

BOOK REVIEW

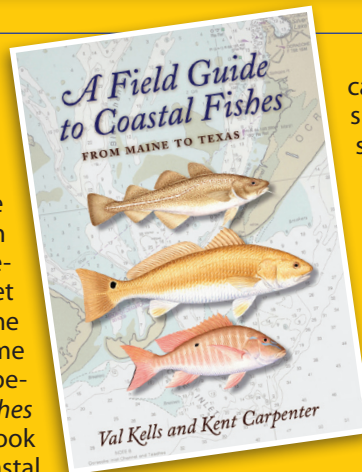
A FIELD GUIDE TO COASTAL FISHES

AUTHORED BY VAL KELLS AND KENT CARPENTER

review by Angelo Peluso

I've collected traditional fishing, hunting and outdoors books since I was 13 years of age - many full moons ago. Over those years, I have had the opportunity to read some of the best works in print and I have grown to cherish those volumes. They've become old friends I visit with often. Yet every now and again, some new volume comes across my desk that makes me say, "Wow!" I recently had such an experience with *A Field Guide to Coastal Fishes* by Val Kells and Kent Carpenter. This book is destined to become a classic for coastal anglers in much the same way as the *Peterson Field Guides to Birds* has become the bible for birders. *A Field Guide to Coastal Fishes* contains 1,079 magnificent full color illustrations and 1,006 concise species descriptions - two hallmarks of this significant work. This guide performs double-duty as not only a valuable fish identification and reference tool for libraries and laboratories, but also as a very functional field guide sized to fit inside a tackle box, dive bag, tote or backpack, or for use on a boat. Fishermen especially will benefit greatly from this scientific and artistic reference book.

A Field Guide to Coastal Fishes is a comprehensive, current, and accurate identification guide to the more than 1,000 nearshore and offshore fishes that live in brackish and marine waters from Maine to Texas. Val Kells and Kent Carpenter bring decades of hands-on experience to this project. This book is visual eye candy for fishermen; it is completely illustrated in full color. With Kells' detailed, vivid illustrations and Carpenter's deep knowledge of biology, taxonomy, and nomenclature, this book



captures the stunning diversity of species along America's eastern shores. Key features of the book include: full-color illustrations, set side-by-side with informative descriptions of each fish; details about the biology of each species; habitat, distribution, and size information.

The book is up-to-date and a reliable source of fish identification. *A Field Guide to Coastal Fishes* has been touted as the most complete book ever published on East and Gulf Coast fishes. Its beautiful design and friendly format make it an ideal guide for fishermen, divers, students, scientists, naturalists, and fish enthusiasts alike. The scope of this guidebook includes helpful information and diagrams about fish identification, features, habitat and biology of the individual species. The accompanying color illustrations are accurate and meticulous in every detail.

Val Kells is a widely acclaimed marine illustrator. She is an avid angler and naturalist and spends her free time exploring and fishing the coastal aquatic habitats. Kent Carpenter is a renowned Ichthyologist and professor of biological sciences at Old Dominion University. He is an avid SCUBA diver. The combined talents of this team have created one of the best guides to fishes in a very long time. You are sure to not only enjoy the visual experience of this book, but also learn from it. The book was published by the Johns Hopkins University Press. For more information, visit: www.fieldguidetofishes.com or www.press.jhu.edu.