



Calvert County NEWS

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The Chesapeake Bay's Favorite Trophy Fish is Back in Season *Rockfish Season Opens on the Chesapeake Bay April 21*

PRINCE FREDERICK, Md. – April 4, 2012 – Call them rockfish, rock, stripers or striped bass, but *Morone saxatilis* is back to spawn in the Chesapeake Bay and area anglers will be out in force for the striped bass season that begins Saturday, April 21.

During the trophy season that runs through May 15, anglers may catch one striped bass per day measuring over 28 inches in the mainstream Chesapeake Bay from Brewerton Channel to the Maryland/ Virginia line and in Tangier and Pocomoke Sounds. After May 15 the rockfish size and limit will change to 18 inches or above and anglers will be allowed to keep two rockfish.

The striped bass, named the official fish of the State of Maryland in 1965, gets its name from the seven or eight dark stripes that run from head to tail. The fish has an olive green back, fading to light silver on its sides, with a white underside. Known for its size and ability to put up a good fight, the striped bass is considered by many to be the premier sport fish on the bay.

While adult striped bass swim in the ocean, they lay their eggs in fresh water. Between April and June, they move up into tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay to spawn. The bay and its tributaries are the primary spawning area for up to 90 percent of Atlantic coast striped bass. The young striped bass spend three to five years in the bay before migrating out to the Atlantic, where they may live up to 30 years. The record for a striped bass caught on the Chesapeake Bay is 67 pounds, 8 ounces for a fish caught in 1995.

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Calvert County is home to the bay's largest charter boat fleet and anglers from across the East Coast and beyond visit the county to chase the big ones with help from the area's knowledgeable boat captains. Sport fishing is an important industry in the county and it is serious business for people like Dale Weems who owns and operates two charter boats out of Solomons.

"There's nothing like the start of rockfish season," said Weems. "I love taking people out on the bay to catch fish – whether it's their first or their 50th. It's always an exciting time and all our charter captains do their very best to ensure our customers come back to the marina smiling at the end of the day."

To learn more about Calvert County's sport fishing opportunities, visit <http://www.ecalvert.com/content/tourism/visitorsguide/boating/charterboatfishing.asp>. For more information on county attractions and events, please contact the Calvert County, Maryland, Department of Economic Development at 410-535-4583 or 800-331-9771 or via email at info@ecalvert.com. Visit online at www.ecalvert.com.

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Calvert County is Maryland's smallest county in land area with 213 square miles. It is home to approximately 90,000 people and has one of the highest standards of living in Maryland. Major industries include defense contracting, information technology, tourism, utilities, light manufacturing and administrative services.