

# Charter owners booking for summer sea angling trips

**Skippers and charter boat owners around the Firth of Forth and further afield are beginning to receiving bookings for chartered sea angling trips now that the weather appears to be improving.**

Firms operate on both sides of the Firth with several in Fife and others on the Edinburgh side of the water.

Aspire skipper Iain Gatherum is one of the most experienced and he runs Sea Angling Trips East Neuk. Iain and has been taking charters fishing for 40 years off the Fife coast.

The days when he was fully booked by clubs are gone, he said, but he still takes up to eight anglers on two, four and six-hour trips.

His home port is Anstruther and trips run from May to October but the skipper stressed that his trips and where he fishes are weather dependent.

Codling is one of his main target species and the most popular time of the season for anglers is when mackerel make an appearance in the Forth.

He confirmed that an angler hooked into a porbeagle shark last year, the first time in four decades that has happened.

Iain stressed that anglers should bring their own ice if they

intend to keep their catch fresh and added that there is no catering on-board.  
He does not have a toilet.

Fishermen board the catamaran via a pontoon in Arnstruther Harbour and his normal area of operations are to the fishing grounds from Elie to Kingsbarns, including the Isle of May, around 8km off the coast.

Lugworm is, he suggested, the best bait and it is preferable to have it fresh, not frozen. He has rods and reels available for rent but he encourages anglers to bring their own gear and lead sinkers.

Iain added: "The length of the trip and wind direction have an input on where we would be fishing on the day." The cost of a charter is £150 for two hours, £200 for three hours and £320 for six hours.

Still in Fife, Forth Sea Safaris ran mackerel fishing trips from East Dock, Burnisland, last year and can carry up to 12 passengers. They are equipped with the latest navigation and safety systems and they can supply waterproofs if needed. Last year it was from £25 per person.

Over the Forth to Dunbar and Andara II has been based in the East Lothian harbour since 2010 and is licensed for six anglers. Skipper Trevor Springford operates within a 20-mile radius from May to October and he is equipped with all the necessary safety equipment.

Further south, Eyemouth-based skipper Derek Anderson operates, weather permitting, throughout the year and coalfish and ling are among the main species he targets with mackerel and bass the focus during the summer. Prices last weekend were £50 per person.

He operates MV Sagittarius, a catamaran with a roomy deck almost five meters wide with an island wheelhouse. It is ten

metres long and trips can be booked by groups and individuals.

They can last up to six hours. The boat has a toilet and tea and coffee facilities. Equipment can be hired and the skipper has a small selection of hooks, weights and lures onboard and cod have been recent targets. Squid has proved the best bait.

PICTURE: Anglers on board Aspire show off their catch. Picture courtesy of Iain Gatherum, skipper of Aspire.