



# Onancock Bay Challenge 2024

September 7, 2024 (Bad-weather date: Sept. 8)  
OFFICIAL RULES & PRIZE CATEGORIES

- 1. ELIGIBLE SPECIES:** The following 8 species will be eligible for prizes: **Bluefish, Spot, Speckled Trout, Flounder, Gray Trout, Croaker, Red Drum 18-26", & Sand Mullet.**
- 2. PORT ASSIGNMENT:** Anglers may fish anywhere in Virginia waters but must return to the Onancock Wharf weigh-in site by 5:00 P.M. to be eligible for prizes.
- 3. FISHING HOURS:** Fishing will begin at 6:30 A.M. and all fish must be presented for weighing by 5:00 P.M. (You must be in line by 5 P.M). It is the responsibility of participants to synchronize with Tournament time.
- 4. WEIGH-IN:** Weigh-in begins at 4:00 P.M. **Each contestant may enter the weigh-in line only one time and may present only one fish per eligible species.**
- 5. COMMUNICATIONS:** The Tournament Committee chairman can be reached at 757-709-8697.
- 6. ENTRY FEES:** Adult: \$25; Youths under 16: FREE.
- 7. ENTRY FORM:** The entry form must be completed in its entirety by the boat captain/owner.
- 8. DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES (REGISTRATION):** 10:00 A.M. September 7 (or 10:00 A.M. on bad-weather date).
- 9. BOAT ANGLERS:** All persons on a boat must be registered to fish in the tournament and must pre-pay entry fee. **YOUTH ANGLERS ARE FREE**, but must be registered by the deadline.
- 10. BOAT INSPECTION:** The Tournament Committee reserves the right to inspect any or all boats entered in the Tournament.
- 11. LIABILITY:** All boats shall adhere to U.S. Coast Guard and State requirements and regulations. The Eastern Shore of Virginia Anglers Club, the Town of Onancock, event sponsors, and any volunteer workers will not be responsible for a participant failing to comply with Tournament rules or for accident, injury, or damage that may occur during the Tournament.
- 12. JUDGING TIES:** If, after the final weigh-in, a tie exists, the earliest fish entered will be the winner.
- 13. CONSERVATION:** Participants are encouraged to release fish they do not plan to eat or enter in the Tournament. Our rules conform to Virginia's slot limit for red drum, so if you catch one of these fish that exceeds those limits, please handle and release them carefully.

14. **METHOD OF CATCH:** All fish must be caught by rod and reel or hand line. All fish must be identifiable as to species and must not be cut, bitten, speared, shot, or otherwise mutilated in any way except by hook or gaff marks. No commercial gear may be used. All fish entered by an individual angler must have been caught by that angler.

15. **SPECIES ELIGIBILITY:** Each angler is responsible for identifying the fish they present to the weigh master, and for making sure that it meets current state and tournament rules regarding length.

16. **WEIGHING FISH:** The weigh master is solely responsible for determining the weight of fish. At his or her discretion, the weigh master may inspect any fish presented for weigh-in. Any fish may also be inspected by a marine biologist or conservation officer.

17. **MEASURING FISH:** Each angler is responsible for making sure that the fish they weigh in meets current state and tournament rules for minimum and maximum total length. The weigh master will measure fish to make sure that they conform to this published VMRC definition of how to measure fish: "Total length means the length of a fish measured from the most forward projection of the snout, with the mouth closed, to the tip of the longer lobe of the tail (caudal) fin, measured with the tail compressed along the midline, using a straight-line measure, not measured over the curve of the body. Snout means the most forward projection from a fish's head that includes the upper and lower jaw."

18. **WEATHER CONDITIONS:** In the event of bad weather, the Tournament Committee may elect to postpone the Tournament provided that the decision is made by 8:00 A.M. on the Tournament morning. Adverse weather developing after fishing has started will place the decision of whether or not to continue in the hands of the owner/captain. In the event of Saturday's fishing being postponed, the Tournament will be moved to Sunday, September 8, weather permitting.

19. **RULES VIOLATIONS:** Any violation of Tournament rules will be grounds for disqualification. Questions or issues not covered by the rules will be resolved by the Tournament Committee.

20. **PRIZE WINNERS & CATEGORIES:**

- A. Heaviest and second-heaviest adult-caught entries in all eight species categories
- B. Heaviest and second-heaviest youth-caught entries in all eight species categories
- C. Special award for the heaviest speckled trout
- D. Special award for the heaviest red drum
- E. Special award for the heaviest oyster toad
- F. Each boat captain whose boat lands an Adult First-Place Species Award (determined by weighing in the heaviest eligible fish)
- G. Best adult-caught fish (determined by weight closest to citation weight)
- H. Best youth-caught fish (determined by weight closest to citation weight)
- I. **George Phillips Memorial Award:** Best Eastern Shore of Virginia Anglers Club member-caught fish (determined by weighing in the heaviest eligible fish)

21. **DRAWINGS:** All participants will be entered into drawings for dozens of valuable fishing-related prizes, leading up to the Grand Prize drawing worth more than \$300. You don't have to weigh in a fish to be eligible for the drawings, but **YOU MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN A DRAWING PRIZE.**