

**CAPE CORAL TARPON HUNTERS' CLUB
CAPE CORAL, FLORIDA**

***BY-LAWS AND REGULATIONS
OF THE
CAPE CORAL TARPON HUNTERS' CLUB***

(Revised February, 2008, March 2011, March 2018, Sept 2018, March 2022, April 2024)

The Cape Coral Tarpon Hunters' Club is a non-profit organization established to create enjoyment, enthusiasm and competition among the members in the spirit and sport of tarpon fishing. The club is a total release club.

I. ORGANIZATION

a. Officers of the club will consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant-at-Arms.

b. Officers and directors will be elected for a one-year term. Officers or directors may be elected to serve consecutive terms. The vice president and immediate past president generally serve consecutive terms to maintain consistency on the board. However, it is recognized that new persons on the board is desirable, and in general officers and directors will be limited to four consecutive years. Exceptions to the four-year limit may be approved by a majority vote of the nominating committee. Past officers or directors may be re-elected in subsequent years to fill vacancies as necessary.

c. The board of directors shall consist of up to six persons who shall be elected by the membership and have one vote each. Additionally, the vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, and last year's president will each have one vote. The president is a non-voting member unless there is a tie. The president may appoint a club historian. This office is a non-voting position, and may be held by the same person for as long as he or she may desire. This office is required to maintain club records, photos, and memorabilia in a scrap book format, which is to be displayed at club functions.

d. Candidates for office will be nominated by officers and board of directors, who will serve as the nominating committee. Verbal nominations from the floor will only be accepted at the July membership meeting. Written nominations of candidates for office must be submitted to the board by August 1st by a member in good standing and signed, for the candidates to be considered. Candidates must be a member for at least one year to be eligible for office. Officers and directors will be elected by the club members by a majority vote of those present at the last membership meeting of the season.

e. Officers' and board of directors' meetings shall be scheduled by the president. Membership meetings will be generally held one weekday evening before a hunt, or otherwise called by a majority of the board of directors, or the president. Members are to be notified of General Meetings through email and the Calendar posted on-line. (March 2022)

f. Any amendment to the by-laws must be submitted at a membership meeting at least one meeting in advance of voting. A majority vote of the members present at an announced membership meeting is necessary for approving amendments to the by-laws.

e. Officers and board of directors vacancies may be filled for an unexpired term by a vote of the officers and board of directors.

h. At the conclusion of every calendar year, there shall be an audit of the financial records. The audit committee shall consist of: incoming president, outgoing president, incoming treasurer, outgoing treasurer and one person delegated by the board of directors. This committee shall be charged with checking bank statements, cancelled checks, books, checkbook and any other records needed, and a written report shall be submitted to the secretary, for record purposes. This report shall be read at the first board meeting following the audit.

II. MEMBERSHIP

a. Single membership dues will be \$40.00 per person, per year. Family memberships are available at \$45.00 per year, and cover spouse and dependents, **children, and grandchildren** under eighteen years of age. Those under eighteen will not have voting rights unless they have a single membership. Dependents, **children, and grandchildren** turning eighteen prior to the start of the Tarpon season are required to have a single membership. Those turning eighteen after the Tarpon season has begun will continue as a family member dependent, **child or grandchild** until the end of the season. **All dependents, children and grandchildren and their ages and birth dates must be listed on the original or subsequent applications for membership.**

Bold print revisions retroactive to March 1, 2011

b. All members must be approved by the officers and board of directors each year.

c. Licensed guides and any persons on board during a paid charter shall be ineligible for club competition or awards while actively engaged in such charters.

d. All club members and dependents, including officers, will be subject to dismissal for a violation of the club by-laws and regulations. A majority vote of the officers and board of directors, at an announced meeting, is necessary for dismissal.

e. New member applications and dues received after September first will be carried forward to next year if the applicant does not catch and release a Tarpon or receive an award at the

annual awards banquet. If they receive an award, they are considered an active member for the year and are required to pay dues for the next year.

III. BOUNDARIES

a. The boundaries for eligible fish in river and bays will include all of San Carlos Bay to the Gulf and extend north to and including Captiva Island Pass, east on a straight line across Panther Key to Pine Island Bridge, up the Caloosahatchee River to the Olga Dam, and south on a straight line to Big Hickory Pass.

b. Gulf boundaries shall be from a line due west of Gordon Pass, north to a line due west of Captiva Pass.

IV. ELIGIBILITY OF FISH FOR SEASON

a. Must be caught by a member current in dues and good standing.

b. Must be released within club boundaries and in compliance with Florida's fishing regulations.

c. Must be hooked by one person to be an "official" catch, credited to an angler's total. Once the hook has been set, no person other than the person setting the hook may touch rod, reel, or line until the leader has been physically touched by the angler or another person. At that time the fish will be considered "caught" and may be handled by any person to facilitate tagging, and releasing in a manner that would maximize the survival chance of the fish. Fish caught on unattended poles on which the drag is engaged, or in gear, while unattended will be considered "hooked" by the first person to touch such pole.

d. Fish must weigh at least 50 pounds to be eligible for any awards. To estimate fish weight, this formula is to be used: Girth squared, times length, divided by 800 equals the approximate weight of the fish. (A chart is provided in new member packets to assist in the computation of tarpon weight.)

e. All fish release claims must be witnessed to be eligible. It is the club member's responsibility to furnish the name and contact information of the witness in addition to the catch data including date, time, and location of release, estimated weight of the fish, Captain's name, bait used, and YTD releases. The information shall be provided to the Club statistician by email or other designated electronic means within four days or the release is disqualified. (March 2022)

- f. In the event of a tie by numbers, the first angler reaching that number shall win.

