



# Texas tornadoes

Keen kayaker Ian Harris and friends enjoy rocket-fuelled freshwater lure action near the Kennedy Space Centre.

**Y**ou could be forgiven for thinking that after four days' worth of 4am starts we would have had enough of kayak fishing. But this was Texas – and David Morris, Rob Appleby and I had just finished competing in the Hobie World Kayak Fishing Championships.

We had all caught some great largemouth bass on lures from the freshwater lakes near the state capital Austin, but now we were looking forward to a spot of saltwater fishing from the kayaks. We hoped to cross lines with some of the huge black drum that frequent the shores around Galveston, but we had a problem – namely the breeze, which had picked up out of nowhere and scuppered our chances of kayak fishing in the surf.



A redfish is released

"All hell broke loose. The fish powered across in front of me and twisted the kayak around"

## Plan B - inner space

With the help of some guys from Hobie, it was time to implement Plan B. We were to fish the shallow saltwater flats of Clear Lake, near the Kennedy Space Centre at Houston.

We arrived at the slipway to meet our guides for the day – Cam, Marshall and Jon, a great bunch of lads who know the flats and creeks like the back of their hand.

As we paddled our Hobie Outback kayaks out to our chosen location, baitfish were jumping all around us. We chatted to our guide who told us that these



Playing another redfish



fish were mullet. Marshall reckons that the fishing is good all year round, that there is always something to give a good pull on the end of your line, so our hopes were high. We were going to be fishing exclusively with lures – a mix of spinnerbaits, soft plastics and jig heads (left).

I had two rods, a 6ft baitcasting outfit and my favourite 7ft Tekdon Concept 702L rod teamed up with a Mitchell Mag Pro Extreme 2000 reel. This reel is incredibly light (231g) and saltwater-resistant – Dave Box at Veals of Bristol helped us out when he heard we were struggling to get hold of suitable tackle for our trip, and his advice was spot-on. The reel is a cracker.

The guides split up and searched different parts of the saltwater flats to try to locate the fish for us. Cam took us to a creek that was angled so the wind would blow us straight down the middle. That was the plan, but in reality David and I found ourselves constantly having to manoeuvre using the rudder in order to prevent ourselves hitting the bushes and trees lining the banks of the creek.

The idea was to drift down the channel, casting the jig heads as close to the bank as possible and then working them back into the kayak, searching as much of the

bank as possible. Cam made it look easy – but it wasn't.

**Rootin' for redfish**

About halfway down the creek, Cam hooked into a fish and we both knew at once that it was a decent one. It spun his kayak around against the wind in the blink of an eye, and his rod was bent over at an alarming angle.

"It's a big red," he shouted, as the fish began towing the kayak along. Seconds later, it was gone – the double Uni knot connecting the braid to the fluorocarbon leader had parted, and with it went the prize. "How big do you think it was?" I asked Cam. "Well over 20lb," he replied.

We paddled around the corner to a spot where the edge of the flats was marked with sticks. The water was only two or three feet deep, the wind had picked up by now, and on the advice of Cam we had switched to spinnerbaits.

On my second cast I thought I

felt a couple of taps, so I cast back into the same spot and slowed the retrieve down just a touch... twitch, pull, bang! All hell broke loose. The fish powered across in front of me and twisted the kayak around. Cam caught my eye and he had a big grin on his face as he once again shouted: "Redfish!"

These redfish really scrap, and it took quite a while to coax this one to the kayak. It was not big, but I was pleased as Punch!

Then it was back to the creek, and David was now into a redfish. Again, it gave a really good account of itself and he was somewhat chuffed!

**Lure of the day**

Marshall, in the mouth of the creek, was bagging up on speckled trout. We had a couple of drifts without success, and then Marshall gave us both a crazy looking Berkley lure which he was using. The results were instant – David and I were into a

series of speckled and sand trout. David then caught an old adversary – a catfish. These fish have nasty spines, but Marshall safely unhooked it.

I somehow managed to catch a flounder, which promptly dropped off as I got it alongside the kayak. I still can't get my head around how big their flounders are, or the fact that they catch so many on lures. Food for thought.

And that was the end of our day. I would thoroughly recommend kayak fishing the flats in Texas – it's great fun, and the Hobie kayaks make it possible to fish hands-free so that adjusting your drift pattern is a doddle.

I would advise you to employ the services of an experienced guide – it will really improve your chances of hooking something decent. If you would like to employ the services of Cam or Marshall, they can be contacted at [www.texaskayakguide.com](http://www.texaskayakguide.com) (Marshall) or [www.camfishes.com](http://www.camfishes.com) (Cam).



Discussing species and tactics

**Test-paddle a Hobie**

Hobie Cat Centre of Poole, Dorset, is offering Sea Angler readers an opportunity to try a Hobie Mirage Drive fishing kayak at Rockley Point in Poole Harbour.

A demo charge of £50 will be refunded against the purchase of a Hobie Kayak from the centre.

Call the centre on 01202 671661 to book your session, mentioning Sea Angler.



**BYELAW 5**

**MARINE AND COASTAL ACCESS ACT 2009**

**NWIFCA has made a new Byelaw prohibiting all fishing of sea fish in the area known as the Heysham Bass Nursery**

A full copy of the byelaw is available free from NWIFCA office or website [www.nw-ifca.gov.uk](http://www.nw-ifca.gov.uk)

Objections to confirmation of this byelaw should be sent in writing within 28 days of publication of this notice

(Closing date: 15/03/2013) to:

NWIFCA, 1 Preston Street, Carnforth LA5 9BY  
or [office@nw-ifca.gov.uk](mailto:office@nw-ifca.gov.uk) AND Marine Conservation and Enforcement Team, MMO, PO Box 1275, Newcastle NE99 5BN

[IFCABylaws@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:IFCABylaws@marinemanagement.org.uk)

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