



## PRESS RELEASE

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*The wild blue catfish: it's fat, it's juicy, it's full of flavor and there's a never-ending supply.  
Local chefs make this invasive species a top menu item.*

Jessup, MD (February 23, 2015) – Congressional Seafood's Vice-President and expert on domestic fisheries, Tim Sughrue, is on a mission to spread the word about the wild blue catfish currently threatening the health of the Chesapeake Bay. An aggressive species the blue catfish are multiplying rapidly and eating everything in their path posing an environmental catastrophe to our local rivers and streams.

Catfish are native to the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio River basins but they've made it to the mid-Atlantic. They were introduced here into the Chesapeake Bay in the 1960s for sport, and since then, they have grown exponentially and practically taken over the waterways, devouring native species like blue crabs, rockfish, herring and shad, leaving fewer of them for us. With a diet like this the invasive blue catfish produces a delicious white flakey filet.

Jumping on the band wagon and taking matters into their own hands, area chefs are putting this tasty bully on their menu, and diners are snapping it up.

David Guas, chef at the Bayou Bakery in Arlington and a judge on the Travel Channel's *American Grilled*, is currently serving his favorite whiskered fish crusted and oven-baked. Guas, a native of New Orleans, knows his catfish recipes.

Catfish is a favorite of Fiona Lewis, owner of the District Fishwife, a husband-and-wife team of fishmongers who started selling cooked versions of their catch over the counter last year. Lewis says fresh-caught blue catfish tastes cleaner than the older variety often found in supermarkets. In fact, that's part of the secret to her success. That, and the Rolling Rock beer in the batter.

Chef Jeff Black of the District's acclaimed Pearl Dive Oyster Bar, makes a mean catfish po' boy. Black expands the BLT acronym to CEBLT — catfish, egg, bacon, lettuce and tomato. The sandwich has been lauded by the Washington Post as a “Delta prize.”

Anthony Lombardo, executive chef at The Hamilton, a downtown D.C. favorite, dishes up a blackened wild blue catfish sandwich garnished with lettuce, tomato, red onion and a distinctive pickle-back mayo.

Sughrue says of the blue catfish, “We need to eat-em to beat-em before they beat us and eat everything in the Chesapeake that we hold near and dear – especially our rockfish and blue crab. It's a real problem that needs our immediate attention.”

Blue catfish are available from distributors like Congressional Seafood and others throughout the region as efforts are being made to raise awareness of the issue while promoting solutions for eradicating the species from our local waterways.

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*Congressional Seafood Co., located in Jessup, Maryland and conveniently situated along the I-95 corridor, is considered one of the mid-Atlantic region's best suppliers of top quality seafood from around the globe. Their buyers source only the finest seafood products and have developed long-standing relationships with fishermen and producers enabling them to buy much of their product directly from the people catching the fish, and thus providing the freshest products to local chefs and restaurants. Learn more about Congressional Seafood at [www.congressionalseafood.com](http://www.congressionalseafood.com).*