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**SALTWATER FISHING FORECAST**

**North Florida Anglers Aggregate**

By: Rory Gregg

Spring has officially sprung in North Florida, and the month of May is one of the best times of the year to be on the water! With temperatures on the rise, bait fish schooling, and calmer days ahead before hurricane season the bite will be on from the creeks, to jetties, and offshore reefs and wrecks. No excuses, head to your local bait and tackle shop, spool up your favorite money stick, tie on and cast off for some of the best angling action in the world!

**INSHORE** – With mullet running all over the creeks, the Redfish, Trout, Flounder, and Black Drum will be on the hunt. Best of all, since the water temps are pushing into the 70s, the top water bite is phenomenal! Early mornings or late in the day will be your best bet for a thunderous strike walking the dog with a Badonkadonk 4" LP by Bomber Saltwater Grade, tied on with a loop knot to 10-15lb. braid and a 30lb. mono leader. Flounder are best targeted at lower tides using live shrimp or mud minnows on 1/8-1/4oz. jig heads pitching into creek mouths and steep drop offs next to oyster rakes.

**JETTIES** – If you like to catch a ton of fish for the Sunday fish fry, or simply just want to anchor up and bend your pole, the jetties will hold just about every species in the river! The Sheepshead will still be lingering around and can be targeted using a fish finder rig, or jig head with oysters and fiddler crabs. Blues and Spanish will be schooling along the rocks hitting live bait and spoons. Large Trout are targeted best on clear days around the rocks on float rigs, and live mullet on a weighted jig head can snag you a monster Red!

**OFFSHORE** – The bad news is, the Snapper/Grouper/Seabass ban is in effect for offshore reefs and wrecks, but there are plenty out there for the fight, so hopefully "the man" will get their act together soon and realize there is no shortage or abundance of said species for our local fisherman to eat and make a living. The good news is the Cobia will be chasing the rays off the beach, and the Kingfish bite will be on! If you have the skills to pay the bills, trolling for Kings, or searching out near-shore Cobia is some of the best line peeling action you will ever experience!

**BEST DAYS TO FISH:**  
 May 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th – 9th, 10, 11th – 16th, 17th, 18th – 22nd, 23rd, 24th – 29th, 30th, 31st **\*\*But really, any day is a good day to be on the water!**

**JAX KAYAK FISHING.COM**

# THE WORLD'S LARGEST KAYAK FISHING TOURNAMENT

**Columbia Sportswear Jacksonville Kayak Fishing Classic** By: Rory Gregg

Did you know Northeast Florida is the mecca of kayak fishing? Not only do we have hundreds of square miles of pristine waterways from the Atlantic Ocean to the St. Johns River and ICW, but endless launch points and tributary creeks that offer the perfect environment for one of the fastest growing sports in the world to thrive in. It started as an idea of few, grown an online community of many, and parlayed into the largest kayak fishing tournament in the world all in the name of local charity!

JaxKayakFishing.com, Northeast Florida's online kayak fishing community, is the fishing machine behind the world's largest kayak fishing tournament held annually in Jacksonville, Florida on May 13-14. The 8th annual Jacksonville Kayak Fishing Classic promotes kayak fishing in Jacksonville with a fun conservation-oriented format and raises funds for children's programs at the Down Syndrome Association of Jacksonville and the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation.

Where did it all begin? How could the biggest little town in the USA become the dominating force in kayak fishing? As the sport of kayak fishing has grown the last decade, so has competitive tournament fishing across the country. Kayak fishing communities and tournaments started popping up on East and West coasts respectively, and more kayak anglers were taking to the waters of North Florida. "Kayak fishing is an intimate style of fishing, where you slow down at water level, taking note about your surroundings and inevitably catching more fish", exclaimed Mike Kogan, President of Jax Kayak Fishing, and founder of JaxKayakFishing.com.

Dr. Kogan, or "Kayak Mike" as he's better known, is a seasoned IT professional

and avid fisherman. Eight years ago he saw the need to fill a void in the fishing community of Jacksonville, and created a website/forum offering everything you need to know about kayak fishing in North Florida. Not only an informative place, but also a place building community, and sharing a passion for kayak fishing. As the community grew, so did the need for a local tournament, and the goal was supporting local charities as well as local businesses behind the sport of kayak fishing. In 2004 the first Jax Kayak Fishing Classic was held, in torrential Nor'easter conditions they might have had only 25 entrants, but when the event was finished they had over 100 anglers participating!

It grew like a wildfire, the next annual event pulling over 140, then 166 the third year tied them with the former largest kayak fishing tournament in the world in California. Year after year it evolved into the biggest, most prestigious kayak fishing event anywhere drawing over 400 kayak anglers annually from across the USA, and Internationally! Not only has it grown in size and charitable endeavor, but it is also the pioneering event for "Catch-Photo-Release" format utilizing digital photography, a technologically advanced scoring system, and a certified measuring board with token device for safely catching, recording the fish, live release all in the name of sport, charity, and conservation.

The Columbia Sportswear Company, global leader in active outdoor apparel is the title sponsor, and Captain Blair Wiggins, the renowned Mogan Man of the Addictive Fishing Show will be the featured guest captain. The event is co-sponsored by many of North Florida's finest kayak and fishing retailers, including Strike-Zone Fishing, Black Creek Outfitters, Gander Mountain, Dick's Sporting Goods, All Wet Sports, Academy Sports,



and Aqua East. The world's leading fishing kayak and accessory manufacturers are also sponsors: Jackson Kayaks, Freedom Hawk Kayaks, Hobie Kayaks, Malibu Kayaks, Ocean Kayaks, Emotion Kayaks, Native Watercraft, Cobra, Wilderness Systems Kayaks, Accent Paddles, Yak-Gear.Com, 321fish.com, and Malone.

Officials expect that once again more than 400 kayak anglers will target Redfish, Trout, and Flounder in a catch-photo-release format with more than \$80,000 in prizes and gifts. Last year's Classic had a world record attendance of 430 paddlers! The 2010 Classic raised over \$40,000 for local children's and conservation charities, and has raised more than \$200,000 for charitable endeavors since its inception in 2004.

It's never to late to enter or be involved! Log on to JaxKayakFishing.com to register for the Jax Kayak Fishing Classic, and find out more about how you can join the largest kayak fishing community supporting local charities in the world!



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