

Weed fishing and honey dues.

With the Ides of March behind us I am starting to get twitchy. It's this time of year that I take some time out from fishing to catch up on some of the honey dues, renovations and decorating that will put me in good standing with the wife for the rest of the year, like an on going excuse. As I scratch away at the old popcorn ceiling I realize it will not be long before the gulf water that laps the shore line of the National Seashore (PINS) will hit the magic 70 degrees, this trigger temperature will be the comfort mat that will entice the return of the Anchovy schools close enough for me to work around Sargasso weed with top water lures and wheedles jig heads rigged with an assassin on the Breakaway Alpha 7.6ft rod.



Bass Assassin rigged wheedles, does help but does not stop it all.

Weed fishing can be very productive and a lot of fun if you remember the cliché “go with the flow.” It is one of the building blocks of the seashore, the dead weed acting as a bonding agent for the sand. The weed that our beaches tend to attract this time of year approaches the Island in beds miles in length and girth. This floating mass is a haven for creatures that our target fish find irresistible, which if you think about it puts them in a predictable area. That is the secret of fishing, finding out were the fish are, once you know that, all you got to do is figure out how to catch them.



Sargasso weed one of the building blocks for our beautiful Island.

On short rods and fishing the first gut you will be able to find breaks in the weed, small wheedles areas drifting cleanly with the mass, that's your target. Ideally it will be down current from you, pop a lure in the clear spot. If it's a sinking lure like a wheedles rigged jig head the trick is to progress the lure towards you at the same speed the current is moving the clear spot. An old fisherman and locally famous lure crafter named Poncho told me of an action that describes beautifully the technique he used that best describes the action required when fishing around weed. " he said to me that at certain times of the year Trout in the bays will only have a green slime in their belly and can be very hard to catch, the only technique that seemed to work for him when he noticed this was to make the lure flick sand, that was his words and his hand action described how the lure would drop to the bottom then with a twitch of the rod tip the lure would flick the sand with its nose as it lifted six inches to a foot in the water column then dropped back to the bottom again. The jig head making it fall nose first with the tail up, just firm the line again, and then twitch to repeat the action. This action has produced many Texas Surf weed Trout for me in the past and as long as you stay in touch with the lure, IE: don't let the line slack you will get a near wheedles retrieve nine out of ten time. Keeping the rod tip high



when fishing and especially when fighting the fish is imperative any slack line contact with the water and the weed will be on it before you can shake a stick.. To land a fish around weed keep the rod tip high and walk backwards out of the surf until the fish is safely on the beach.



Brenda Meyer demonstrating, the tip high technique used to fish around weed on our Texas beaches.

If you are doing catch and release, stay where you are, again keep the tip high and line tight or you will find yourself loaded down. You of course don't wear stringers in the surf as often the dinner will be eaten before you get it to your plate, in weed it will be totally unpractical as it would soon be loaded down with it. The trick to fishing weed is to fish close but on occasions the temptation to snag a Jack fish at long distance is too tempting. By using a lure like the Roberts lure which is a long distance top water lure you can sight cast jacks at about 100yds and if you are careful you again can retrieve and navigate the lure back to the beach through the weed, keep the rod tip high and don't let any slack line drag into the water. If you get into a scrap with a big one keep the tip as high as you can and walk the fish out by walking backwards. The key here is to turn the fish quickly with line pressure and get him pointing towards you, as soon as he is head to the beach you will gain quickly but if he stays side on, you're in for a scrap. If he is side on he will be running along the gut and you must keep in front of him. Do not try and fight the fish from a standing position, if he heads North you need to be heading north as well and the line should remain high and 90 degrees to the beach. Often when fishing the National Seashore you can find areas to fish that have not got as much weed as others. Some time the first impression can be misleading. The first few miles might have tons of weed on it, go fifteen miles south and it will be clear. Personally fishing around the weed beds is one of my favorite types of fishing. I find it challenging and rewarding. This picture is my wife Brenda with one of this year's Texas Weed Trout. The trick is don't fight it, go with it and keep that line high.



Nick Meyer