

# Fishing Journal

Information For The Serious Angler

April 2011

## New Puget Sound Seasons

**Shrimp**  
Areas 6-7-8-1, 8-2, 9  
Opens the First Saturday in May

**Shrimp Pot Gear Rules**  
[Click Here](#)

**Shrimp Pot Set-up**  
[Click Here](#)

**Ling Cod**  
Areas 6-7-8-1, 8-2, 9  
Opens May 1

**Halibut**  
Areas 6-7-8-1, 8-2, 9  
Opens the First Thursday in May

## Seminars

By John Martinis

**Shrimping Seminar** April 12th,  
7:00PM at Bayside Marine:  
sponsored by CCA (Coastal Conservation Association). The public is invited.

All my seminars are open to the public and there is no charge for the seminars.

## Anacortes Salmon Derby Winner Mike Campion 19lbs 8oz

Congratulations to Mike Campion for catching the winning salmon in the 2011 Anacortes Salmon Derby. Picture of winning fish, [Click Here](#).

Mike called me on Wednesday March 29 and told me his story.

Here it is: One of my employees at John's Sporting Goods took a phone message from Mike Campion. Mike stated that he was the winner of the Anacortes Salmon Derby and that he wanted to talk to me. I always like hearing about the winning fish, so I was anxious to call Mike back. I called Mike at 3:45 PM Tuesday March 29, 2011.

The conversation started like this (This is Mike speaking): "John, I want to thank you for all the advice that you give in your monthly

newsletter. I followed your advice in the March Newsletter about understanding the tides and currents in the San Juan's and charted out my game plan according to your advice. I caught the winning salmon in the first twelve minutes that I was fishing. I also followed your advice on only using "High Percentage Lures." I always keep plastic coated copies of your Newsletter in my boat when I am fishing." Mike won the derby using a Goldstar 3.5 Cookies n Cream Kingfisher Spoon. Mike changed the hooks out on his spoon to the "Owner" brand of hooks. That was a smart idea!

First of all, Thank you Mike. This is one of the highest honors I get from publishing my Newsletter for over twenty years. As I write this, I only smile and feel humbled by knowing that the advice that I give brings such joy to others. Thank you so much!

## Halibut Fishing 2011 Puget Sound and San Juan's Opens Thursday May 5

This is my most fun Newsletter to write of the whole year. Ling Cod opens on the May 1, Halibut opens May 5 in Puget Sound and Shrimp opens May 7. Trout also opens the last Saturday in April. There are fishing opportunities galore in the

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Next 30+ days. So, hold on while we talk about Halibut and then move to Shrimp in the next 3000 words.

Halibut fishing is an addiction! Where else on the whole West Coast of the Continental part of the US can you have a reasonable chance of catching a 50lb fish? How about a 100lb fish? Let's narrow it down a bit more. Where else can you catch a fish that size within an hour boat ride from the dock? Eliminate sturgeon fishing and there is only one more fish. Halibut.

Halibut fishing has grown in popularity over the years as boats have gotten larger and the fuel economy of boat engines have given anglers greater range. Not too many years ago salmon fishing was open during May and June giving anglers a greater choice of different fish species to fish for. As the variety of choices have dwindled, anglers found new opportunities that they have found to be quite enjoyable as well as challenging.

Halibut fishing is much like salmon fishing. Get equipped with the correct tackle so that you have a reasonable chance of hooking a fish. Once you hook a Halibut, you got to have the right tools to get the thing in the boat. I will cover all of this in great detail.

Lets' start with the tackle. Halibut tackle is relatively simple. Here is a list of essential things that you need to have:

Have at least three of these items per person for two days of fishing. You can scrimp a little on the lead weights.

