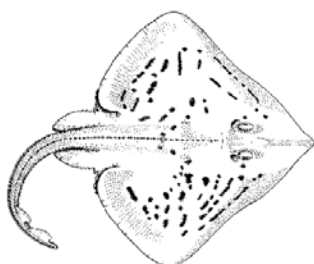




DIFF CLUB NEWS



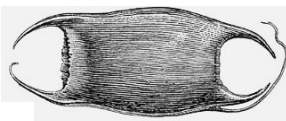
AT THE TOP



Clearnose Skate
Raja eglanteria

The clearnose skate may reach a maximum disc width of 19 inches and a maximum length of 33 inches (measured snout tip to second dorsal fin). The largest on record was about 37 inches long. They live from Massachusetts Bay to both coasts of Florida.

An instructive video on skate cleaning is at youtube.com. Enter "things joe likes skate"



Their eggs range from 2 to 3.5 inches and are often called "mermaids purses".



ON THE INSIDE

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DIFF Annual Membership Meeting

The 2009 Diff club annual meeting was held at The Hut in Pineville beginning at 11:00 am with more than 90 members present. Lunch consisted of Bar-B-Que chicken, cole slaw, baked beans and tea catered by Jack Rainwater. Special thanks to Les Gladden and the town of Pineville for the use of The Hut. After the lunch, valuable fishing-gear door prizes were given out by Rich Frank. A big thanks to Bass Pro for donating part of the door prizes. There were about a dozen lucky winners.



**Rich Frank,
Director**

Con Grant introduced the current DIFF Board Members and gave recognition to Mike Laughlin for his contribution as editor of the DIFF Newsletter and to Roger Wise as past President of DIFF.

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DIFF At UMS Meeting

I attended a meeting of the United Mobile Sportfishermen on March 9 in Salisbury MD. UMS is an alliance of approximately 30 surf fishing groups from Massachusetts to North Carolina of which DIFF is a member. Also in attendance were representatives of Assateague Mobile Sportfishermen, the Association of Surf Angling Clubs, Cape Lookout Mobile Sportfishermen, Delaware Mobile Surf-fishermen, Farragut Striper Club, Long Island Beach Buggy Association, Montauk Surf Casters, New Jersey Beach Buggy Association, North Carolina Beach Buggy Association, Outer Banks Preservation Association and Paumonak Surf-casters. UMS is actively recruiting additional members. This coalition supports free and open access to coastal beaches, maintains a legal defense fund to assist member organizations and has a scholarship program.

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**Davis Shore Ferry Service
Annette Mitchum and
Captain Mitch Mitchum**

Vickie King reported DIFF had

purchased a laptop computer and Quick-Books software. She also reported DIFF had received more than \$1,000 in memorial gifts from the families of deceased DIFF Members. Niles Chumley reported that DIFF has awarded one scholarship at \$500.

Annette Mitchum of Davis Shores Ferry Service said they will run from March 16th through December 31, 2009. Corbett Davis of Cape Lookout Cabins and Camps Ferry Service also spoke to the group. The two ferry services will alternate departure times from their respective Davis docks and will share the same dock on the island.

Ed Caskey reported the Fall Tourney will be limited to 200 participants. Those under 12 years of age whose membership dues are current will not pay a tournament entry fee. Damon & Rebecca Newton will head the Sponsorship Committee. Glenn Green again raised the issue of moving the Fall Tourney to October or November. The Board has discussed this extensively and will



**Cape Lookout Cabins and Camp
Ferry Service
Captain Corbett Davis**

revisit this issue from time to time. Currently, the Board recommends the status quo as availability of cabin and ferry reservations at the later time could severely limit the size of the Tourney...as well as other factors. Mark Weir described the

Long Range Plan committee as a "think tank". He emphasized the importance of members submitting the expanded survey forms.

J.W. Smith presented Lifetime Achievement Award plaques to honor DIFF Members Jim Grier and Floyd Elkins for their many years of support and service to DIFF.

Roger Wise announced the names of Board Members rotating off: Mike Laughlin, Roger Wise, Robert Wilson, Scott Mosley and Con Grant. He presented the slate of directors for 2009 which was elected by acclamation. The meeting adjourned at 12:30. The election of officers by the new Board followed.

