

SHOREBOUNDANGLER

by Bugs

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I made a quick trip to the PC south jetty this evening. I got there with only about an hour and a half of light left. I travelled light, with just one rod, my little green tackle box, and a cooler with some fresh dead shrimp and a couple of beers on ice.

We had a strong cold front blow in last night. The wind blew 30+ mph out of the north all day. It finally laid down a little just before dark, giving me a little window to fish. When I got to the rocks the surf was sandy brown. Big waves were moving sideways down the beach. The water in the channel was also off colored and moving in on a slow incoming tide.

I started on the surf side near the base of the jetty. I soaked dead shrimp on bottom right next to the rocks and never got a bite. Switching over to the channel side was the same story – long soaks and no bites. I relocated a little farther out and put another shrimp out on bottom in the surf. This time I felt a strong tap and my line went slack. I reeled down to take up slack and made a big swinging hookset. Fish on! After a short fight I swung the darkest black drum I've ever seen up on the rocks. It was clearly too short to keep, so I took a quick picture and released it.



The darkest Black Drum ever!

Happy to finally be getting bites, I cracked a beer and put another shrimp back out in the same area. So began an epic run of hardheads! I caught big ones, small ones, and one with a missing fin. I somehow forgot my pliers, so each time I caught one I had to reluctantly grab them by hand to unhook. At first I was taking pictures of each one until some guy walked by and asked why I was taking pictures of catfish. Why indeed!



I relocated again out near the middle of the jetty. I was encouraged when I caught 2 small whiting in a row. I considered boxing them but decided against it. Then the hardhead catching resumed. I caught 4 or 5 more before finally catching a big piggie perch. By now the sun had hit the dunes, so I called it a day.



Going forward for the next couple of weeks, I encourage anyone fishing the Packery jetties to try dead shrimp. This latest front should drop the water temperature into the lower 70's. That along with the short days will encourage a big push of fish out of the

laguna and into the gulf. I'll be watching for any window with a steady outgoing tide to target big croaker and sand trout in the channel. Remember to take care of your shrimp. Don't let them cook in the sun. Fish on bottom with just enough weight to cast. Recast if your rig swings wide on the tide. The last tip would be to down size your rig. You shouldn't need anything larger than a 1 outh hook for any of the pan-fishing expected the next couple of weeks.