## **Spreader Bar**

### **10/0 Hooks**

**10/0 Hooks tied on 50-80lb monofilament leader**

**10/0 hooks tied on wire leader  
12oz, Square 16oz, 24oz weights**

**Large snap swivels**

**Miracle thread**

**6"-9" White Plastic Squid**

**Frozen herring 7"-8"**

**This is what you need for a rod and reel:**

**Most Minimum: Penn 309 on a 6'-7' stiff solid glass rod \$89**

**Better: Penn 330 on a 6'-7'**

**Shimano Rod \$129**

**Best: Penn 113H or Shimano Tekota 700 on either a Shimano**

**Talavera Rod or a Shakespeare**

**Tiger Stik Rod \$180-\$240**

**Line: 65lb Spectra line installed with backing \$34**

## **Landing Gear:**

### **Gaff**

### **Harpoon**

I have some new harpoons that are very good quality for only \$39.95 with a stainless harpoon tip with 600lb wire attached.

### **Set your gear up as follows:**

The long end of the spreader bar goes to the 7" plastic squid. The short end goes to the lead weight. I like my leader to be 18"-24" long. Shorten the leader up if it is tangling with the main line while you are letting the line out.

On the leader, slide a large bead or scent tube (any color) until it rests against the hook. I like using a #8 Corkie. The Corkie gives the squid a slight amount of floatation. Tie the leader to the spreader bar.

Now, I will end your curiosity about the square 16oz weight. Square weights only come in 1lb (16oz), 2lb and 3lb. I like the square weights because they do not roll around in the boat. Start the day by using a 16oz weight then adjust according to the speed of the drift.

I know that I have given this piece of advice many times:

Tie the herring to the leader. This is the procedure: Take the upper most hook and thread it through the underside jaw of the herring and out through the top of the head. Lay the leader and back hook along side of the herring. Take the Miracle thread and start wrapping it around the herring at the tail and now towards the head and around the front hook. Now wrap the thread back to the tail and half hitch it off a few times. The herring will stay on all day and even through the most fierce bite/strike of any Halibut. Thank about this: If a Halibut bites and you get trigger happy and strike too early using a herring that is not tied on, you just gave Mr. H a free meal. He says good bye. You cry. If the herring is tied on and you take an early strike and miss the fish, 90% of the time he will come back for another taste. In fact he will be more eager the second time around. Pretty good idea, eh? This is a great money saving tip while conserving on bait.

Side Note. 8"-9" Herring will be in very short supply this Halibut season.

### **Another way I like to deal with bait for Halibut:**

Filet the sides off 10" herring and coat the filets with rock salt the night before you go fishing. You

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then can tie these filets to the leader in the same manner as tying a whole herring to the leader. Tying a whole herring to a leader is much easier.

Once you get everything assembled and baited-up, let the rig to the bottom and gently swim the bait. No jigging allowed! Swim the bait. Move the rod slowly up and down, no more than 12". You want the bait to look alive. Think about it? Herring, Squid, and candlefish swim in a forward motion, they don't jump around. Swim the bait. Don't place the rod in a rod holder hoping that a real stupid Halibut is going to latch on to your bait. It happens, but not often enough.

## Halibut Depths:

In Puget Sound, I have caught Halibut in as little as 60ft and as deep as 180ft. I have caught most of my Halibut in 120-150ft of water.

## Tides:

I have caught most of my Halibut on semi strong tides when the water is moving. In other words, I don't think the small tides are as good as medium to stronger tides. I feel that a tide with a minimum of six feet of difference is best for fishing Halibut.

There are plenty of spots to fish for Halibut even if you have a small boat. The closest place to fish for Halibut in the Central Puget Sound Area is Mutiny Bay on the southerly end of Whidbey Island. Mutiny Bay is an approximately 45 minute run by boat from Everett or Edmonds on a nice day. There is no boat launch in the immediate Mutiny Bay area.

Admiralty Bay on the southwest end of Whidbey Island has it all. There is a good public boat launch (Forty Casey) within two minutes of the fishing grounds. This is a great area to fish for Halibut from any sea worthy boat. If the wind comes up, you are only a few minutes back to the dock. Both in Mutiny Bay and Admiralty Bay there are Halibut that are boated in excess of 100lbs every year!