DIFF Fall Tournament

The 24th annual Fall Fishing Tournament will run from Thursday September 24 through Saturday September 26. If you have never attended, please make an extra effort this year. It is a great opportunity to meet new friends and share your knowledge.

Tournament registration begins at 8:00 AM on Thursday September 24 at Cabin 10. The mandatory pre-tournament meeting begins at 11:00 AM. We should be wrapped up by Saturday at 2:00 PM. Make ferry and cabin reservations before committing tournament fee. If you have beds available in your cabin, please post on www.diffclub.com.

Damon Newton and Rebecca Newton will be sponsorship co-chair this year. Contact Damon, Rebecca or any Board member if you know of any sponsors interested in donating cash or merchandise for the tournament. Please check out our current and past sponsors at www.diffclub.com and support them with your needs.

Please complete enclosed tournament application attached to enclosed tournament rules. Please make note of two changes this year. We have limited the paid participants to 200. If participant maximum is reached before July 31, The Tournament will be full. Otherwise, Entry forms must be postmarked no later than July 31. The tournament fee will be waived for DIFF members twelve and under; but they will need to fill out an application to be on official roster for prize eligibility, hats and T-shirts.

Ed Caskey

At this meeting, I listened to Jim Keene, President of the North Carolina Beach Buggy Association (NCBBA) and John Couch, President of the Outer Banks Preservation Association (OBPA) describe at length the difficulties encountered at the Regulation Negotiation process of Cape Hatteras and the unwillingness of the environmental stakeholders (Audubon Society, Defenders of Wildlife and the Southern Environmental Law Center) to compromise. These environmental groups are very well funded, have a large membership base and lobbyists to help further the restrictions on ORV access within the National Parks. Mr. Keene and Couch recommended avoiding RegNeg at Cape Lookout if at all possible.

The meeting was hosted by the Assateague Mobile Sportfishermen and was co-located with a fishing expo that is an important fundraiser of the AMSA to help build their legal defense fund. AMSA concentrates their efforts on the Assateague Island National Seashore which has a very restrictive Over Sand Vehicle policy. For example, from March 15-August 31 (or later), the southern end of the island in Virginia is completely closed to vehicles, pedestrians and boat landings to allow for Piping Plover breeding and nesting. The remaining Virginian area of AINS, where vehicles are allowed, is restricted to 18 vehicles at a time, using a one off/one on rotation. The Maryland area of AINS allows for more vehicles (145) but has restrictive permitting fees, vehicle size limits (no duals, GVWR under 10,000 lbs), no overnight camping on the beach, (campers must relocate to the "Bullpen" to camp).

Attending the UMS meeting allowed me to see how fishing clubs and organizations very much like DIFF are dealing with the beach access issues they are experiencing and how as a group we can address any future access issues. For more information on United Mobile Sportfishermen visit www.umsnet.com.

Scot King

The ORV Corner

N EPA, EA, ESA, EIS, REG NEG, NPS, ORV, FONSI, CALO, PIPL, PEPC. No, I'm not starting into my bowl of alphabet soup; I'm looking at some of the federal documents that will govern the Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Cape Lookout (CALO) National Seashore. As confusing as this may seem, I encourage each of you to become familiar with the process that will eventually produce the ORV Management Plan for CALO. You can follow the process and learn more by accessing the National Park Service (NPS) website at www.nps.gov/calo and following the links: Management, Park Planning, PEPC and

