



Annual Maryland Sport Fisheries Achievement Award Presentation

2026

Presented to:

Lenny Rudow

by

**The Maryland Department of Natural Resources
and
The Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission**



Josh Kurtz

Secretary

Department of Natural Resources

Michael Luisi

Director

Department of Natural Resources,
Fishing and Boating Services

Scott Lenox

Chair

Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission

2026 Award Presentation

October 20, 2026

Lenny Rudow,

nominated by

Jesse Howe and Theodore H. Carski

Maryland Sport Fisheries Achievement Award

2026 Recipient

Lenny Rudow



Lenny with his sons David and Max, enjoying the Chesapeake Bay on Christmas day in their very favorite way. Photo credit goes to Zach Ditmars.

“Fishing is my life and Maryland is my home, so to be recognized with this award means more to me than I can even say. Thank you Maryland, thank you anglers, thank you fishing community for always being there when I needed you, and I promise I’ll work as hard as I can for as long as I can to help bring new anglers into the fold, promote fishing in Maryland, and rejuvenate our many diverse fisheries. I hope everyone who happens to read these words will open up their calendar right now, look for the next open day, and mark it “Going Fishing!”

- Lenny Rudow

Nominated by Theodore H. Carski

Lenny Rudow is the Editor of FishTalk Magazine, a monthly publication, and the Angler-in-Chief for the monthly broadcast ‘Live with Lenny’. Lenny authors many articles for publications such as BoatUS Magazine. Lenny is also an often-invited speaker at many regional fishing/tackle/outdoor shows.

Through all these avenues Lenny is an extremely strong proponent of sustainable recreational fishing in Maryland. Not just how and where to catch fish, but with a special emphasis on how to fish sustainably. Some examples often discussed by Lenny include sizing the gear to the fish for rapid catch and release, using single hooks rather than treble hooks, using barbless hooks, using rubberized nets, how to minimize handling the fish prior to release, moving to a new location if fish are undersized or the wrong species, and not targeting striped bass when water/air temps are too high. Fishing and eating invasives, such as blue and flathead catfish, and snakeheads are also covered in detail. Including a monthly fishing derby, in conjunction with CCAMD, the Great Chesapeake Invasives Count. Lenny is a very strong voice for the use of sound science to inform fish management. Lenny also emphasizes the importance of good water quality and better habitat to good fishing, including what each fisher can do to help enhance water quality. Lenny often invites experts, or chairs a panel of experts, on these topics to help inform and educate Maryland fishers. These positions are not always popular with many fishers, yet Lenny continues to represent these practices as the right way to recreationally fish. Based on the year-round, consistent, positive, upbeat message Lenny delivers on Maryland recreational fishing, I can’t think of anyone more deserving of this award!

Lenny Rudow has been a tireless champion for recreational fishing in Maryland and the greater Chesapeake Bay region for more than three decades, dedicating his professional life to improving anglers' understanding of fisheries, habitat issues, conservation challenges, and sustainable fishing practices. His work has made a significant and lasting impact on fish and recreational fishing in Maryland through education, outreach, habitat awareness, and community engagement.

As the Angler-in-Chief and founding editor of Rudow's FishTalk Magazine—a publication specifically created to serve Chesapeake and Mid-Atlantic anglers—Lenny has built one of the most trusted sources of timely, accurate, and highly practical fishing information available to the regional recreational fishing community. Recognizing a longstanding gap in region-specific fishing media, he developed FishTalk to be a comprehensive resource for how-to guidance, seasonal fishing reports, and expert advice targeted to this area's unique fisheries. The magazine's print and digital platforms, along with weekly reports and video content, help anglers of all skill levels understand and engage with local fish populations, seasons, techniques, and opportunities.

Lenny's background and professional achievements reflect a lifetime of immersion in the sport and science of fishing. He is an experienced marine journalist with more than 30 years in the fishing and boating fields. In addition to founding FishTalk, Lenny serves as Electronics and Fishing Editor for BoatUS Magazine and is a frequent contributor to a wide range of national marine and fishing publications, including Saltwater Sportsman, Sport Fishing, YachtWorld, boats.com, and others. He has authored at least seven fishing books and numerous e-guides covering topics such as fishing Maryland's public lakes and ponds, mid-Atlantic species techniques, and common angler mistakes — resources that have broadened knowledge and helped countless anglers become more effective, safe, and respectful of fish and habitat.

Lenny's writing ability has been recognized extensively by his peers. His work has received multiple awards from Boating Writers International and the Outdoor Writers Association of America for excellence in craft and content, reflecting his skill in communicating complex techniques and concepts in clear, engaging ways. Beyond the written word, he has served in leadership and volunteer roles such as judging the NMMA Innovation Awards and serving as president of Boating Writers International, further demonstrating his commitment to advancing the profession and the fishing community.

Through FishTalk and his broader work, Lenny has advanced education and conservation advocacy for Maryland's fisheries. He regularly engages the fishing community with "LIVE with Lenny" livestreams and interactive how-to sessions that offer real-time seasonal tips, dialogue, and guidance for anglers preparing for each fishing season. Additionally, as host and moderator of discussion series such as A Chesapeake Perspective, he has brought together fishery scientists, habitat specialists, and resource managers to discuss issues like habitat preservation, restoration, and angler access, connecting anglers directly with experts and empowering the community to better understand and help address conservation challenges facing the Bay.