If you want to get out into the straights to fish, you can either launch at Fort Casey or at Cornet Bay at Deception Pass. In either case, you are only 7-9 miles from good Halibut fishing. My favorite two places to fish for Halibut are Partridge Bank and Eastern Bank.

The spots to fish in the places that I am mentioning will be on the maps that you can click on at the end of this column on Halibut fishing.

## Good Advice:

On the maps that I give you with waypoints, don't repeatedly go to the waypoints. The waypoints that I give you are starting points. Look at each Bay or Bank and map it off in to a grid. Each time you make a drift, use a slightly different drift pattern so that you don't repeatedly cover the same water. Mix it up as you go. If you catch a fish, mark it with your GPS and wear that spot out! Almost always, if you catch a Halibut in a particular spot, you will likely catch another Halibut in that same spot.

## Harpooning a Halibut:

Have your Harpoon set up in advance with 20-25 feet of 1/8" nylon rope attached to the spear tip. True Story. I had a customer who harpooned a Halibut last year with no rope attached to the spear. He

harpooned the fish and came back with only the spear handle. Geez! Have everything ready with the rope tied to the cleat. Harpoon the fish right in the middle of the body. This will not harm the meat at all. Don't hang onto the rope. Once the fish gets to the end of the rope, pull it back to the boat. Don't bring it out of the water. Put a gaff through it's lower jaw and only lift it's head out of the water. Take a filet knife and insert it into the gills and rake the knife around inside the gills. The fish will die instantly. Let it bleed and then bring it onboard. The fish will bleed the rest of the day. They are the bloodiest animal that is on this earth. If the fish is too big to put in the ice chest put a wet towel on it to keep it cool.

## Halibut Maps:

Mutiny Bay [Click Here](#)  
Admiralty Bay [Click Here](#)  
Partridge Bank [Click Here](#)  
Eastern Bank [Click Here](#)  
Dallas Bank [Click Here](#)

## 2011 Puget Sound Shrimp Poised to Open First Saturday in May (May 7)

Shrimping has become a yearly ritual that everyone seems to enjoy. It is fun, it is expensive and it is a great family event. Are you ready? If you have not gone shrimping in the past all the information that you need will be included in this Newsletter along with the best shrimping Maps. Including an all new Shrimping map in the San Juan's. Note to all shrimpers, "don't let the

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Halibut anglers outshine you when it comes to being resourceful." Lengthen your shrimp season. Shrimp until the end of June. Shrimp every day of the week. By now, you are thinking, "John has lost his mind?"

Listen up, I have good advice and good news for the avid shrimper. My shrimp advice will not help you win a derby with a \$10,000 first prize. But, I will help you keep a \$1,000 worth of shrimp gear working for three months.

Let's start with the modest 2-3 day Puget Sound Shrimp season that opens the first Saturday in May. This is one of the biggest Puget Sound events of the year. With a modest boat and four shrimp pots for two people, you can easily harvest 160 shrimp.

Once again, shrimping is like Halibut and Salmon fishing. You have to be rigged correctly in order to do well. The definition of doing well is, "catching limit of shrimp every time you go out." You should be able to get close to that goal if you use my maps and rig with good gear. My shrimp bait formula is Killer!

## **Rule #1:**

Remember that the limit is only 80 spot shrimp. I state this because; you do not need the most expensive "shrimp palace" shrimp pot to catch only 80 shrimp. The limit is 80! A \$59 shrimp pot will do just fine. If the limit were 500 shrimp then we could discuss what pot is the best.

