



BONANZA

Official newsletter of the Casco Bay Bluefin Bonanza

bluefinbonanza.org

Fall, 2024

Another Successful Season

Thanks to our sponsors, participants, volunteers, mother nature and our tremendous bluefin resource, the 2024 Casco Bay Bluefin Bonanza was a rousing success. We had more support, more participation and more fun than ever. You can read more about it on Page 2.

Hopefully 2025 will be even more successful and while we're all huddled inside and bracing up for another Maine winter we're also gearing up for the 7th Annual Bluefin Bonanza. Yes, you read that right. It's hard to believe but we'll be entering our 7th year! For the veterans, things should be status quo. We don't anticipate any major changes but you never know what the future holds.

For those who have not fished the Bonanza before, be sure to check in regularly with our social media and our soon-to-be-launched new, improved website. Of course, you can always contact us at bluefinbonanza@gmail.com.



2025 Registration

Registration for boats returning from 2024 begins at 12:01 on January 1, 2025. Open registration for newbies and returnees begins Monday, January 13. Those who have our App can now register directly through the App. If you don't have it, get it. You will also be able to register through the store on our website. (see schedule on Page 5).

Online Store

Speaking of stores, our online store stocked with great Bluefin Bonanza apparel is always open. Thanks to our fantastic sponsors at W.S. Emerson and Miller's Workshop, we continue to expand our line of performance fishing and lifestyle apparel, including some cool new stuff from Carhartt. Check out the latest items and order early if you want them in time for Christmas.

<https://cascobonanza.itemorder.com/>



SEARCHING FOR INFO?

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Another Successful Season

The 2024 tournament week kicked off with our Youth Day. Kids were treated to hands-on fish science demonstrations by Walt and his (our) team of interns from the **UMaine Pelagic Fisheries Lab**. Nate Garrett of **Big Fish Gyotaku** led fish printing demonstrations, our friends from **Cabela's** had several different activities and served a hearty lunch. Then we capped off the day with the crab fishing tournament and crab racing derby where kids got some great prizes.



Thanks to the folks at NOAA Fisheries, Sunday was an RFD so people were able to linger longer at the Captain's meeting Saturday evening, where they told fish tales, enjoyed a BBQ meal sponsored by **Fat Kid Culinary** and Dock Talk Pale Ale provided by **Batson River Brewing and Distilling**.

The seas were a bit more than we'd hoped for on Monday but many bold lads and lasses braved them and brought some beautiful fish to the scales, including what would ultimately be the tournament winner.

While fishermen took Tuesday to rest and recover, our volunteers led a group of special folks on a tour of Casco Bay, sponsored by **The Hometown Foundation**. Then they got a chance to have their own crab tournament and learn more about fish science.



Weather improved slowly but steadily over Wednesday and Thursday, as did visitors to the weigh-in, including an 11th-hour fish that took second place.

We capped things off with a tremendously successful lobster bake and awards ceremony including raffles and auctions. Thanks to everyone's generous participation, we'll be able to increase our community support in several areas, meaning more skilled tradesmen and women in the work force and an even healthier fishery managed by more competent professionals.



Then, we took a well needed and well deserved break.



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Congratulations to



our 2024 Winners



First Place: Capt. Isaac Molt Redemption, 635 lbs., 103.25"



Second Place: Capt. Bobby Strong, Amy Lynn, 612.5 lbs., 106.5"



Third Place: Capt. Keith Jordan, Bailey & Bella, 610 lbs., 105.25"



Fourth Place: Capt. Max Bogdonovich, Bogsea, 591 lbs., 104"



Fifth Place: Capt. Kurt Christensen, Molly Jane, 575 lbs., 101.5"



Greatest Cumulative Weight: Capt. Kurt Christensen, Molly Jane, 1,152 lbs.



As a first class tuna tournament, the Casco Bay Bluefin Bonanza provides a contest of competition, comradery and fun to support bluefin tuna research and students enrolled in the trades. Batson River partnered with the organization to create Bluefin Brew, a crisp Kilsch Style Ale that is perfect for sunny days on the boat.

bluefinbonanza.org

BREWED & PACKAGED BY
BATSON RIVER BREWING
75 MILE ROAD
WELLS, ME 04090

CASCO BAY BLUEFIN BONANZA

DOCK TALK

IPA

BATSON RIVER BREWING & DISTILLING

KEEP COLD, DRINK FRESH, PLEASE ♻️

SMALL BATCH BREWING. 5.0% ALC/VOL (10.0% ALC BY VOLUME). 100% MALT & HOPS. 100% WATER FROM THE PINE TREE AREA. IT'S THE WAY TO LIVE. © 2024 CASCO BAY BLUEFIN BONANZA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Joining Forces



This year we were privileged to include the inaugural Gulf of Maine Grand Slam in our awards ceremony. An idea, four years in the making finally came to fruition when we teamed up with the Bluefin Benefit Battle and the Bailey Island Fishing Tournament to create a unique award for anglers who participate in all 3 tournaments. The winners, with total accumulated points based on weight from all 3

tournaments were Captains Kurt and Erik Christensen of F/V Molly Jane.

