

ing the prolonged freezes of 2010, snook have increased in numbers and size. Instead of finding a few 15- to 20-inch specimens in canals and creeks, you can now consistently target 25- to 30-inch linesiders on the flats of Mosquito Lagoon and northern Indian River. "So," you might ask, "just where are those bad boys?" Well, to answer that question, you'll want to think like a snook.

What do snook want? Current, structure and temperature seem to be the top three most coveted elements for snook. Across South Florida these components can pinpoint snook for you, and in Mosquito Lagoon it's no different. What is unique about the lagoon, however, is that it has little to no tidal fluctuations and most of the islands do not have undercut banks or mangrove roots in much more than a few inches of water. When it comes to finding a good shoreline for snook in the lagoon, the characteristics are minimal.

Launching from the western side of the lagoon, the boat ramps of choice (moving from north to south) are George R. Kennedy Memorial Park, River Breeze, Bea-

con 42 and Bio Lab Rd. On the eastern side you are more or less confined to Apollo Beach Boat ramp, although there are numerous areas to launch a canoe or kayak. Before heading out, take a good look at current satellite imagery or a chart. On the western side, you can find supplies and advice at the Anchor Hardware bait and tackle shop, and on the eastern side, Needful Things Bait Shop and General Store. For boaters, the running theme is "Just because you can run there, doesn't mean you should." This refers to the those with flats boats capable of running in extremely shallow water. You may not be hurting your vessel, but if you're running in less than two feet of water, you are more than likely hurting the grass and seafloor/habitat in general. Remember, when fishing south of Georges Bar or in the northern Indian River, you are in the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and need a Refuge Sports Fishing Permit. You can find this permit with a quick Google search and it is a free, self-issued permit. Having signed the permit, you declare you have read the rules and regulations and

