

The Avid Fisherman



Giuseppe Dinklaker was one avid fisherman. For thirteen years in a row, he spent his winter vacations fishing in Tarpon Springs, Florida. For thirteen years, he set his sights on reeling in the big one: Tim, the Titanic Tarpon, a gigantic predator fish that gave its name to both the city and to a realistically interactive Parker Brothers board game that had cost more than one inattentive player a finger or two. For twelve of those thirteen years, Giuseppe paddled a rented dhow into the Gulf of Mexico where he caught anchovies, baramundi, coelacanths, damselfish, electric eels, flagblennies, guppies and hoki, javelin, kokopu, lumpsuckers, morwongs, nase, oarfish, piranha and quillback. Just no tarpon. So for the thirteenth year, Giuseppe changed tactics. Having heard tales of tarpon forsaking their coastal habitats and venturing inland to breed, he abandoned his deep-sea fishing expeditions and instead sought out and found a tarpon-sized hole in one of Florida's frozen inland waterways. There he baited and dropped his fishing line ... and waited. After three days with nary a nibble, Giuseppe was ready to give up. But then, abruptly, the ground beneath him shook. It was the Titanic Tarpon, he thought excitedly as he let out more line. But, no. That tarpon-sized hole was really the crater of Wewahitchka, Florida's only active volcano. No, there wouldn't be any stuffed tarpon gracing the mantel of the Dinklaker parlor any time soon.