choosing Cape Lookout. There you can see all of the plans that may have an environmental impact on CALO. If you want to see only the ORV Management Plan and its process go to the following website address: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?parkId=359&projectId=15978>. The ORV plan must be developed per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a law enacted by President Nixon in 1970. Simply stated, most Federal agencies have to comply with NEPA before they make final decisions about actions that could have environmental effects. The workbooks that some of you filled out last year are now being evaluated and the National Park Service (NPS) will soon publish a list of Draft Preliminary Alternatives for the ORV plan. There will be opportunities for public comment when that list is made available later this year. I'm begging everyone to submit your comments at that time. Last year there were only 76 workbooks submitted to help guide the development of the ORV management plan. Pardon me, but that is just pathetic when we are talking about our continued access and usage of Core Banks. Everyone needs to be involved in the ORV plan. By comparison, our brethren to the North at Cape Hatteras (CAHA) are also in the process of developing an ORV Management plan. Their process included Regulation Negotiation (REG NEG), where 29 stakeholders (representatives of surf fishing and access groups, local government, environmentalists, local business and others) attempted to reach a consensus on how to best manage ORV access at CAHA. After 14 months of meetings and long deliberations, REG NEG failed to produce an ORV plan because the environmental stakeholders refused to compromise and took their case to Federal Court to force ORV restrictions on surf fishermen and other users of beach vehicles. Dare and Hyde Counties contributed \$500,000 towards this failed effort, which now reverts to the traditional method that CALO is following.

Hopefully the ORV management process at CALO won't be as tenuous since we are currently operating under the Interim Protected Species Management Plan/ Environmental Assessment (IPSMPEA) which received a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). This suggests that CALO is on the right track to develop a workable ORV Management Plan. However don't get complacent and think you can ignore the upcoming public comment period for the Draft Alternatives. Many of you have returned the member surveys and indicated that ORV/beach access is a high priority and should be a focus of DIFF. To accomplish that focus, our collective voices must be heard to ensure that responsible vehicular access to Core Banks remains as free and open as possible. I'll be more than happy to assist anyone or answer questions on this important matter. Please feel free to contact me.

Scot King

DIFF to Offer \$1500 in Scholarships

The DIFF Club will offer three \$500 scholarships to children or relatives of active DIFF Club members. If you are a member and have a child or relative who is a high school senior planning to attend a school of higher learning, or you have a college senior planning to attend graduate school, then go to www.diffclub.com and complete an application for one of the \$500 scholarships. You still have time to submit an application! The deadline is April 30th.

Winners will be notified by May 15th.

\$500 Mini Grants Available through DIFF

The Davis Island Fishing Foundation awards up to \$500 in grants to nonprofit organizations or individuals who plan to conduct a project that can have a positive impact on the environment or community. Applications for grants will be considered semi-annually – spring (March 25th) and fall (September 25th). We encourage school service organizations, scouts or scout groups, church groups, civic groups, or individuals to apply. Please go to www.diffclub.com and submit an application for your project.

DIFF Has Five New Directors



David Holcomb



Ernie Holcomb



Damon Newton



Rebecca Newton



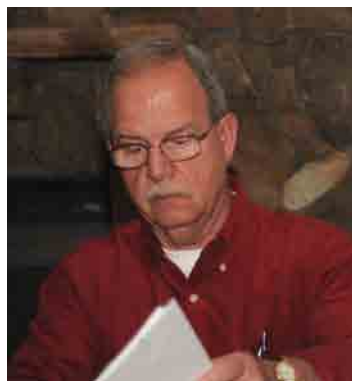
Johnny Wells

The Board of Directors meet four times each year. The 2009 meetings are planned to be January 24 in Concord NC, February 21 in Pineville NC, June 27 in Durham NC and September 23 on South Core Banks. Committees such as Long Range Planning, ORV and the Fall Tournament have additional meetings and or conference calls as needed.

DIFF Officers for 2009



Mark Weir, President



Ed Caskey, Vice President



Vickie King, Treasurer



Scot King, Vice President

President's Letter

Have you ever wondered how you could become President of DIFF? I am sure each of the past DIFF Presidents has an interesting story about their journey to that office. Any DIFF member can become the President, it could happen to you. The first step is to become an active member and be noticed by the Directors. A list of proposed Directors is developed each year by senior Directors. The list consists of returning Directors and prospective new Directors. The roster of Directors is formally presented for approval at the annual Membership Meeting in Pineville NC. The Presi-

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Niles Chumley, Secretary

dent and other officers are elected for a one year term by the new Board of Directors immediately following the Membership Meeting.

I have never seen anybody campaign to become the President of DIFF during the time I have been on the Board. There are no primaries or caucuses, unless you count the conversations on the island during fishing lulls. I declined this opportunity in the past due to a heavy work load at the office. My recent retirement eliminated that excuse and I decided against inventing another one. Although I did not actively seek the job, I do accept it with enthusiasm and I want the members of DIFF to feel confident in your new President. My background and qualifications are presented below.