Lenny's work extends beyond information dissemination; he provides mentorship and real-world experience to students and emerging media professionals. Through internships and externships with FishTalk, he has helped young writers from local colleges gain practical experience in both writing and understanding fisheries issues — reinforcing the next generation of communicators in the sport and stewardship of fisheries.

In all of his activities, Lenny's commitment has consistently centered on enhancing Maryland's recreational fishing experience, promoting conservation-minded angling, fostering education, and supporting sustainable fishery enjoyment for all. His career exemplifies the depth and breadth of meaningful contributions envisioned by the Maryland Sport Fisheries Achievement Award, and he is a deserving candidate whose efforts have enriched both the sport and the stewardship of Maryland's fisheries.

Maryland Sport Fisheries Achievement Award

Past Recipients

2026 - Lenny Rudow

2025 - Shawn Kimbro

2024 - Dr. Ray Morgan

2023 - Captain Monty Hawkins

2022 - James 'Jim' Gracie (posthumous)

2022 - Captain Bruno Vasta

2021 - Robert Wall

2021 - Joseph W. Brooks (posthumous)

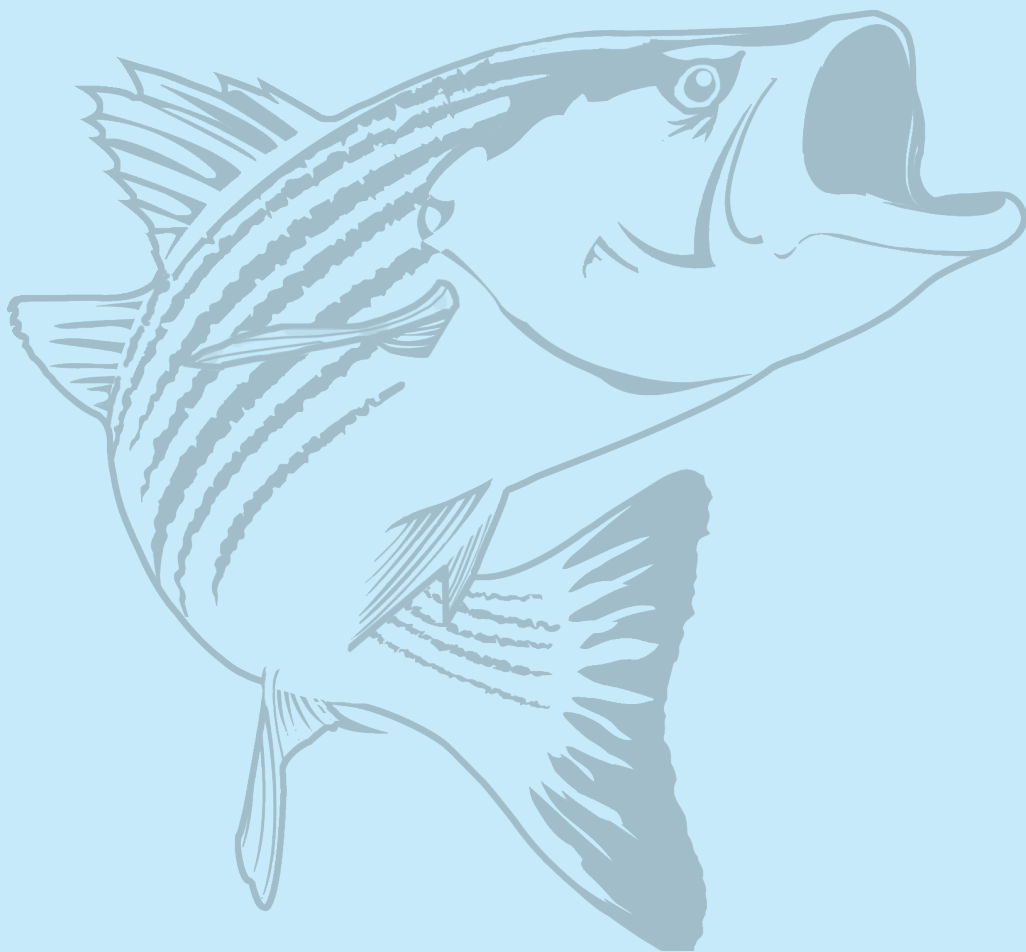
2020 - Dr. Kenneth Lewis

2020 - Benard 'Lefty' Kreh (posthumous)

Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission

The commission was established to advise the Maryland Department of Natural Resources on sport fisheries-related matters referred to the commission by the department. The commission is comprised of individuals from across the State who represent the interests of various constituencies in recreational fisheries and one member represents the Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission.

The Maryland Sport Fisheries Achievement Award was established in 2019 by the commission for Maryland-related recreational fisheries. This prestigious award recognizes individuals who have provided sustained efforts in habitat management, conservation, education, research, and / or other meaningful contributions that benefit fish and recreational fishing in Maryland. The award is a celebration of conservation, education, and sportsmanship. Thank you to all in attendance today and thank you to all nominators for submitting nominations representing individuals from around the State.



The Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Inspired by nature and rooted in science to improve and grow stewardship for Maryland's natural resources.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources leads the state toward a resilient future by using data, partnerships, and an innovative spirit to improve ecological, social, and economic outcomes for all Marylanders.

Maryland DNR commits to fostering a culture and workforce that is inclusive, equitable, and representative of the State's diversity. We are committed to increasing accessibility to our public lands, waterways, and natural resources for all communities to enjoy. By engaging and understanding communities that have historically been left behind, we strive to address and remove systematic barriers that perpetuate environmental injustices. Through this work, we celebrate these values within nature, our partnerships, and the communities we serve.





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