

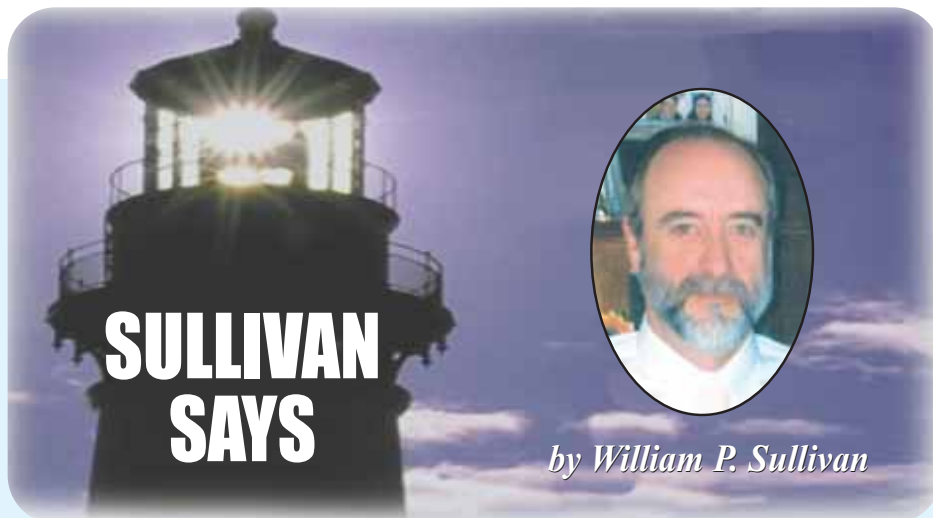
"Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth, whenever it is a damp and drizzly November in my soul, then I account it is high time to get to sea as soon as I can." - Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*.

Fall is hard upon us and winter is just around the corner. Most of the boats are snug for winter and tackle is racked in hibernation and wracked from a long season's beating. But, you can't quit fishing just yet. Blackfishing is just getting started, stripers are at their fall peak, some bluefish will still be around, and sea bass have run deeper, but not to the shelf. Codfish, God willing, will begin to show on the wrecks. You just need to change your tactics.

**Blackfish:** There are some anglers out there who haven't hauled out and truly can work hard bottom for 'tog. For the most part, getting on good blackfish structure, staying on it and taking fish is better left to the pros. It really depends on where you are and your own skill sets. "To thine own self be true," as the Bard said. Out East, particularly Orient Point, amateurs can put together a fair catch of blackfish by bouncing around the rocky bottom until they luck into a hot piece. The reefs, Fishers Island and numerous other spots will produce. Better bet - pick a charter or party boat out of Orient by the Sea Marina and let a pro do the hard work. Expect to use up to 20 ounces of lead and 50-pound composite line. Tog are big there and nothing smaller than a #3 Virginia or 4/0 Gamakatsu will do. Depending on the bite, you will be using whole, halved or quartered green crabs and sometimes the hard shell orange-bellied crabs will work best; other times the pale green, thin-shelled crabs are on the menu. We aren't talking bluegills and Tommy cod; this is workin' for a living. The same holds true for Montauk and back

to the west on the north shore. The tide flushing in and out of the sound screams. And the bite is hard like they want to take the rod out of your hands.

Along the south shore, it's a totally different universe. The structure is smaller and much harder to anchor on. That's due to the lighter current and heavier effect of the wind on anchoring. Without the screaming tide, blackfish can be more choosy and finicky in the bite. The pickup can be a light touch to just a sinker walking away from you. Here, some days, the fish will want white crabs instead of green. Tackle is



## SULLIVAN SAYS

by William P. Sullivan

lighter and skill is the rule. Novices can catch 'tog out east; to the west, seasoned blackfishermen will clean your clock. Don't go dollar-a-fish with anyone from Sheepshead Bay unless you know what you're doing.

As I said, charter and party boats will sail from Huntington, Mount Sinai, Orient, Greenport, Montauk, Shinnecock, Captree, Freeport, Point Lookout and Sheepshead Bay. Save the hassle; relax and have a fun day letting blackfish teach you a lesson in losing bait. Just one more bit of advice: go with one hook and stop hanging in the structure.

**Striped Bass:** The fall migration is now in full swing and bass will be open until December 15. During the day, trolling along the beaches with umbrellas, parachutes and bunker spoons is going to yield bass and mondo bluefish. I'm not a big trolling fan myself, but you can't knock the results. It's more fun to bait bass on light tackle in shallow water. In the inlets on the south shore, drifting clams or live bergals in daylight or live eels at night will rule.

