

TROPIC NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

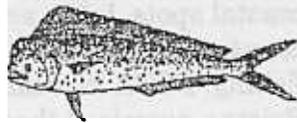
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

May 1996

Volume 8 Number 8

Dolphin Tournament

On Sunday, April 14, 1996, the Virgin Islands Game Fishing Club held the First Annual Dolphin



Tournament at Latitude 18 on the east end of St. Thomas. As a result of rough seas prior to the tournament and low dolphin catches in the previous days the tournament rules were amended to include Wahoo, Tuna and Kingfish. There were a total of 34 fish weighed-in. Fourteen dolphins were caught ranging in weight from 0.8 to 50.2 lbs. The winning dolphin was a bull weighing 50.2 lbs. Prizes were awarded to the largest fish in each category. The fish weights were as follows:

1 Wahoo	36.2 lbs
4 Blackfin Tuna	7.8 - 12.3 lbs
12 Kingfish	2.4 - 24.2 lbs
3 Cero Mackerel	4.2 - 8.8 lbs

The number of participants was small due to the foul weather but a fun time was had by all who attended. Cash prizes, dinners and a variety of other prizes were awarded to the winners. Members of the Division of Fish and Wildlife staff served as weighmasters and technical advisors. The event was sponsored by Bellows International-Tanqueray, Snapple & Coors Light, Offshore Marine - Yamaha.

Environmental Education Workshop

On Wednesday, 22 May 1996 the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) and the UVI Marine Advisory Service (VIMAS) will host a teachers' workshop on **Environmental Programs in the Virgin Islands**. This workshop will take place at the Department of Education's Curriculum Center from 5:30-7:30 P.M. The workshop's purpose is to introduce teachers from the St. Thomas-St. John District to the many environmental programs, activities and information that various government and nongovernmental organizations offer. A similar workshop was held for teachers on St. Croix in

1997 Year of the Reef

To publicize the need to learn more about reefs and how to keep them alive, 1997 has been declared the International Year of the Reef (IYOR). The IYOR will be launched at the 8th International Coral Reef Symposium to be held in Panama in June.

IYOR will have a two-pronged approach: promotion of research and the development of public awareness about coral reefs.

The scientific community will undertake coral reef assessment, monitoring, and other research aimed at creating a better understanding of the condition of the world's reefs and how to keep them alive.

Through the combined efforts of schools, governments, nongovernmental organizations, aquariums, and others, IYOR will feature a number of public awareness programs to highlight the value of reefs and threats they face. In the United States, public aquaria will use a coordinated curriculum on coral reefs, as well as public events, including an underwater photography exhibit and a poster contest for children.

The scientific and public awareness efforts will complement each other: scientific discoveries will provide new information for public awareness programs, and publicity and education campaigns should lead to wider support for scientific work.

This information was taken from the Intercoast Network Issue # 25 / Winter 1996. For more information on IYOR contact: Stephen Colwell, the Coral Reef Alliance, 809 Delaware St., Berkeley CA 947109. Tel: 510-528-2492. Fax: 510-528- 9317. E-mail: CoralReefA@aol.com.



Quote

The environment is man's first right. Without a safe environment, man cannot exist to claim other rights, be they political, social, or economic.

Ken Saro-Wiwa
Nigerian Environmentalist

National Fishing Week

Once again the nation will celebrate National Fishing Week in June. The event, slated for June 3 through 9, is targeted to increase awareness of the joys of sport fishing and hands-on aquatic resource education opportunities.

To help with the effort is award winning cartoonist Jim Davis and his lovable fat cat GARFIELD! Together they serve as the National Honorary Chairman and *Chaircat* ?! Davis and his pal Garfield, enthusiastically accepted the role for a second year. Supporting the promotional efforts, Davis is lending his talents and energy, while Garfield's universally recognized image adds humor and interest for people of all ages.

Locally, we commend all efforts at increasing awareness of our natural resources yet we don't encourage large fishing events. The numbers of marine fish have drastically decreased from catches once enjoyed by our grandfathers. Over-fishing and pollution are the chief culprits in our present dilemma. It is in our best interest to invest our energies in efforts to protect our marine environment. Here are a few ideas:

- promote sustainable use polices that balance commercial, recreational and ecological values;
- improve our understanding of fish and their role in the marine environment; and
- preserve coastal habitats and water quality.

.....
Trees were saved by printing on recycled paper

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



NATIONAL FISHING WEEK JUNE 3-9, 1996

F V S 10701 P070101 Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314-1524

Animal rights group to target sport fishing

PHILADELPHIA - The same group who brought you blood-splashed furs and liberated lobsters have trained their sights on a new target.

The fishing rod. And the hearts and hands behind it.

The animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) this summer will hit coastal spots, lakes and fishing holes around the country, beating the waters for a ban on sport fishing. PETA fish campaign coordinator Tracey Reiman promised that protesters, accompanied by 6-foot mascot "Gill the Fish," will maneuver their boats among fishing craft.

The animal rights movement has gained increasing respectability since a 1984 raid on a University of Pennsylvania lab where researchers inflicted head injuries on baboons.

Even the Humane Society of the United States criticizes PETA's anti-fishing campaign in a published report as "somewhat silly and possibly counterproductive when the movement has so many other priorities."

Reiman said the animal activist organization, which has a worldwide membership of a half million and a galaxy of celebrity supporters, turned its attention to fishing because "fish comprise probably the largest number of animals as a group to be killed for food or fun."

Article by Gloria Campisi, Philadelphia Daily News.



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
OF THE UNITED STATES

Department of Planning and Natural Resources
Division of Fish and Wildlife
6291 Estate Nazareth 101
St. Thomas, USVI 00802-1104
(809)775-6762 (ST.T.), (809)772-1955 (ST.X.)

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CHARLOTTE AMALIE, V
PERMIT NO. 35

Address Correction Requested