

A Family Fishing Trip...

I was fortunate to grow up spending a lot of time on the Texas coast. Many a Saturday started with the faint background sound of a weather radio and my dad peeking into our room, "If you want to go fishing, we're leaving in thirty minutes. I'm not coming in here again."

If the plan for the day was to head offshore (into the Gulf where the big fish swim), I'd spring from bed and be loading the truck with gear before my Dad finished his coffee. On the other hand, if an inshore (bay) trip was on the agenda, I'd sometimes roll over, only to be awakened thirty minutes later by the sound of my dad and brother heading off in search of trout and reds. Fishing the bay is fun, but there is just something in my nature that cannot resist a sunrise over deep blue Gulf water. Out there, it's always something new and you never know what type of fish might make that reel scream.

So there we were, ready for my kids' first bay fishing excursion. At three and five years of age, they were exempted from the 5:30 am wake-up call (old D-Pa is getting soft with age) and were certainly not going to be left at the dock. Plus, our other deck hands (one mom and one grand mom) were up a bit late the night before...drinking champagne and fishing for piggy perch with niblet corn. Around ten am, we shoved off and headed out to buy some live bait.

Now any fisherman knows that the best bait is found early in the morning, fresh off the boat. Add in a holiday weekend, and finding *any* live bait midmorning was an issue. We bought what we could find, which consisted of a few scraggly live perch and a Ziploc of "fresh dead" shrimp. After topping off with fuel, a can of downed Pringles, and a couple of juice boxes, we were on our way.

With thirty to forty years experience on the Laguna, our Captain knew quite a few good spots to fish. The only problem was that most either consisted of wading ("not gonna' happen," the women said) or a longer boat ride than the kids patience would bear. We ended up tied along the intracoastal with all of the other weekend warriors on holiday retreat. After much work getting the anchor, current, boat, and wind to coordinate, we finally got some bait in the water. Boredom set in quickly, but was partially abated as a tugboat and its barges tried to spin around in the channel without running aground. We may have been fishing fifteen minutes (with no action) when the call came to go back to shore and get some lunch. As we pulled up anchor, Parker asked, "Can we just go back to the pier and catch some of those fish that like the corn? I'm good at those."

Maybe we never should have left the dock. I guess the acorn doesn't fall too far from the tree.

Until next week, keep smiling.

-Please send comments to Drs. Parrish through www.ParrishDental.com.