qualify for fisheries disaster aid.

In the letter notifying Maryland of its decision, U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo wrote that NOAA Fisheries recognizes the challenges invasive species have created in the Bay ecosystem and offered to discuss potential opportunities in the future with Maryland.

“We’re disappointed in the decision, but also understand the ruling due to the limits of federal law surrounding fisheries disasters,” said Maryland Department of Natural Resources Secretary Josh Kurtz. “We will continue to work with our federal partners to determine what form of federal assistance can help us mitigate the continued and pervasive spread of blue catfish and other invasive species impacting commercial fisheries in the Bay. However, this was just one of several efforts underway to tackle this issue. Maryland is taking proactive steps on its own to limit the spread of blue catfish and other invasive species.”

In November, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) hired a dedicated program manager to coordinate strategies across agencies and industries to reduce populations of invasive fish in Maryland.

DNR is also:

- Increasing blue catfish research and monitoring programs;
- Urging recreational and commercial anglers to increase their harvest of blue catfish and other invasives; and
- Working to educate the public about how invasive fish species affect the Bay ecosystem.

Maryland has no fishing limits on invasive fish, which means anglers can catch and keep any number of them, at any size, during any time of year.

At the same time, Maryland’s Department of Agriculture (MDA) is ramping up marketing efforts to promote wild-caught Chesapeake blue catfish to chefs, consumers, restaurants, grocery stores and distributors to encourage more people to buy, eat, and sell wild-caught Chesapeake blue catfish. The marketing and promotional campaign activities currently focus on media appearances, social media posts, and roadside billboards highlighting the culinary versatility of blue catfish and how eating more of the fish is an important way we can all help watermen, local businesses, and the health of the Bay. MDA also works closely with chefs to attend various events throughout the state to provide demonstrations and samplings of wild-caught Chesapeake blue catfish.



Additionally, MDA has included more than \$1 million for Maryland-caught blue catfish filet purchases in its program supporting food bank purchases of local food. The agency is also promoting blue catfish as part of the state’s goal of 20 percent local purchases by colleges and other state institutions through the Certified Local Farm and Fish Program.

Some of the 2,000 pounds of blue catfish caught at the Sharptown Catfish Tournament in 2022. Such tournaments are becoming a popular way to target the species. Maryland Department of Natural Resources photo.



Signs help identify the Chesapeake Bay’s invasive catfish. Maryland DNR photo

(Catfish cont'd from pg 14)

Blue catfish were first introduced in Virginia in the 1970s as a target for recreational fishing. The catfish are native to the Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, and Rio Grande river basins. Against expectations, the catfish expanded out of freshwater and into the higher salinity waters of the Bay, and from there [began to spread into other rivers](#) and tributaries in Maryland and Virginia. Blue catfish populations grow rapidly, and studies have found the invasive catfish making up [75% of the total biomass of fish](#) in a Virginia river.

Blue catfish are voracious eaters and have been [documented as preying on blue crabs, menhaden, white perch and other species](#). They out-compete the native species for habitat space and food and pose a threat to key commercial fisheries including blue crab, striped bass, white perch, yellow perch, and American eel. Flathead catfish and snakehead are also known to prey on and out-compete native species. With few natural predators, these fish can spread quickly through Maryland waters.



Catfish seem very plentiful this year.



Photos courtesy of member Rolland Campbell





Editor's Report

Michelle Beatty

Welcome to True Readings Newsletter 2024!

In our newsletters you will find squadron business as well as photos of activities, cruises, pop-ups and more from our Squadron members both scheduled and unscheduled. We will also bring you news from District and Nationals.

Please send pictures (with photographer name and short blurb about it), recipes, product reviews, before/after photos with story, or anything else you feel may be of interest to our readers. Activities could include family boating & community events outside of squadron activities in addition to squadron organized functions.

This newsletter we featured "Maintenance Spotlight". Our last newsletter had "Member Vessels" and "Member Adventures". We will alternate our spotlights so, Chuck Beatty is looking for members to interview about their vessel for future newsletters (ANY vessel, large or small, sail, power or paddle). Please email us if you'd like us to spotlight your vessel.

"Member Adventures" are to be written & submitted by members with photos of their adventures. Don't worry if you're not a good writer, we will edit your story for you. Just make sure to have all the details and we will edit it as needed.

"Maintenance Spotlight" suggestions can be emailed as well as photos for quality printable photos to the editor. We will pull some photos from Facebook but prefer emailed photos. prpseditor@gmail.com is our email address and anything newsletter related, or questions should be sent to this address. ~ Lt Michelle Beatty, Editor

Light is sweet; how pleasant to see a new day dawning. ~ Ecclesiastes 11:7



Fun Facts

The term "head" used for a marine toilet started because of the location of the toilet on the earliest sailing ships. For crewmen, the facilities were located at the head of the ships. The front of ships had a figurehead: a carved wooden figure or bust fitted on the bow of the ship. The toilet was located there set just above the water line with slots cut near the floor level to use wave action to wash the toilet.

TRUE READINGS

The monthly newsletter of the Patuxent River Sail and Power Squadron,
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United States Power Squadrons®

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Send all articles, ideas and comments to: prpseditor@gmail.com.
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AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB

For Boaters, By Boaters™

PATUXENT RIVER SAIL AND POWER SQUADRON
A UNIT OF DISTRICT 5

UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS VESSEL SAFETY CHECK

Vessel Safety Checks - A free yearly Vessel Safety Check (VSC) is an important safeguard to a safe day on the water. There are no consequences if your boat doesn't pass. Our goal, in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, is simply to make boating as safe as possible for you, your family and your friends.

SCHEDULE YOUR VSC BEFORE BOATING SEASON BEGINS!

Squadron Bridge

2023 - 2024

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