I was born in Winston-Salem, NC. I completed my AS degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology at Gaston Technical Institute, div of NC State University. I later completed my BS degree in Business Administration at High Point University. I have 44 years of industry experience, including 28 years in management. I lived in Gastonia and Charlotte before settling in the small town of Mocksville, near Winston-Salem. I have been married to my high school sweetheart for 43 years. We have two sons, one granddaughter and one grandson.

My first vivid memory of Davis Island fishing as a child was watching my dad proudly remove the canvas that covered his small homemade trailer. He had just returned home from a fishing trip to Davis Island. Under the canvas was a bed of shaved ice covering layers of Flounder and Drum. My dad nailed



the fish to the garage to take photos. He cleaned fish into the evening and talked about the trip with his fishing partners. My first opportunity to visit the island was a family vacation in July of 1955. We crossed Core Sound on Sterling Dixon's boat and stayed in his duplex rental cabin in what is now known as the Great Island camp. I caught one small Puppy Drum that delighted my dad. The

next year my dad and his uncle had Sterling Dixon to build them a small cabin. My dad took me to the island on fall fishing trips once or twice a year from 1957 thru 1975. Those trips contributed to my personal maturation in ways that could never have happened at home. On the island he treated me as a fishing partner, not as a pampered child. Thanks Daddy! My first driving experience was on the island at the age of fourteen. My dad drove his '49 Olds beach buggy to a barren sandy area south of the camp. He stopped the car and told me to get under the steering wheel. I was shocked as we had never discussed me driving a car. He said "Look around. There is nothing here that you can hurt". His driving instructions were clear, so my first island drive was uneventful. Over the years he taught me to prepare bait, to catch fish, to clean fish and to repair cars by improvising with tools and materials available on the island. He taught me to be self reliant, but he also taught me to never pass by a vehicle on the island that might need assistance. Those experiences with him ended when his cabin was destroyed by the Park Service in 1976. I returned to the island in 1980 with my brother-in-law and other friends and I have not missed a year since then.

I joined DIFF in 1991 and attended my first DIFF tournament in 1994. I have been a DIFF Director since 2001. I was the Fall Tournament Director from 2003 through 2008. I led the DIFF Long Range Plan (LRP) committee for the last four years. I have been DIFF Vice President the last two years. I feel that these experiences qualify me to be the DIFF President.

Several people have asked why I put so much effort into my DIFF activities. The answer is twofold. First I realize that I have been truly blessed to enjoy the island with my dad for over twenty years and with my brother-in-law for another twenty-five years. I want to give back my time and energy to others in the hope that I can somehow contribute to their island experiences, to enrich their lives as it has enriched mine. If that sounds too righteous, my second motivation is more selfish. The reason I continue to come to the island after the passing of my dad and my brother-in-law is the new friends I have met through DIFF. There is a special bonding that takes place between people sharing experiences on the island. Those experiences

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certainly include fishing, but it goes beyond fishing in ways that I have never experienced anywhere else in my life. I believe every DIFF member has a love affair with South Core Banks. Enjoying time on South Core Banks is a life-long love affair that I plan to continue.

Now that you know about me, I want to tell you about some changes within DIFF. Five Directors have completed their service on the DIFF Board of Directors. Robert "Gaterman" Wilson is not able to visit the island or attend meetings as frequently as he once did due to his work commitments. "No offense" Gaterman, but what a lame excuse. Scott "Warthog" Mosley is leaving due to a job change that takes him far away from the island. Connie Grant is leaving the Board due to many competing demands on his time. Con was the Director of our experimental Team Tournament for the last three years. He was on the LRP committee and the Fall Tournament committee. Connie is the past President of DIFF. Mike "Sharkie" Laughlin is leaving the Board just because he thinks it is time to go.... Mike has been on the DIFF Board for eight years. Mike has served as Secretary, photographer and editor of the Newsletter for five years. Mike was also on the LRP committee and the Fall Tournament committee. "Doc" always brought a sense of professionalism to everything he did for DIFF. Roger Wise has been a Director for eight years and served as President for five years prior to Con Grant. Roger also served on the LRP committee and the Fall Tournament committee. Thanks so much to these gentlemen for your many contributions. We hope you will continue to support the club as your circumstances permits.