If you can run the bay at night, eel fishing is primo. You don't need to head for the inlets and the mayhem. Remember the scene in *JAWS* when all the boats were heading out for the reward. Well, that's what an inlet is like on weekend nights. Better to scope out the tide and current changes along with phases of the moon and fish whatever night, weekday or weekend, that suits your area. Full bore ebb tides off the full moon are the best. Rigging with eels is simple; use either a 3X3 rig with a 4/0 Gamo and Fluoro leader or the same thing run through a fishfinder. Lead will depend on current. In the inlets it will be 4 to 6 ounces; in the back it can be zero to 2 ounces. Even flatlines with a small split shot will work. Drift across the mouth of some big drains where you have current and try casting the eel into the drain and drifting it out. Rips and riffles are prime, so look at water going over the top of a bar or around a corner. If you bucktailed fluke out back all summer and

paid attention, you should have a dozen prospects to start with. If the skinny water doesn't work, drift the deep in channels. If that doesn't work, head to the inlets. You need to buy your eels ahead of time. Keeping them alive is just a matter of either a wire pen or a 5-gallon bucket drilled full of 1/4-inch or 3/8-inch holes hung off your boat. Don't make the holes too big or the bait will get loose and make sure you have the lid tied down tight.

Herring may show late in November and the preferred bait will quickly switch from eels to herring, and then the bass will switch to daylight on herring as well as night. Sabiki rigs have to be at the ready to nail some herring; toss them in a live well and head for the bass in the inlets.

Out East everything works on practically every tide. Pick or choose out there. Live porgy for bait is a Montauk staple, and you know a bass big enough to take a porgy doesn't need to be measured. As December comes on, diamond jigs will play a more prominent role along the south shore inlets.

**Bluefish:** If you still want them, they will be on the troll, on the anchor over structure or just 3X3 with some peanut bunker in the inlets. As long as we don't get a hard chill, they will hang around with the bass for a while.

**Wreckfish:** Porgies are closed in New York. Sea bass will start to move and they may be at 90 feet

now. Bluefish will take jigs over wrecks and stripers will come up in the mix too. And don't forget the blackfish. Codfish will show in no numbers, but possibly a size fish or two on the south shore wrecks 80 feet and deeper. It's good for an adventure to target codfish under these population conditions, and good for the soul when you find a few. From Moriches west to Debs, codfish on the wrecks used to, and maybe still, shop up and stay on the wrecks until late January. There should be more out east on Coxes Ledge and the Montauk-Shinnecock wrecks, but nothing to write home about. It will be better at Montauk in February and March. If you have the cod bug bad and want to take a ride, head north to Massachusetts or wait for the local offshore party boats to get off tuna and start wreck-fishing the deep.

Offshore there will be tuna in the canyons as long as the water stays warm out there. Seventy-degree water offshore is not unheard of into December. It depends on the storms and whether they break up the temp situation. Party boats will be running offshore tuna



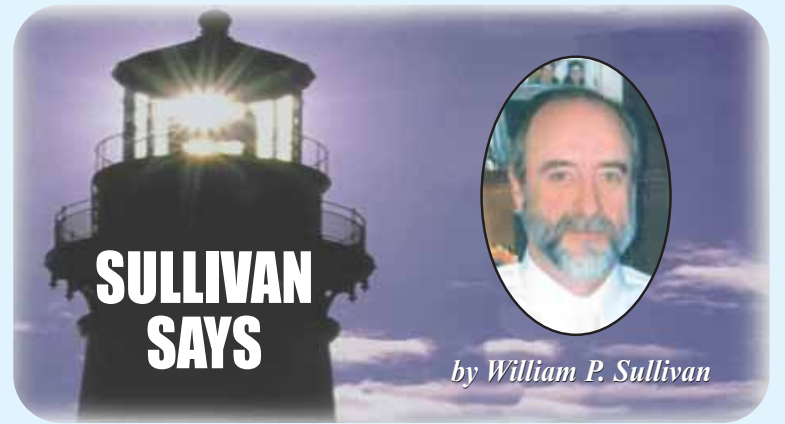
From November 2005, Mike, Jim & Tom night eeling on the Island Princess, Captree. Photo courtesy Capt. Nick Manzari



Odd catch of the summer, a 68-pound black drum on the Codfather while striper fishing. This was the second drum that day, another in the mid-30's was released. Photo courtesy Capt. Mike Barnett Codfather Charters, Freeport

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# BRICK COVE AD PDF SENT SEPARATELY



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trips from New York and New Jersey as long as there is life in the canyons. Then, the offshore action will switch to long-range wreck, sea bass, codfish, pollock, hake and tilefish trips.

