



AN INTERVIEW WITH
DINO PERTUIT

How long have you been doing this?
Since I was born. I fish with my brother.

Where do you fish?
Off Myrtle Grove, about five miles into inside waters.
I don't go into the Gulf.

What is your favorite fish to catch? To eat?
Flounder is king. I love to eat it, and I catch more flounder than anything else when I go out.
It's a dumb fish.

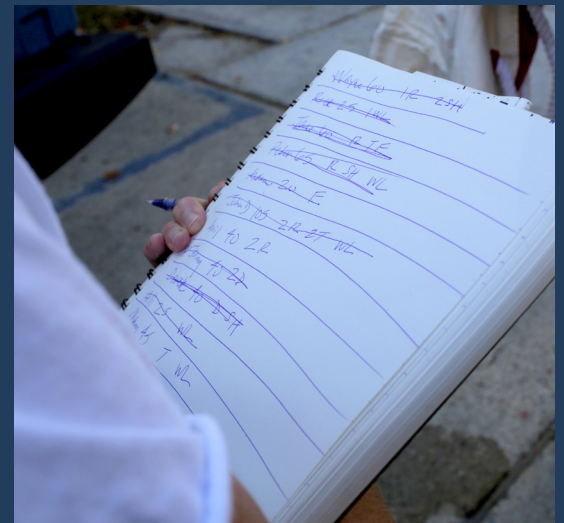
When fishing for fun – with a pole – trout is fun to catch. Red fish and drum are fun, too – they put up a big fight.

What are some of the biggest challenges facing our coastline?

There are big-time changes.
Everything is eroding. Different current lines.
If you don't do this work from a kid, you can never do this. Nobody can just come in and trawl. If you lose one net, you're looking at thousands of dollars to replace.
If you catch a stump, then it rips your net and you lose your catch.

Since Hurricane Ida, we are catching tons of fish, shrimp, and sharks. Up to five years ago, we never caught those before, but I had one [shark] as big as 113 lbs, mid sized. I think this is because the land is going away.

If you couldn't be fishing, what would you do?
I don't know. I don't know anything else.



“IF YOU DON'T DO THIS WORK FROM A KID, YOU CAN NEVER DO THIS. NOBODY CAN JUST COME IN AND TRAWL. ”

-DINO



"DINO WOULD RATHER BE ON HIS BOAT THAN ANYWHERE ELSE."

- DOODY

Photos by Kenny Morrison

DINO & DOODY

A DYNAMIC DUO: CATCHING & SELLING LOCALLY

Dino Pertuit (pictured left) is a commercial fisherman. He's been fishing since he was a little boy and doing it as a business since he was 16. These days he and his brother take their 45' skiff off Myrtle Grove, about five miles into inside waters, where they catch crab and trawl for shrimp. A typical day for Dino begins at 5:45 pm, when he takes his boat out, navigating stumps, currents, and mosquitoes. As the nets fill up with shrimp, Dino also pulls up flounder, red fish, sheepshead, and speckled trout, which join the catch on deck. He usually returns to the dock at 2:45 am and loads the fresh catch for the drive to New Orleans.

Dino supplies to many of the great New Orleans restaurants, but when the pandemic hit in 2020 and the restaurants closed, he had to find other ways to make a living. A friend of a friend guaranteed customers if he would come to his New Orleans neighborhood. More friends joined, including Doody Lester (pictured right), and Dino began traveling to various areas of the city three times a week.

Now that restaurants are back up and running, he supplies shrimp, crab, and fish to those establishments daily, while continuing to sell to the "Fish Wish List." Every three weeks Doody sends a reminder to the group, tallies the orders, and meets up with the appreciative members when Dino shows up with the orders.

A commercial fisherman's life is a hard life, he says, one that no one wants to do anymore (his own son is at college), but one that he cannot imagine not doing. While he takes off only on Saturday nights, he is already thinking about being back on his boat on Sunday and the next fresh catch.