Participation was better than hoped and we expect things to really take off next year.

FMI: www.gulfofmainegrandslam.com



LINDSAY WITHERS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Thanks to donations from Ducks Unlimited, Larry Tibbetts and others, we were able to make a substantial contribution to our Lindsay Withers Memorial Scholarship. Capt. Lindsay left us too soon but she insisted on leaving a legacy that will ensure rural areas of Maine have better access to well-trained first responders. This is one of our year-round fundraising efforts and we hope you'll consider making a donation to honor Lindsay's memory and help out Maine families.

Awarded to eligible Maine Emergency Medical Services/Paramedicine trainees

ABOUT THIS SCHOLARSHIP

Upon Lindsay's passing in February, 2023, the **Casco Bay Bluefin Bonanza Lindsay Withers EMS/Paramedicine Scholarship** was established to continue her legacy of commitment to the training and education of first responders.

This scholarship is awarded to Southern Maine Community College students who:

- Are in good standing with a rural Maine Fire Department and hold the necessary prerequisites.
- Have demonstrated personal financial need.



Donate to this Scholarship

To donate to this scholarship, visit www.smccME.edu/donate

To apply for this scholarship, contact:

jgraves@smccME.edu

For More Information:

Contact the SMCC Foundation at foundation@smccME.edu or 207-741-5559



Conservation and Education

Have you taken the time to learn more about what our interns are doing with your fish at the scales? In addition to providing an opportunity for future fisheries scientists and managers to learn practical skills in data collection, the research they conduct and we support provides an important source of data for fisheries managers in determining stock status and setting quotas.

It cannot be overstated what an important role this data collection plays in both the national and international management of bluefin tuna. It is an incredible amount of effort to collect these samples collaboratively with participants in the fishery.

Lisa Kerr, Ph.D. Associate Professor, UMaine School of Marine Sciences



It Takes a Crew

The Bluefin Bonanza is run entirely by volunteers. It's a lot of work but also a lot of fun and very rewarding. We can always use more hands so if you'd like to join our crew, please reach out to us at Bluefinbonanza@gmail.com

2025 SCHEDULE

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

Saturday, July 26 - Youth Day - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Captain's Meeting - 4 - 6 p.m.

Sunday, July 27 - RFD - No fishing

Monday, July 28 - Fishing Begins at 12:01 a.m.

Scales open 8 a.m. - Noon - 5 p.m. - 11 p.m.

Tuesday, July 29 - RFD - No fishing

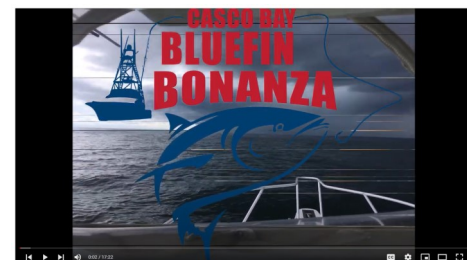
Wednesday, July 30 - Fishing Resumes at 12:01 a.m. and continues through Thursday, August 1.

Scales open 8 a.m. - Noon 5 p.m. - 11 p.m.

Friday, August 1 - Dinner, Auction, Awards 4:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Tournament Videos

You can see all our video presentations from past tournaments by going to the **Sport-Ventures YouTube** channel and looking for the **Bluefin Bonanza** Playlist



2024 Awards Banquet and Auction

Friday, August 2 4 - 8 pm Port Harbor Marine



Plan Ahead

Future Tournament Dates

July 26 - August 1, 2025

July 25 - 31, 2026

July 24 - 30, 2027

2025 Tournament Awards

First Place - \$25,000	Second Place - \$12,500	Third Place - \$6,000
Fourth Place - \$3,000	Fifth Place - \$1,500	Cumulative weight - \$1,000
	Largest Fish Daily - \$1,000	

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

In case you were wondering where the proceeds go from our year-round fundraising efforts:



\$25,000 - **University of Maine Foundation to the Pelagic Fisheries Lab.** These funds provide internships for 6 students working at the Lab and toward Bluefin tuna research led by Dr. Walt Golet.

\$18,000 - **Foundation for Maine's Community Colleges.** Eighteen students enrolled in trades and marine science programs at Maine's 7 community colleges will each receive \$1,000 scholarships to continue their education.

\$10,000 - **Lyndsay Withers Memorial Scholarship.** This money will help build our endowment to ensure medical first responders in Maine's rural communities have the proper training and credentials they need.

\$5,000 - **Foundation for Maine's Community Colleges.** This will fulfill our endowment so there will always be scholarships for community college trade students.

We thank all our sponsors on behalf of our beneficiaries.



Registration for the Sixth Annual Casco Bay Bluefin Bonanza begins January 1, 2025