

# OFF THE DOCK

WITH D. A. MANN

~ Can't Buy a Fish ~

2/14/25

To say that inshore fishing over the past month has been almost non-existent would be an understatement. Granted, it's had its moments, but overall, you couldn't buy a fish.

So when I went out early Friday morning, I was optimistic that maybe some sense of *normal* had returned to the Bays. Dead fish floating in Lyons Bay greeted me. By the time I reached the Intracoastal and headed north against an out-going tide, I passed more fish. These were in the process of dying swimming upside-down in circles. Disturbing. The red tide had invaded the bays. It must have come in quickly for I was seeing Mackerel, Trout, Reds, Sheepshead, Black Drum and Pompano (Pompano was a first for me) pass by my boat – not the normal mix of dead fish. In my 50 years on the water, I have never seen anything like it. Made me sad; and determined.

I drifted the whole Bay north-to-south going with the tide and only had a couple Ladies and one Lizardfish to show for it. I spent the next hour behind Snake Island which proved a total waste of time. The (now) incoming tide brought carpets of dead fish with it. I called it at 1:30 and came home. Red tide in February; just when you thought it couldn't get any worse.

I did have a nice Valentine's Day thanks to my wife. She caught a nice Lobster tail at Detweiler's.