We have five new Directors for 2009: David Holcomb from Olin NC, Ernie Holcomb from Yadkinville NC, Damon Newton from Conway SC, Rebecca Newton from Conway SC and Johnny Wells from Greenville NC. The 2009 officers are: Mark Weir, President; Ed Caskey, Vice President; Scot King, Vice President; Niles Chumley, Secretary and Vickie King, Treasurer. There are additional changes in responsibility for the DIFF leadership in 2009. Ed Caskey is taking over as the Fall Tournament Director. All the Directors will be supporting Ed, with Damon and Rebecca Newton coordinating our sponsors. At this time there are no plans for the Team Tournament in 2009. We

would like to find a niche for it. Please let us know if you would be willing to champion this event. Scot King has the important role of leading our involvement with the CALO ORV plan. The ORV plan alternatives are scheduled for public comment this year. Please watch the diffclub.com website for current information on ORV and other topics. Scot will also chair the LRP committee that will include Ann Beeson, Ed Caskey, David Holcomb, Mike Laughlin, Johnny Wells and me. Please complete the enclosed Member Survey form and return it no later than April 20. The information from the survey will be used by the LRP committee. Rich Frank will continue his responsibility for the annual Membership Meeting in Pineville. Niles Chumley will continue leading our fledgling Scholarships and Grants program. Johnny and Mary Ellen Wells will be enhancing the diffclub.com website. Damon Newton and Rebecca Newton will be exploring new DIFF merchandise.

We will depend on B.K. Barringer for his many years of DIFF knowledge and general wisdom, including Board of Director nominations. Every effort is being made to have smooth transitions for the changing roles to ensure our continued success.

We have enjoyed the high standard of this Newsletter established by Mike Laughlin. In addition to the professional format and content, his passion for photography has elevated it to a higher level of excellence. I am grateful that Mike has offered to help me in my new role as the new Newsletter editor. I will do my best to provide a good quality Newsletter to you. I want to add a new column for member articles under topics such as "Fishing Tips" or "Island Recipes". I am especially interested in unusual recipes that are invented out of desperation such as Skate Wings or Mullet (bait) Stew, etc. Please contact me if you have an interesting article for the Newsletter.

Mark Weir



**B. K. Barringer,
Director Emeritus**

DIFF Club News

Davis Island Fishing Foundation
P.O. Box 72395
Durham, NC 27722

Reminder

**Renew your North Carolina
Coastal Recreational Fishing
License for 2009**

**[www.ncfisheries.net/
recreational/NCCRFL.htm](http://www.ncfisheries.net/recreational/NCCRFL.htm)
800-682-2632**



**Davis Island Fishing
Foundation**

P.O. Box 72395
Durham, NC 27722

Officers

Mark Weir, President 336 306 0050
mark@diffclub.com
Ed Caskey, Vice President 803 285 9025
Scot King, Vice President 919 632 3099
Vickie King, Treasurer 919 632 3099
Niles Chumley, Secretary 803 366 5079

Board of Directors

B. K. Barringer 704 663 4044
Richard Frank 704 588 4549
David Holcomb 704 876 6052
Ernie Holcomb 336 961 2483
Damon Newton 803 471 6101
Rebecca Newton 843 254 7739
Johnny Wells 252 367 8822

Email the Board of Directors: diff@diffclub.com

DIFF...Beyond fishing!

The Davis Island Fishing Foundation is a non-profit group dedicated to preserving the cultural, historic and natural heritage of Davis Island in Carteret County, NC.

The DIFF CLUB helps maintain the cabins at the Great Island camp and is involved in projects designed to protect the fish and wildlife population in the portion of Cape Lookout Seashore known as Core Banks South.

Club members can fish in annual fishing tournaments sponsored by the Club.

If you are interested in joining DIFF, visit our website, www.diffclub.com for membership form.

*This newsletter is published and edited by Mark Weir
Photos by Mike Laughlin.*

