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By Ken Lamb of the Tackle Box, 301-863-8151

Fall fishing is great now as rockfish, bluefish, white perch, spot, and even croaker are feeding up in the cooler weather.

Rockfish are in the shallows of the Potomac and Patuxent for lure casters using surface plugs, bucktails, sassy shads, and spoons. Trollers are finding fine rockfish in the holes up the Patuxent and Potomac. Many of these local fish (the sea-run rockfish have yet to enter the Bay) are plenty big ranging up to 30 inches and weigh 8 to 10 pounds. The bay is loaded with rock breaking on bait fish and drawing clouds of birds to show the way. Several anglers came in this week claiming that they caught (and released except for their limit of two) so many that they tired of catching them and left them breaking. Most of this action is from the Nuclear Power Plant south to the Targets. Live liners are also enjoying excellent success now as the hefty rockfish love live spot. Second Beach just north of Drum Point is hot, as is Cedar Point and Little Cove Point.

The spot are in the mouth of the Patuxent off the O'Club. They gather there every fall and bite bloodworms like crazy. A charter captain took his party there this week and landed 200 spot in a couple of hours to stock up the live wells.

Bluefish are also making news. The blues are everywhere in all sizes, from 10 inches to 6 pounds. The bigger blues are south of the Target Ship for trollers using spoons and surgical eels. Schools of blues of 5 to 6 pounds are in the ships channel, some breaking and some caught blind trolling. Smaller blues are up the rivers chewing off lures not protected with wire leaders. Blues and rockfish mix in breaks.

Croakers are still consistent on the middle-grounds and many are giants. The bottom fishing here is now a 50-50 mix of croaker and spot and they will bite all day and night.

White perch and puppy drum are in the creeks and will take lures (small spinner baits, and tiny traps) or bait (bloodworms, peeler crab). The creek fishing will stay good until the weather gets cold enough for the water to get clear. Then they go to the deep holes in the rivers. The puppy drum will stay until the water cools to an uncomfortable level (58 degrees) and they will vanish overnight. There are some big rockfish up the creeks looking for the last of the peelers and soft crabs. Make sure your drag is not too tight!

St. Mary's Lake is loaded with eager largemouths ready to take most any lure offered. The crappie are hitting live minnows in the cooler water.



The creeks are full of perch and puppy drum.



Russell Knapp caught this exotic Florida Pompano at Plum Point this week.



Chris Goulart used a green and gold popper to lure this 30 inch rockfish at Fishing Point NAS off the beach.



Rowena Shields scores again at Hog Point, Patuxent using top water plugs off the beach.