

Be The Fish

If you are going to catch fish you have to learn to **think like a fish**.

In order to get close enough to catch any fish you have to **understand how, where and when that fish will feed**. And you have to be quiet.

For the next eight weeks you will have the opportunity to learn about fishing in the Charlotte Harbor area. **Licensed, local, professional fishing guides will be your teachers**.

If you pay attention you can learn a lot about the environment, the ecosystem and the estuary that is Charlotte Harbor and in the process you will learn about the fish that live here.

Read. **Take the time to read as much of this Resource Manual as you can**. Anglers need to understand many things if they want to catch fish and keep the fishery healthy for years to come.

This book is like no other. It is a local how-to-do-it resource manual put together just for you. Hopefully you will find it helpful for years to come.

Your goal should be to learn to fish responsibly and to become the caretakers of the environment in the future. It's all up to you.

When you complete this course you will be ready. You will receive a graduation certificate, a tackle bag filled with tackle and a really good Shakespeare rod and reel to start you on the way to a lifetime of fun fishing.

Your journey begins right now!

Good Luck, stay safe and have fun!

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What is An Estuary? Estuaries are water passages where the tide meets a river current; an arm of the sea at the lower end of a river. Charlotte County has the second largest estuary* in Florida. Charlotte Harbor has a surface area of 270 square miles with an average depth of 7 feet. The deepest part, approximately 70 feet, is in Boca Grande Pass.

The Myakka and the Peace rivers supply a steady flow of freshwater that mixes with the saltwater to create a pristine harbor and healthy fishery.

There are numerous beaches and barrier islands, some accessible only by boat, that offer many miles of beach and wade fishing opportunities plus wonderful areas to picnic, walk, or go shell hunting.

Additionally, the county has more than 400 linear miles of man-made canals, most of which are located in residential areas.

The harbor, gulf, and a considerable distance of the two rivers are **brackish** (mixed salt and freshwater), but there are substantial fresh water fishing opportunities available throughout the county. The upper portions of the Myakka and Peace rivers and Shell Creek, which flows into the Peace, offer freshwater species. The Babcock/Webb Wildlife Management Area is a state fee-charging preserve that has a large freshwater lake. That lake, coupled with the miles of freshwater canals in the county offer anglers unending freshwater opportunities