

# Wood, Field and Stream

By GEORGE GREENFIELD

The 1936 salt-water fishing season proved, if nothing else, that we must revise our ideas about the haunts of big game fish. The sensational catches of white marlin off Ocean City, Md.; the development of giant tuna angling at Jordan's Bay and the introduction of rod-and-reel fishing for swordfish off Louisburg, N. S., revealed new and fascinating places for sport.

You never can tell where the fish are until you start fishing for them. How true this is may be gathered from a recent experience of a South Carolina sportsman, A. T. Heath of Sumter. Paul H. Wesley of Murrells Inlet, S. C., forwards this column a letter written by Mr. Heath, describing an expedition to unexplored water off the Carolina coast. The letter follows:

"I took my son and Bit Wilder in my 38-foot cruiser, Florolina, and ran out to a coral reef thirty-eight miles southeast of Murrells Inlet. We got out there and caught barracuda, dolphin and one large sailfish.

## Sighted Three Marlin

"While my son was playing the sailfish, I saw more sails than I ever observed in the Gulf Stream off the Florida coast. There were probably 75 or 100 jumping all around us. I saw three marlin which would probably have gone between 200 and 300 pounds. After we landed the sailfish we just had time to get back to the inlet, so, while we had three other strikes, we did not get any more sails.

"For two years I had been interested in going out to the Gulf Stream off the South Carolina coast, as there is a big coral reef shown on the chart. Rather, it is a coral mountain, as the depth right at the Gulf Stream showed 119 fathoms. On one side of the reef it shows a depth of 69 fathoms, on the other side 77 fathoms and on top of the reef 24 fathoms.

"I had always thought you could get regular Florida fishing at this point. Two days after the trip I mentioned, we went out to the spot where we had caught the sailfish. The water there was very calm, just like a mirror, and while we could see the small fish about six feet under the surface, they were not working or moving, and we did not see any sailfish or marlin then.

## Caught Dolphin Till Tired

"So I decided to run on north about thirty miles further to the big coral reef on the Gulf Stream. On the way out there we ran across a school of dolphin and caught them until we got tired. Then we ran straight on north to the Gulf Stream. The water was about 150 feet deep, which seemed to be the edge of the reef. We took hand lines and cut mullet to see what was on the bottom.

"Drifting out to where the reef went straight off into the stream, we commenced to catch grouper. We caught four different kinds, the Nassau, the red and black, and one I had never seen in Florida. It was colored all black, with white spots on it.

"These fish were from twenty-five to forty pounds, and we had started getting some larger ones when they began breaking the hand lines. We then moved back two miles inshore on the reef and caught red snapper, Lane snapper and a twenty-pound tuna that took a trolled lure.

## Sharks Spoiled Catch

"We had some fun pulling up the red snapper until the sharks commenced following and cutting them off when we had brought them up about 125 feet. For diversion, we threw mullet out on the surface and as the sharks came up to grab them we took shots at the pirates with a rifle.

"We dropped around to different points of the reef to see what kinds of fish we could catch. None of us caught any grouper away from the first drop in the Gulf Stream, as the grouper is a tropical fish and stays altogether in warm water, principally in Florida. I imagine they would not leave the stream at this point.

"At one time I caught sight of a shark that seemed to be about sixteen feet long. I am under the impression it was a mako, but he went down before I could get a good look at him.

"As near as I can figure, we caught nearly every variety of fish that is taken off the Florida coast and the keys on the edge of the Gulf Stream."

Mr. Wesley, in forwarding the interesting letter by Mr. Heath, adds that in addition to the species of fish mentioned, barracuda have been caught in large quantities off the coast. It seems here is another potential fishing ground worthy of investigation.

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