

Fishing

by Matt Curtis

Reporting Period: Late September through October 24, 2013

Note: Missing dates normally means that the wind contributed to boats not going out to fish. I have a NEW email if you can send me any fishing news or pictures: lyncurt0@gmail.com

10/01-10/14 With, fisher-persons just returning to Kino, reports have been sketchy. As September ended, PERRYDIZE and other second hand reports were mainly concerning dorado fishing to the south of Isla San Pedro Matir, with decent numbers being picked up trolling feathers, as usual. The quality was mostly on the small size, however. About the beginning of October small yellowtail, sierra and bonito, some of very nice size, began to be caught from Turner to Punta Willard. HILL BILLY YACHT, PERRYDIZE, 13-0-13, MANANA MAYBE, and SAND DOLLAR fished Turner and Dead Man trolling for small yellowtail, sierra, and bonito, but some days produced great catches, while other days were very slow. The bites seemed to come on very suddenly for an hour or so, then shut down just as suddenly. On 11 October, Sand Dollar caught limits of bonito and a few yellowtail and sierra at Turner. The largest fish of the day ripped off a lot of line on the troll, then put up a good fight before making its getaway, probably a yellowtail. MANANA MAYBE also was there doing about the same, but did get into a good bonito bite at Dead Man's. The next day, 13-0-13 fished Turner but the bite did not develop as the day before. They went on to try San Esteban, but had no luck there.

Some reports of corvina and Cortez halibut have started to come in from shore fishermen at the Kino estuary. Most have been caught on the rising tide.

10/14 SAND DOLLAR went back to Turner and caught one very nice sierra in addition to more sierra and a few bonito. 13-0-13 also had a good catch of sierra and some bonito. The yellowtail were scarce and small for both. RED ROVER was also in the Turner area, but spent most of his time trolling around Deadman, catching limits of bonito and yellowtail, but more of the latter.

10/18 RED ROVER caught limits of bonito and yellowtail, some 10-12 pounds at Deadman. His catch was about 50-50 bonito and yellowtail.

10/20 GIZMO came in from an overnight trip, fishing from Turner towards Punta Willard. They brought in limits of bonito, yellowtail, sierra and nice sardinera.

10/21 SAND DOLLAR, MANANA MAYBE, 13-0-13, EL SUENO, SEA BASS, HILLBILLY YACHT, NIGHTWINGS, ROSIE, JAYHAWKER, POCO FELIZ, and EL COYOTE all fished the the Turner, Deadman, with a few exploring up to the north. Everyone caught good catches of bonito, yellowtail, sierra and assorted other species. The bonito were not as common as earlier trips, but a few yellowtail from 13 to 16 pounds were caught, mostly by trolling and some by jigging near Deadman. (A few were lost also, so the big boys are out there). The sierra were particularly thick and the size was improving. SEA BASS landed a nice "grouper" (sardinera?) near the Pyramids and some bonito and yellowtail were caught in that area early on. Other species caught included some fat rockies, a few "goldies", barracuda, and even needlefish.

10/22 13-0-13 returned to "the scene of the crime" for more yellowtail, sierra and limits of bonito. Canning time! Reports from San Carlos last weekend highlighted nice catches of yellowtail jigging in up to 300 feet of water for fish in upper 20s to 33 pounds! The IRONMAN on CATCH 22 had a great birthday!

10/24 SAND DOLLAR, GATOR BAIT, TORO GRANDE, PANDEMONIUM, ROSIE and DAKOTA were all around Isla Turner today and had great fishing, while trolling for bonito, yellowtail, and sierra. Limits were caught, or could have been by anybody trolling anything on a great Fall day. The bonito came on particularly strong, with more nice sierra and decent yellowtail to fill the boxes. UPDATE: Rumor has it that ROSIE boat caught two dorado in addition to some big yellowtail out near Turner on this date.

REPORT ON STATUS OF SHRIMP CULTURE IN MEXICO

Since returning to Kino Bay, most of us have noticed the high cost of shrimp and absence of the extra large shrimp. Reports were going around about the shrimp farms not producing due to a wide spread epidemic of some sort. According to the locals, this resulted in most of the wild shrimp being sent to Guaymas for the big commercial cooperatives. What follows is what has been reported on the internet about the shrimp farms and the diseases inflicting so much damage to the shrimp farming industry.

Fishing, continued

The next section is based upon a report fro 2010 in "Shrimp News International" (shrimpnews.com/FreeNewsFolder/FreeNewsBackIssues/2010BackIssues/FreeNewsJuly201030.html).

This disease is not a new one. In 2009 103,000 metric tons of shrimp were produced in Mexico, 90-93% from Sonora and Sinaloa. In May, 2010, farms in Sinaloa began to experience outbreaks of "white spot viral disease". White spot soon spread north to the farms near Bahia Kino. These farms produced over one half of the domestic Mexican shrimp market. When production dropped by one-third, concern began to grow. Although not so hard hit as farms to the south, it was hoped that warmer summer temperatures might help stop the spread of the virus. Unfortunately, an extended period of La Nina influence in this part of the Pacific led to cooler temperatures and bad news for the future.

In a report from July, 2013, (undercurrentnews.com/2013/07/25/mexico-shrimp-farmers-call-for-emergency-state-be-declared/), shrimp culture dropped by 85% from 2009 and cost the industry up to MXN 300 million. This year 125 of 128 registered farms have lost up to 70% of their harvest, down to less than 15% of 2009 harvests.

Other factors effecting prices include the tropical cyclone Phainor which is threatening India's aquaculture areas at this time, and another epidemic ravaging the Asian shrimp farms, named "Early Mortality Syndrome". Little is known about it except

that it spreads quickly. Now there also seems to be doubt about exactly what disease is hitting Mexico's farms now, and it is feared that it may be EMS. That makes the outlook grim for Mexico's aquaculture and is making other central and south American countries nervous.

The result of all of this is that prices for wild caught shrimp has sky rocketed and you are lucky if you can get the larger shrimp.

UPDATE: An August 30, 2013 article (<http://harpers.org/blog/2013/08/on-the-trouble-with-farmed-shrimp/>) in Harpers magazine confirmed the previous information and that the source of disease is still unknown, but stated that crowding, heavy metal contamination and an unknown disease all contributed to the losses. Mexico is our closest and seventh largest source of imported shrimp, so it is a big problem with no end in sight. The sad thing is that in many cases, the shrimp farms are built in mangrove areas, so when disease appears, they simply drain and dry the pond and build a new one over a new mangrove area. Obviously, this is not a very ecologically sound practice because of the importance of those area as nurseries for many fish, invertebrate and bird species. Fortunately, not all Mexican farms follow this practice , but maybe we should keep our eyes on the estuaries in the Kino area!