

Sea Trail Fishing Club Member's Meeting – July 16, 2026

Pink Palace, Sea Trail Plantation, 295 Rice Mill Circle, Sunset Beach, NC

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM by President, Mike Shannon (Mike 1) followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 29 members and guests in attendance.

New member John Altenberg was welcomed to the club.

Guest Ailian (sp?) was also in attendance and welcomed.

The Meeting Agenda was presented and approved without change.

Minutes of the June 18th Member's Meeting were presented and approved by the members in attendance.

Nick Leb, Treasurer, said that her still had some membership cards that had not yet been picked up. It was pointed out that many local shops and stores offer discounts to Club Members once they show their membership cards.

Nick next gave a brief update on Club finances. Nick's presentation was brilliantly crafted, and properly detailed. The Treasurer's Report was approved as presented. Cash balance was \$10,969 with current liabilities of \$1,520 (2026 tournament awards). There were 185 club members as of the date of the meeting.

At the conclusion of the business portion of the meeting, Steve P. introduced guest speaker Captain Strange from Strange Magic Charters located in Little River SC.

Capt Strange was asked to focus his presentation on flounder fishing citing the two-week, one fish / day NC season coming up in early September and the more liberal season in SC. Some germane points of his presentation include:

- The captain prefers a 6'6" medium action pole. He is also partial to Shimano reels as they seem to be rugged workhorses that last many seasons which is critical in the charter fishing business.
- He uses a 20 lb fluorocarbon leader, typically 23" – 36" long. His current main line of choice is 15 lb braid but he said he was considering switching to 10 lb braid in the future.
- He prefers attaching his leader to the main line with a small snap swivel to facilitate easy change out of the leader / lure when fishing.

- The capt. said the waters were currently rife with easily available bait with mud minnows, mullet, and menhaden which are his current baits of choice over shrimp since pin fish and other nuisance species are also abundant this time of year and they like to steal shrimp. He also prefers using bigger baits to catch bigger fish this time of year.
- The captain's preferred artificial baits include Gulp and Zman baits in the swimming mullet / paddle tail shapes in chartreuse or white colors.
- Whether fishing live baits or artificials, the captain prefers ¼ oz jig heads in either red, white, or chartreuse colors.
- He prefers fishing both sides of the high tide and focuses his casts between the shell line and the grass.
- He focuses on looking to the presence of bait in the water when selecting a spot to fish.
- He also looks for areas where marshes drain into the Intracoastal (e.g., marsh drains).
- When fishing the falling tide, he focuses on creek outlets.
- The captain emphasized the importance of keeping the bait / lure low in the water column since flounder are predator fish lurking on the bottom on the water bed.
- When fishing live baits, upon feeling a "thump", the captain said he counts up to ten before softly setting the hook. This allows the fish to stun the bait (first thump) and then turn it around so it can swallow it head first.
- When fishing artificials, the captain said it is best to set the hook upon the first tug and not delay as when fishing live baits.
- When landing the fish, it is important to keep its head in the water before netting (preferably head first). This reduces the risk of the fish spitting out the hook and catching the fisherperson. It also helps prevent all your friends laughing at you (right Mike Sutton) when you lose the flounder of a lifetime as it approaches the boat)
- The captain prefers to fish in the September / October timeframe for flounder as the water cools down. He said that the fish are very lethargic in the summer heat as the water temperatures spiral. If planning on fishing in the summer, the captain said it is best to get out first thing in the morning before it gets too hot and the fish turn off.
- The captain charges \$450 for 1 – 3 fisherfolk on his boat and \$50 for a 4th person. He said 2 – 3 people is optimal.

Captain Strange wrapped up his presentation at 7:30 after a brief question / answer period. Steve P. expressed the Club's appreciation to the captain and emphasized that if you want flounder, see the captain since he primarily fishes SC where the season is limits are much more reasonable and fisherfolk friendly.

Mike 1 announced a short break and the meeting reconvened at 7:45.

Mike 1 reviewed the results of the recent poll where club members expressed an interest in an offshore charter. There were 32 responses with 75% expressing an interest, and 25% saying they had no interest. Of the 75% that were interested, the majority (62.5%) were interested in a 10-hour charter vs. a 6, 8, or 12-hour charter. Mike Sutton will schedule a meeting of the Social Team to pursue setting an offshore charter up.

Mike 1 also presented the results of a poll to determine which days the members preferred the club hosted tournaments and events should be held on (e.g., weekdays / weekends / don't care) and 94% said they had no preference (e.g., weekdays or weekends were ok). This poll was in response to a concern previously voiced by a member that events hosted on weekdays excluded participation of individuals who worked.

Next Brian reviewed the recent and future tournaments. Currently, there are 27 members registered in the annual club tournament with 152 entries for the covered species. There will be \$1520 in awards handed out at the end of the year to the individual winners in each category. There are currently 19 fish reported so far.

The speckled trout tournament on the pier hosted 18 members. With John Malloy winning 1st place and Andrew Kross taking 2nd place.

The Tournament Team has a "Boats with Guests" slotted drum tournament slated for August 10th. This will be a one-day, weight-based tournament and the Team is looking for volunteers who own boats to host other members to fish with them. There will be an optional \$5 entry fee charged for those wishing to get in the pool.

A flounder tournament will be held 9/1 – 9/14 to coincide with the NC flounder season. This tournament will be awarded on the longest fish and will be a handicapped event with penalties / enhancements given for the venue used to catch the fish (e.g., pier / surf / boat / charter / dynamite).

A bull drum tournament is planned for the entire month of October.

Mike Sutton (Mike 2) next covered the undertakings of the Social Team. They are planning a Take a Kid Fishing (TaKF) pier event to focus on kids who are less privileged and not afforded the opportunity to fish. Mike is working with Gary from the pier to plan schedule this event.

Mike 2 is also working on setting up an offshore charter as mentioned above and is working with the Team and capt Jule (Fish Screamer III) in an effort to get a better handle on this event. Buddy next covered club apparel sales. As previously announced, the club will no longer carry a inventory of shirts but will facilitate orders when there are enough people committed to purchasing the minimum number required from the vendor. Buddy said he has the current order on hand and people that ordered from him need to pick up their shirts.

Next, there was a brief discussion of “fish stories” where members get to tell stories about their recent exploits, both fishing and other. These sessions are typically entertaining and demonstrate just how creative fisherfolks can be. Also discussed was the recent boat armada to celebrate the USA’s 250th anniversary. The event was highly successful and well attended.

The 50:50 Drawing was won by member Tim Coda and was \$55. The Club retained \$55

Next, the door prize winner was selected and the humble, yet handsome, intelligent (albeit modest to a fault) club secretary, Jim, B. won a pro-fishing tool set. A second door prize, a donated rod rack, was won by John Mallory.

The Club sponsored a charter raffle for 3 members to win. Tickets were limited to 50 total and were \$10 each. The Club sold 33 tickets and will augment the remaining \$120 to pay for the charter. This month’s charter is with Capt Tim Disano. Three tickets were selected and the following members won:

- Roman Poremski
- Kevin Daley
- Fred Pearson

It is the responsibility of the winners to coordinate schedules and plan the charter trip at a mutually agreeable date and time.

Mike 1 adjourned the meeting at 8:20 PM

Submitted: Jim Baumgartner, STFC Club Secretary