V. HUNT RULES

- a. Fish hooked prior to official time signaling the beginning of hunt will not be eligible for the hunt.
- b. Fish must be caught according to club rules, and a leader touch must occur by the closing time of the hunt.

VI. TACKLE CATEGORIES AND DIVISIONS

1. OPEN TACKLE CATEGORY

- a. Any size and type equipment with line and leader, including double line, meeting IGFA specifications may be used, except that the leader length shall not exceed ten feet. While bait fishing for Tarpon, fish caught with “J” hooks, “stingers” or trailing hooks will not count toward the angler’s or club total. Only fish caught with circle hooks will count toward the angler’s or club total.
- b. Tarpon released on “open tackle” will be eligible for all club awards except for Twelve Pound or Fly Fishing divisions.

2. TWELVE POUND DIVISION

- a. Twelve pound (or less) test line may be used on any type of rod and reel.
- b. The leader shall not exceed ten feet in length.
- c. Double line not to exceed thirty feet in length.
- d. Tarpon released in the twelve pound test division shall be eligible for all other club awards except for the fly fishing division.

3. FLY FISHING DIVISION

- a. Fishing regulations and equipment including line, rod, reel, hooks, and artificial flies shall be in accordance with IGFA rules.
- b. The leader shall comply with IGFA rules except that the class tippet shall not exceed twenty pounds.

c. Tarpon released in the Fly Fishing Division shall be eligible for all other club awards except those for the Twelve Pound test division.

VII. SEASON, HUNT AND EVENT DATES

a. The season shall start at 0001 hours on the first of March. Fish hooked prior to the start of the season will be ineligible.

b. The season shall end at 2400 hours on the last day in September. Fish must be released prior to the close of the season.

c. Regular and special hunts and events shall be scheduled or rescheduled throughout the season at the discretion of the board of directors and officers.

d. The season end may be extended at the discretion of the Board. (Sept 2018)

VIII. AWARDS

a. There will be awards for the anglers releasing the first, last and most fish during a hunt. A person may receive only one award for a hunt. Anglers entitled to awards for more than one hunt shall be recognized with a consolidated award.

b. There will be an award for the first and last tarpon of the season that is released. If a person qualifies for both awards, a consolidated award will be given.

c. There will be awards for the three anglers and the three boat captains tagging and releasing the most fish in a season. If a person qualifies for awards as both angler and captain, consolidated awards will be given. Credit as a tagging angler will be given to the person who catches the fish in compliance with club rules regardless of who physically places the tag in said fish. Credit as a tagging boat captain will be given to the owner of the boat from which a fish is caught and tagged, or in his/her absence, a person designated by the owner to be in charge of the boat. Such credit for boat captain tagging shall be given to the boat owner or designated person regardless of who catches the fish or physically places the tag in the fish.

d. A rookie award will be given to a member for their first tarpon as a member as long as it is not recognized in any other category.

e. There will be a "Rookie of the Year" award to be voted upon by the officers and board of directors.

f. There will be a “Sportsman of the Year” award to be voted upon by the officers and board of directors.

g. Revised March 2018: The Don Brown Memorial Award is presented to J. Geyer for perpetuity. The “Jerry Geyer” Captains Award will be given to the boat owner-member who has the most different INDIVIDUALS (members or non-members) releasing fish (in accordance with club rules) while fishing on his or her boat during the year.

h. There will be a “Rookie Hunt” with awards for the first, last and most fish released during that hunt. Only members who have not yet landed a tarpon as a member prior to the “Rookie Hunt” are eligible. Additionally, there will be awards for first, most, and last fish released for the member who “guided” the rookie award winners.

i. “Traveling Trophies” will be awarded to the winner of the Release Division. Women’s Division, Junior Division, Twelve Pound Division, “Rookie of the Year” and “Sportsman of the Year”. The winner shall retain the trophy until the next season’s closing, at which time the trophies must be returned to the club’s officers and board of directors.

j. There will be first through tenth place awards for most releases during the season in the Release Division.

k. There will be awards for the most fish released in the Junior Division. These will be awarded to members in good standing under eighteen years of age at the start of the season. Awards will be given for first, second, and third place. There shall be separate Junior awards for both male and female members.

l. There will be awards for the most fish released in the Women’s Division. Awards will be given for first, second, and third place.

m. There will be awards for the three anglers who release the most fish in the Twelve Pound Division. Awards will be given for first, second, and third place.

n. There will be awards for the three anglers who release the most fish in the Fly Fishing Division. Awards will be given for first, second, and third place.

o. All donated trophies, including regular awards, must be approved by the officers and board of directors.

p. One fish will qualify for one award and be recognized in all other categories and divisions. Anglers who receive division awards and also place in the Release Division will not receive an additional award but will be recognized on their Release Division award.