

BLACKFOOT CHARTERS

Florida Backcountry Flats Fishing



Fall Fishing is Fantastic

It has been a hot summer but fall is finally here, this means cooler days and more comfortable fishing conditions. Outback in Florida the red fishing has been red hot! Averaging between 18-25 inches catching your limit of reds has been for the most part quite easy during full day trips. Whether you prefer sight fishing the shallow water flats with fly and artificial or fishing the bottom with bait near deep channels or around island motes the reds are everywhere. But redfish are not the only thing out there; over this past year I have seen a great resurgence of the local snook population from the devastating cold snap we experienced two years ago. Snook are great fun on light tackle and are a welcomed catch when out fishing the backcountry. Along with the just awesome seatrout bite, anglers can expect to find plenty of black drum, sheephead, and jacks hungry for action. For those of you out there looking for a fight the sharks are waiting for you. While the most productive areas continue to be the local waters around Flamingo, the evening action locally can be a great option for those looking to head out on a half-day (4 hours) trip.

Tarpon will become easier to find during the day locally as we get into October/November with our annual fall mullet migration. Key Largo and the Upper Keys have many passes and points that these mullets will predictably travel through attracting the attention of tarpon, snook, barracuda, jacks, and larger snapper. As always, I encourage my more serious tarpon anglers to get an early start to improve our chances of hooking up with a silver king. By early I mean leaving the dock around 4 or 5a.m., there is less pressure on the fish and they usually bite better before the sun peaks over the horizon.

Fall is one of the best times of the year to catch the coveted flats slam (bonefish, permit, tarpon). With the cooler day time temperatures bone fishing can be done all day long rather than in the early morning and late afternoon summer time pattern. Permit return to the flats searching out shrimp and crabs but most often can be found following stingrays waiting for a free meal. You can pretty much guarantee that any permit following a ray is hungry and ready to eat.

For those of you who know me, know that to me, fishing is more than just a game, it is a way of life. So, fish hard and fish often!

Capt. Mike Makowski
Blackfoot Charters



Bonefish



Tarpon