

Smart Harbors

Spring 2025



Updates From Virginia Institute of Marine Science

Boating Infrastructure Grant

Stay tuned for emails about the upcoming Boating Infrastructure Grant cycle. We expect the USFWS to post the grant opportunity around mid-June 2025. If you are interested in applying or have questions about the grant opportunity, please email acclark@vims.edu or call 804-684-7768.

Why become a Virginia Clean Boater?

By adopting pollution prevention measures, Virginia Clean Boaters can take satisfaction in knowing they are doing their part to keep Virginia waterways clean, preserve our waterways for the future, and learn/teach clean boating habits. For more information, click [here](#).



Updated VA Clean Marina Recertification Checklists

The updated VA Clean Marina Program recertification checklists have been posted to [our website](#). Next time you recertify, please use the updated version. If you'd like a copy emailed or mailed to you, please email acclark@vims.edu.

CMP Highlighted Marina – Deltaville Yachting Center

This quarter's highlighted marina is Deltaville Yachting Center & Chesapeake Yacht Sales located on Broad Creek in Deltaville, Virginia, situated between the Rappahannock and Piankatank River and one mile from the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia. Helping Boaters since 2001. First Virginia Clean Marina for Middlesex County, VA (2003).

Deltaville Yachting Center is a full-service marina with open and covered slips, boatel services, service yard, and Boater's Boutique. Certified dealers for Yanmar, Cummins/Onan, Suzuki Engines, Selden, Garhauer, Harken, Garmin, Raymarine and others. ABYC certified technicians are on site.

Chesapeake Yacht Sales is a dealer for Catalina Yachts (VA, NC, WV, TN & KY) and True North Yachts (VA, NC, WV, TN, SC & GA). One of the area's largest yacht brokers for power and sail with listings on and off site.



Credit: Deltaville Yachting Center



Updates from External Partners

Upcoming Webinars / Training

National Safe Boating Council: Interested in training and professional development? Check out a few resources [here](#).

Free Spill Prevention for Marina Staff Course (BoatUS): Click [here](#) for details.

Free Boating Safety Course (BoatUS): Check out this Virginia Online Boating Safety Course [here](#). This course is approved by VA DWR.



Chesapeake Bay Foundation – Oyster Gardening

Interested in Oyster Gardening at your marina? Please contact acclark@vims.edu or Jlutzow@cbf.org for more information if you would like to partner with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

Industry News

Citizen science helps take a ‘bite’ out of shark depredation

From Gisele Galoustian, Florida Atlantic University, February 11, 2025

Shark depredation is a hot-button issue in recreational fishing, as anglers face off against these stealthy ocean bandits. These underwater thieves snatch fish straight off the line, often leaving nothing but scraps—or a broken leader—as evidence of their heist.

The Southeast, a major hub for saltwater fishing, is a depredation "hot spot" due to high fishing activity. While fisheries managers in the United States monitor shark depredation in commercial fisheries, efforts to evaluate these interactions in recreational fishing have been limited.

With Florida's recreational fishing being economically vital and concerns about rising shark depredation, understanding its extent is crucial. A major research gap is identifying depredating [shark species](#), as most events occur at depth and are rarely observed, making accurate identification difficult.

Florida Atlantic University Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute researchers and collaborators have addressed these challenges by involving the public in citizen-science research. Using multiple methodologies that included social media, online angler surveys, cooperative fishery-dependent charters, and [genetic analysis](#), the study uncovers the scope and impact of shark depredation in Florida's recreational fisheries.

Results of the study, published in the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) [Journal of Marine Science](#), reveal that across methodologies, snapper-grouper species were the most frequently depredated target species group, and bull sharks and sandbar sharks were the most commonly identified depredating species. Findings show 43% of anglers experienced depredation and the probability of experiencing depredation ranged from 10% to 60% and varied both regionally and seasonally. Read more [here!](#)

Fish favorites can't handle the weather roller coaster

From Regina Mobley, Wavy10, February 10, 2025

From the Virginia Beach Oceanfront south to Sandbridge and to a creek near Linkhorn Bay, dead [speckled trout](#) are leaving reminders of the winter that's speckled with wild temperature swings.

Charter boat captain David Wright said the results are unfortunate, but not unpredictable.

"What we're seeing around here is not something that's never happened, OK? It does happen," Wright said. "It's unfortunate when fish are all comfortable and then, [we get] slowly changing temperature, to wham, a shock, a freeze, OK. And a lot of them do not make it through that."

All you have to do is follow the flock and they will lead you right to speckled trout and their running buddies.

"Well, now there ... puppy drum that kind of dwell together a lot of times," Wright said.

Much like what happened to humans at the polar plunge Saturday at the Oceanfront, some speckled trout can escape the frigid waters, but when they reach the surface, they look a little disoriented.

"And on a sunny day, you can walk along afterwards and see the survivors," Wright said. "Not every single fish ever goes away, but you can see the survivors along the banks where the water is kind of shallow and it's sunny, and they're very lethargic, but they're alive. And most of them do survive. It's just sad for people to see that."

From the sea to the air, there is concern about birds that may have been exposed to the deadly avian flu. The virus is suspected in the deaths of birds on the Eastern Shore.

Wildlife officials in Virginia say that if you see an unusual number of dead birds, [report this to the Department of Wildlife Resources](#).

Claytor Lake reopens following Hurricane Helene debris cleanup

From Erin Arthur, Wavy10, March 6, 2025

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation has announced that debris removal efforts at Claytor Lake following Hurricane Helene have been completed.

Cleanup efforts were carried out using modular barges, tugboats, excavators, and a 40-cubic-yard roll-off container. The debris was taken to the dumpsite for disposal and then sorted into four categories: green waste, construction material, general trash, and hazardous materials.

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers takes pride in rapidly responding to natural disasters and restoring impacted areas," said LTC Anthony Funkhouser, USACE Norfolk District, acting commander. "Working closely with our federal, state, and local partners, we successfully removed all floating and submerged debris, returning Claytor Lake to its pre-storm conditions,

ensuring it remains safe and accessible for the community. We appreciate the patience of residents and visitors as we completed this critical effort.”

The operations center was demobilized; therefore, Claytor Lake State Park boat ramp and the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources boat ramp, located off Bear Drive, are operating seven days a week normally.

“The cleanup of Claytor Lake is a testament to the resilience and dedication of our federal and state agencies, park rangers and community members,” said DCR Director Matt Wells. “Their combined efforts have restored this natural space, demonstrating what can be achieved when we work together for the benefit of our public lands.”

Repairs are still needed at the park’s boat ramps and the parking lots. The DWR’s parking lot will also need to be regrated. This future work and repair efforts will cause temporary closures that will be announced later.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with FEMA, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Friends of Claytor Lake helped complete the process.

For more information, click [here](#).



Credit: Claytor Lake State Park

Please Share Your News!

If you have any news that you would like included in the Clean Marina Newsletter, *Smart Harbors*, please let us know! This is a quarterly newsletter with the next issue scheduled for Summer 2025 and we would like to include information from the marina community. If you have comments or questions, please email the Virginia Clean Marina Program: askVCMP@vims.edu or acclark@vims.edu or call (804) 684-7768.

