

Fishing – charter firms are busy and report big bags in the Forth Estuary

Sea fishing is at his prime in the Forth Estuary, according to local experts, and charters from several local ports report being busy as the holiday period continues.

Mackerel are definitely in and fishermen on the Fife coast – some using kayaks – and into Edinburgh have noted greatly increased activity.

Mackerel flesh is high in omega-3 oils and millions of tons are landed by commercial fishermen.

Sport anglers value the fighting qualities of the species which have vertical stripes on their backs and deeply forked tails.

Aquamarine Charters of Eymouth are one of several firms who offer regular trips and out picture shows Davey Taylor with a 7lb cod hooked on a recent trip.

Skipper Ronnie Marshall was confident as we cast off from the dockside.

He was right. As we motored out to sea I placed three three feathers at the end of my main line and I hooked into three lively mackerel on light tackle on my first cast off Burnmouth.

Other anglers on-board were also quickly into these darting,

hard-fighting fish which, when hooked, provide great sport for all ages.

Mackerel are easy to hook they provide delight for youngsters who may be new to the sport.

Taking a place on a charter, where there are fellow anglers around to assist, and which are run by experienced fishermen, could be an interesting departure during the holidays.

Rods, loaded with suitable line and feathers, were provided on-board Sagittatus and my bag eventually included mackerel and cod, both tempted by the colourful red, yellow and white feathers.

The company run charters subject to numbers and it was not just mackerel which were brought on board.

Several anglers hooked into sizeable cod. John Williamson, one of several pensioners on board, used a white Sidewinder rubber lure to claim several fine fish.

Skipper Ronnie is a former trawler skipper and he even provided a demonstration on-board on how to gut the fish once caught.

Pan-fried mackerel, incidentally, take three minutes to cook skin side down in olive oil (depending on the thickness of the fish) and once done turn them over for a minute or so off the heat then serve.

Aquamarine are one of a number of firms housed at East Coast ports.

Another is BeeCool of Eyemonth and Andara II is operated by Trevor Springford out of Dunbar. He reported that anglers were landing plenty of cod and he added: "Mackerel have become more plentiful and some reasonable ling have also been caught.

"Sidewinders are still going well, but fresh bait takes a lot

of beating.”

On land, Bowden Springs fishery boss Jim Gargaro reported that lots of damselfish have been seen on the water and damselfish patterns and buzzers have been catching.

Notable catches have included Raymond Clark from Glasgow with three rainbow trout for 9 lbs4oz all caught on a size 14 black spider on a floating line.

Angling newcomer Alan Rennie also from Glasgow had two fine fish for 7lbs 4oz with the best at 4lbs 4oz.

Bowden’s bait loch has also been fishing well with worm on a float working well for several anglers.

John Grieve from Falkirk caught five 14lbs 8oz on deep fished power and the fish of the week was caught by Chris Sorley from Maddison of 6lbs 4oz on ledgered power bait.

Remember, Fraser Thomson at Pottishaw near Whitburn is offering free fishing plus tuition on a Friday from 1pm to 4pm during the school holidays. Ring Pottishaw to register an interest.