

YJC - JRE 1

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Fishing the Cajun Bahamas

Fishing at Breton National Wildlife Refuge, or particularly Gosier Island, was a new adventure for me. Who wouldn't want to fish at a place called the "Cajun Bahamas"? I had no clue what to expect, but I was still excited and ready to get some business done.

Breton National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1904 by President Theodore Roosevelt. The objective was to provide a sanctuary for nesting birds. Before a hurricane wiped it out, Breton Island had a fishing village with a schoolhouse and several homes. Talk about a fisherman's dream! The islands used to be much bigger than today before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita wiped out much of the land.

When I was invited to go wade fishing at Gosier Island, I knew it would be a great opportunity to catch some fish. When the day came, I was so excited, especially since we were going with my friends. After a long boat ride, the island just popped up out of nowhere. I was warned to be careful because of the sharks, but when we got there, I was so excited I just hopped right in the water after we anchored. It wasn't until an hour later when I actually saw a shark swim by, that I remembered to be careful.

We did not catch fish until we moved to a trough holding a giant raft of mullet. My two buddies and I casted our lines into the raft to find ourselves all hooked on bull reds. Well, what really happened was my two buddies were hooked up right away, but for some reason the fish wouldn't bite my bait. After 10 seconds of being jealous that they were hooked on fish, I got hooked on to a giant bull. We were catching the reds and pounding them to their grave! Every time we cast, we caught a bull red, which is my favorite fish to catch.. The only bad part about catching these reds was trying to net them with one hand. It took ages, but I eventually got the hang of it.

. Knowing conservation is important, we released many fish but kept our limit. I remember when we got back on the boat my wrist hurt so bad because we were catching 20 to 40 inch redfish every cast. It was about to fall off.

Going fishing at the Cajun Bahamas was different. I had not only gone fishing, but I discovered a new place for me to enjoy as an outdoorsman. I'm very thankful for all the fish my buddies and I caught, and I can't wait to go back. This is why Louisiana is the best place a fisherman could live!

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