**Here is your gear List**  
**7/8" Square wire mesh Shrimp pot with fast feeder tunnels (long rectangular tunnels)**  
**Weight to weigh down the pots (Shrimp pot with weight should be 25-30lbs)**  
**Bait container with wire sides or ventilated sides**  
**400 feet of leaded rope**  
**Four 11" yellow buoys or three 15" yellow buoys**  
**Buoy with flag (optional)**

John's Sporting Goods Shrimp and Crab web page, [Click Here](#)

## **Bait List**

**Bumble Bee Canned Mackerel**  
**Friskies Ocean Whitefish with Tuna cat food**  
**Shrimp Bait Pellets**  
**Copper River Prawn Oil or Pro Cure Crab and Prawn Oil**

## **Bait Mixture:**

One of the best pieces of advice that I can give on shrimp bait is: Use lots of bait.

A great bait recipe is: Two cans of Friskies Ocean White and Tuna Dinner (Poke holes in the cans). One can of Bumble Bee canned Mackerel (Poke holes in the can). Two cups of shrimp/fish pellets (Super Bait Prawn Bait/Ace of Bait Shrimp Pellets). Put the fish pellets in a zip lock bag and pour Pro Cure/Copper River Prawn Oil shrimp bait oil on the pellets. Also: pour the liquid out of the canned Mackerel onto the pellets. Let the pellets soak for 45 minutes to one hour in the liquid. After the soak, put the pellets in a bait jar that is very porous. A 6" wire bait jar is the best container for the pellets.

Rigging the Shrimp pot correctly is as important as the bait mixture.

This is where many shrimpers try to cut corners. If you attempt to cut corners this will only diminish the effectiveness of your shrimp gear. Ideally the pot with weight attached should weigh 30 lbs.. If the pot moves around because the tide and the wave action are pulling on the rope, shrimp will either leave the pot or not go in the pot. The worst case; you will lose your pot from it drifting away and off the shelf. This not like losing a flasher and squid while salmon fishing. When you lose a shrimp pot, \$150-\$200 is floating away.

## **Shrimp Pot Set-up Click Here**

Where I see most shrimpers make the biggest mistake; not attaching enough flotation to the rope. If you can withstand the extra expense, attach extra buoys to the end of the rope. Set the rope up like this: at the end of the rope (opposite of the pot end) tie a stainless snap to the end of the rope. The buoy set-up should be on it's own separate rope. Put three large yellow buoys on a doubled-up piece of rope. Tie a loop on one end that the snap on the main piece of rope can snap to. Leave on end of the buoy rope with an extra 10' feet of rope. On that extra piece of rope you can attach a round ball buoy or several smaller floats.

## **Rule #2**

Before you let the pot over the side of the boat, look at the depth sounder with your own eyes too make sure that it is not deeper than you have rope. This might sound silly. But, every year I hear the story about how someone shouted out the depth reading only to find out it was enormously deeper. Whoops! Goodbye \$150. Where these shrimp live, the bottom is

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steeper than the steepest hill in Seattle. That's for real. Look at the landscape along the perimeter of Puget Sound. That is what the bottom looks like.

## Depth

The depth for shrimping can vary quite significantly from area to area. As a general rule of thumb, shrimp in 250 feet of water. Last year I was shrimping on MacArthur Bank in the San Juan's in 325-340 feet of water. We had four pots out. One pot we pulled up had a five gallon bucket of shrimp in it.

## Soak Time:

Let the pots soak for 45 minutes to 2 hours. If you are pulling the pots by hand, do not stop pulling even for a moment. You can lose up to ¾ of the shrimp by pausing while pulling up the pot. They are such agile little creatures, they can easily swim right out of the pot.

## Shrimp Season

Puget Sound will most likely open for only two days starting May 7 San Juan's will open the time, only the season will be slightly longer. Stay tuned.

Area 6 opens May 7, southern part of the west side of Whidbey Island. Last year it was open every day in May and June

Start your shrimping in Puget Sound. Move to the San Juan's (Area 7) after Puget Sound closes. On the days that Area 7 is closed, go shrimping in Area 6. This gives you two solid months of shrimping.

## The Tides

This is where people lose a lot of

shrimp gear.

Puget Sound: Shrimping on any tide if your shrimp pots have enough weight.

