



NEWS

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CCA MD to host blue catfish tournament

As a brighter spotlight is being shined on the dangers of invasive blue catfish, the Coastal Conservation Association Maryland's (CCA MD) Central Region Chapter has scheduled a tournament and day of information to create greater awareness of the harm this species can do to the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The event will be Saturday, March 21, at Smallwood Park in Marbury, MD. Festivities will run from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. The tourney is set for 6:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. with a party and information sharing following from 1-3 p.m. In addition to CCA MD, Maryland's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Potomac Riverkeeper are co-sponsoring the day.

"The exploding population of blue catfish in the Chesapeake watershed has begun to upset the imbalance of the ecosystem, and the blue cats rapidly expanding numbers show no signs of slowing down," said Rick Elyar, Central Region Chapter president.

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“Although trophy sized blue catfish are a valued recreational fishery, they’re now negatively affecting commercially and recreationally important bay species that migrate through on spawning runs or use the watershed areas to release eggs each spring. All of this is creating an overall imbalance of our Chesapeake Bay ecosystem.”

The tournament will include three categories— shore, boat and youth fishing— with single person kayaks qualifying for the shore division. Maryland, Virginia or District of Columbia tidal Potomac waters are open for tourney fishing. Anglers must pre-register at www.ccmd.org, where they can find complete rules.

Starting at 1 p.m. there will be presentations by NOAA and DNR along with music and a blue catfish taco buffet for those attending.

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The Coastal Conservation Association Maryland (CCA MD) is one of 17 state chapters of the Coastal Conservation Association, which has 100,000 members nationally. CCA MD is an organization of recreational anglers fighting for Maryland’s marine resources and believing the sustainability of the resource must be the priority in any fishery management decision.