At any rate, between Thanksgiving, deer season, Christmas shopping, yard cleaning, shutting down the outside water systems, football and everything else that goes on, you can squeeze in some more days on the water. Do check out the party and charter boats and get some ideas from your local bait and tackle specialists. They will improve your catch and limit your frustrations both for a more enjoyable fishing experience.

Now, let's go to the next installation of "American Tackle Shop." The one thing, top of the list, that drives a tackle shop nuts is when a guy walks in with a rod and reel combo and a spool of line that he bought at Mo's or that other supposed authority place and wants his local B & T to spool the reel and tie his rig. That takes colossal gall. You drive to the non-authority to save a couple of lousy bucks and then spend the time and gas money to come back for service. Smart, these guys support the chain stores that put generations old mom and pop businesses out of business to save what amounts to subway fare. Tell me, who will you buy your bait from when your B & T shuts its doors for good? Think I'm kidding? In the past ten years, there are many shops that no longer exist. I'll start you off with a few: Beckman's, Lon Wanser, Henning's, Starstream, and the list goes on.

For every funny, negative story from a tackle shop, there are ten positives, mostly revolving around teaching kids and newbies. Another big plus is learning about the B & T business. I know more about blood and sandworms and the wholesale bait business than anyone has a right to know. Same for tackle, hooks, swivels, line, knives, the works, where it's made, how it's shipped, who has the best prices,



*11/18/2005 Robbie with a November sea bass and codfish on the Super Hawk, Point Lookout. Photo courtesy Capt. Steve Kearney*

what is really made under another name, all that inside knowledge. I know about Spearing - how to seine it, when to seine it, where to buy it locally and out of town. Killies, crabs and eels - I can tell you all about potting and penning. Add this to my fishing and party/charter boat background and I know enough to realize my retirement dream of opening a tackle shop or a skiff livery. All I need is some changes in the regulations and gas that doesn't cost a week's pay.

All that being said, when it comes to writing out the Christmas and Hanukkah lists, remember your LOCAL bait & tackle shop. Drop hints about what you want or need, or think about gift certificates. You want to get the little ones started on fishing instead of Nintendo. Consider Snoopy rods, snapper gear, crab traps, and gift certificates for snapper bait. Think about it; you can spend a couple of hundred bucks on electro-garbage and wind up having your kids sitting alone in front of a tube, or you can get them outdoors in some sunshine and fresh air meeting people and developing social skills. Who knows; ten years down the road they may be writing this column and working in a tackle shop!



## High Tides For November 2006 Fire Island Inlet

Nov 1	4:11 AM	4:32 PM	Nov 16	5:06 AM	5:16 PM
Nov 2	5:10 AM	5:32 PM	Nov 17	5:51 AM	6:02 PM
Nov 3	6:04 AM	6:28 PM	Nov 18	6:31 AM	6:45 PM
Nov 4	6:54 AM	7:19 PM	Nov 19	7:08 AM	7:25 PM
Nov 5	7:42 AM	8:09 PM	Nov 20	7:43 AM	8:02 PM
Nov 6	8:28 AM	8:59 PM	Nov 21	8:17 AM	8:39 PM
Nov 7	9:16 AM	9:50 PM	Nov 22	8:52 AM	9:18 PM
Nov 8	10:06 AM	10:45 PM	Nov 23	9:30 AM	10:00 PM
Nov 9	10:59 AM	11:43 PM	Nov 24	10:13 AM	10:51 PM
Nov 10	11:56 AM	-----	Nov 25	11:05 AM	11:49 PM
Nov 11	12:41 AM	12:52 PM	Nov 26	12:04 AM	-----
Nov 12	1:37 AM	1:46 PM	Nov 27	12:49 AM	1:04 PM
Nov 13	2:32 AM	2:39 PM	Nov 28	1:48 AM	2:04 PM
Nov 14	3:25 AM	3:32 PM	Nov 29	2:47 AM	3:05 PM
Nov 15	4:17 AM	4:25 PM	Nov 30	3:46 AM	4:08 PM

### High Tides For Other Locations:

#### South Shore

Amityville	+ 2:59
Bay Shore	+ 2:46
E. Rockaway Inlet	+ 0:32
Freeport	+ 1:16
Jones Inlet	+ 0:19
Moriches Inlet	- 0:18
Shinnecock Inlet	- 0:12

#### North Shore

Pt. Washington	+ 3:23
Oyster Bay	+ 3:32
Pt. Jefferson	+ 3:29
Mattituck Inlet	+ 3:35
Greenport	+ 2:45
Sag Harbor	+ 2:35
Montauk Point	+ 0:29

All times are approximate • Not responsible for errors.

### Moon Phases