San Juan's: Only shrimp when there is less than 6 feet of difference between the tides. You must heed this advice or risk losing all your gear

Area 6: Only shrimp when there is less than 6 feet of difference between the tides. You must heed this advice or risk losing all your gear. Four feet or less is ideal.

## Shrimping Maps: Click on John's Shrimping

### Maps:

**Puget Sound**

**Camano Island**

**Camano Head**

**Edmonds**

**Seattle**

**Port Gardner**

**San Juan Islands**

**Lopez Island**

**Friday Harbor**

**MacArthur Bank**

## Cooking Shrimp

Here is a great link that has shrimp recipes: [Click here](#)  
<http://www.wildalaskanshrimp.com/Cooking.htm>

## Statewide legal shrimp pot requirements: [Click Here](#)

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/shrimpreg/gearrules08.html>

## Spot shrimp identification [click here](#)

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/shrimpreg/shrimpspot.htm>

The May Newsletter will have a complete set of maps for Shrimping in Area 6.

## Jennings Pond Kids Fishing Derby May 7, 2011

### Sponsors and Financial Donations Needed

This is the 20th year of the Marysville, Jennings Pond Kids fishing derby. John Martinis and the Everett Salmon Steelhead Club have purchased trout for this Derby for several years. The WDFW in years past has also given us trout for this derby. Because of the State budget shortfall, there will be no free trout from the WDFW. John Martinis and the Steelhead Club will both be donating several hundred dollars to this derby. John Martinis and the Marysville Kiwanis Club contribute all the prizes for this event.

From 300-500 children fish this derby every year. This is a great opportunity for children to be introduced to fishing. This event is free to all children 12 years old and younger.

**We urgently need cash donations to purchase more trout for this derby. Please contact John Martinis at John's Sporting Goods if you wish to make a contribution: 425-259-3056. 100% of your money will be used to purchase rainbow trout.**

**A special thanks to all the individuals and clubs that have donated to the Jennings Pond Kids Fishing Derby.**

## Club News SnoKing PSA

Meeting Dates:

The second Thursday of each month at 6:30PM  
South County Senior Center  
220 Railroad Avenue  
Edmonds, WA 98020



## Everett Steelhead & Salmon Club

Meeting Dates:  
3rd Thursday of Each Month  
2411 Hewitt Ave  
Everett, WA 98201  
Bellingham man takes \$15,000  
prize in 5th Annual Anacortes  
Salmon Derby

## Anacortes Salmon Derby Press Release

Anacortes Over 1,100 contestants experienced great camaraderie, better than expected March weather, and only average angling success - as hatchery-reared, winter Chinook salmon failed to cooperate as they have so graciously done these past months.

Open Division: Catching a winning fish nearly 8½ pounds smaller than last year's big fish did not diminish the winner's share of \$15,000 as **Mike Champion** of Bellingham, WA anxiously watched as his 18.96 pound fish, which led all fish caught on Saturday, remain atop the leader board as the weigh-in closed Sunday at noon.

“I was just hoping that the fish was big enough to get me in the top three. When I was still in 1st place on Saturday night, I was secretly hoping for windy conditions on Sunday which would discourage some contestants ... maybe keeping them from going out fishing that day” Champion said. Champion, an experienced river angler, has only been a serious saltwater angler for the past three years, and the only salmon derby

he has fished during that time is the Anacortes Derby. When asked what he was going to do with his share of the winnings, Champion said, “Most will go towards my daughter's tuition ... and I might buy myself that new reel I've been thinking about.”

**Campion's fish was one of 101 total fish boated during the two day event - five of which weighing some eighteen pounds and change.**

Also Ran(s): Patrick Barton of Bellingham, WA won \$5,000 for his 2nd place finish with an 18.74 pound fish and Brett Engholm of Bellingham, WA took home \$2,500 for 3rd place finish with an 18.44 pound fish. All top three prize winners, after collectively raking in \$22,500, were last seen headed towards the Whatcom County line.

I've Got A Secret: Randy Geoghegan of Burlington, WA won \$2,500 as his 11.85 pounder came closest to a pre-determined weight in the Secret Weight category.

Ladies First: Mary Ramage of Mt. Vernon, WA bested the Women's Division bracket with a 12.45 fish disappointing a field of 112 other women - and took home a beautiful silver necklace and a check for \$500 as a reward for her winning effort.

Young Guns: The younger set did not fare as well, as there were no fish weighed by Youth Division entrants (14 years and under). Each and every youngster did take home some very nice prizes including custom-made participation medals, and assuredly, some fond

memories.

“This year's event was the best one to date” said this year's Event Chairman, Terry Nemeth. “Everyone I've talked to this weekend was having a great time, and many indicated that this was their favorite fishing derby in the series. This event is the result of hundreds and hundreds of hours of planning and effort by Board of Directors of the Anacortes Salmon Derby, and members of the host organization: the Fidalgo Chapter of the Puget Sound Anglers.” Nemeth went on to say: “This charitable community event could not take place without the ongoing support from the Port of Anacortes, the generosity of local businesses, those businesses with ties to the fishing community, and an all volunteer staff.

The proceeds from this derby fund scholarships to benefit young adults pursuing a career in fisheries and related science. The Derby disbursed over \$29,000 in scholarship money in 2010. For more information and pictures, please go to: [www.anacortessalmonderby.com](http://www.anacortessalmonderby.com)

**John's Sporting Goods  
1913 Broadway  
Everett, WA 98201**

**Scotty Downrigger  
Cleaning with 250' Cable  
or 300' Spectra  
Downrigger Line  
\$39.95**

Included in the price is new brake pads, your choice of 250' of 150lb. Cable or 300' 200lb. of Cortland spectra downrigger line, cleaning and lubricating the downrigger and any other Scotty factory authorized upgrades.

# Shrimp Bait Formula

by John Martinis

## Items needed:

Friskies Ocean White Fish w/ Tuna canned cat food  
Bumble Bee canned Mackerel  
Ace of Baits Prawn Pellets or Super Bait Prawn Bait pellets  
Copper River Prawn Oil or Pro Cure Shrimp Attractant Oil  
6" bait barrel

The idea of mixing all these ingredients together is to set up a scent trail to attract shrimp to your shrimp pot. Once the shrimp are near your pot, there is a good chance that they will want to enter the pot and feed on the Mackerel and pellets. The cat food and the Pro Cure shrimp oil will quickly leach out of the pot and attract shrimp. The pellets and the Mackerel will keep the shrimp in the pot once they get inside. You can see the purpose of the different ingredients.

Some people like to mix all the ingredients together and freeze the mixture in a large bait barrel. They put the frozen mixture in the pot and let it un-thaw while the pot is working. Some people will add ground up fish to the mixture and others will add dry cat food (Friskies Seafood Sensation).

## My recommendation per pot:

- 1) Put 3 cups of Super Bait shrimp bait pellets in a zip lock bag and add 1 cup of Pro Cure shrimp Attractant Oil in the zip lock bag. Soak the pellets for one hour before shrimping.
- 2) After the pellets soak for one hour, put the pellets in the 6" bait barrel. Hang the bait barrel from the inside of the shrimp pot.
- 3) Poke holes in one can of Mackerel and insert the can in the center bait compartment in the shrimp pot.
- 4) Poke holes in 2 cans of Friskies Ocean White Fish w/ Tuna and insert the cans in the center bait compartment in the shrimp pot.
- 5) Let the shrimp pot over board and soak the pot for 45-60 minutes.

Each time you let the shrimp pot out and retrieve it, you need to replace the canned cat food. It pretty much washes out of the cans fairly fast. The pellets will last all day and the canned Mackerel will last most of day. The cat food is the only item that needs frequent replacing.

I have recommended this concoction to many shrimp anglers and they find that it works quite well. Some anglers will just use the pellets; other anglers will use only the canned Mackerel. Use it all to set up that good scent trail.