

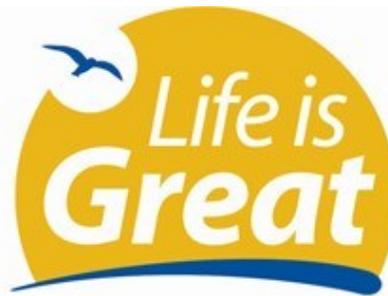
Northwest

Pennsylvania

Fishing Report

Reporting Date:

October 7, 2013



Pennsylvania's Great Lakes Region
crawford • erie • mercer • venango

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The NW PA Fishing Report provides timely angling information for Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango Counties – covering all species and all waters open to the public. The fishing comments and photos are offered by regional tackle shops and area anglers, compiled and published twice a month. The NW PA Fishing Report is based on experiences, observations and opinions of individual contributors; information sources are considered reliable but comments are not independently verified. If you would like to share your fishing experiences or photos from any waterway in the four counties, please email to Darl Black at darlblack@windstream.net. In providing information or pictures, you are agreeing to your comments being edited, and posted to websites and distributed electronically.

The Landing Net

by Darl Black



It's October. Steelhead season on the Erie tributaries started early but is stalled out due to lack of water in streams. When it rains a little bit in the watershed and the streams go up a tad, some steelheads push upstream. But the streams do not stay up, and fishing gets tough under low and clear conditions. With most of the steelhead low in the streams near the mouth or still in the

lake, that's where anglers are concentrated. More rain is needed to raise levels on all tributaries.



NW PA FISHING REPORT for October 7, 2013

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What's biting in the counties of Erie, Crawford, Mercer and Venango?

French Creek – Flowing through all four counties

Attention: French Creek Conservancy will host their Fall Float on Sunday, October 20th for friends and members. For more information, call 814-337-4321 or email info@frenchcreekconservancy.org.

Lou Letterle (Franklin) filed 10/6: "After battling floating weeds on the Allegheny River for the past two weeks, I decided to do a little kayak fishing on French Creek in Crawford County. So this past Thursday, I tried a combined musky/smallmouth trip, carrying one rod for each species and just couple lures for each rod. I used to do this quite a bit during the 1990s, but it's become more comfortable now to just jump into the jet-boat and hit the river. Anyway, I had action. One musky caught and another near miss. I did a quick measurement on the musky – about 38 inches. I attached a photo taken while raining." (See Livewell)

Dustin Shay (Meadville) filed 10/6: "A week ago, walleyes went off live bait and started hitting artificial lures – a good sign the fall bite is coming. On the 6th, Justin and I fished French Creek. We caught 15 largemouth bass, 4 smallmouth bass and 1 walleye in just 90 minutes. The fish were taken on live bait and jerkbaits." (See Livewell)

Editor's note: Dustin Shay has a remarkable talent of finding populations of largemouth bass in slow sections of French Creek and backwater oxbow cut-offs along the creek.



Mike Horrobin (Jigger Tackle) filed 10/6: "The word from customers at the shop is 'French Creek' for bass and walleye. Customers have been buying a lot of shiners for bait."

Steve Monoyoudis (White Oak) filed 10/3: "Recently, French Creek has been yielding good smallmouth bass and walleye for me, along with the occasional musky on the topwater **Hubs Chub**. I have also been catching smallmouth on **Super Flukes** in Watermelon Seed and Disco Violet. I know a 5/0 Gamakatsu hook seems big but it balances the bait better. When the bite is really slow, I go to a **Yamamoto Shad Shape Worm** in Watermelon with gold & black flake."

Jerry Van Tassel (Timberland Bait) filed 9/29: "Friends and I fished French Creek above Union City Dam last week. Smallmouth bass were on fire. We caught a number of smallmouth, some in the 15" to 18" range. All were stuffed with crayfish."

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Chris Hall (Espyville Outdoors) filed 10/7: "Perch are being caught along the causeway with minnows or chunk of crawler on the bottom. Some guys are using standard snelled hooks, while others are using **AFF Lucky Seven Hooks** or jigheads. A few bluegills are being caught using same method.

Catfish are still being caught on a regular basis. A few walleye have been reported on **Lindy Shadlings**, **Berkley Flicker Shads** and **AFF Walleye Wizards**. Most of the success I heard of has been between Orchard and Snodgrass launches in 12 to 14 feet of water.

Dave Richter (Richter's Tackle) filed 10/7: "Not much has changed in recent weeks. The water isn't cooling down quick enough – nights are too warm. Maybe with this cold front moving through, water temps will drop. Some guys are catching a few walleyes on live bait and a few on **Vib-E** blade baits. Doug Wilson brought in a 29-inch walleye the other day. I've heard bass anglers are catching a lot of largemouth and smallmouth bass right now. Perch are starting to hit, but they are small right now."

Conneaut Lake



Bob Mohra (Fergie's Bait) filed 10/6: "I fished Conneaut Lake on Thursday; caught some of the biggest bluegills of the year on white split-tails and maggots."

Dustin Shay (Meadville) filed 10/2: "I fished Conneaut Lake for a few hours on Wednesday with Darl Black. We were trying to catch a nice largemouth bass for photos which Darl needed for an article, but small northern pike were the only thing biting for the first hour of overcast skies. Later in the morning when sun came out we caught several largemouths on a **Terminator Swim Jig**, spinnerbait and a drop-shot rig. However, our best fish was a nearly 4-pound smallmouth on a swim jig."

Conneaut Lake LMB

Woodcock Lake

Steve Monoyoudis (White Oak) filed 10/3: "I usually catch several nice smallmouth bass when fishing topwater from the shore at Woodcock Lake, but on October 1, I raised a 45" musky on a **Hubs Chub** topwater bait. I like the Chrome/Black, Bone and Crawdaddy colors of Hubs Chub in the 3" size. But if you want the commotion to attract a four-pound smallmouth at this lake, switch up to a 4" model."

Canadohta Lake

Jerry VanTassel (Timberland Bait) filed 10/6: "I had reports of quite a few northern pike being caught from the lake over the weekend."

ERIE COUNTY

Presque Isle Bay

Dave Lefebre (Erie) filed 10/3: "The Bay is on fire, but most area anglers don't care because they are chasing perch on the Lake or steelhead in the streams. Crappies are biting like spring. However, they are concentrated in certain deeper areas, not spread out like spring. I kept count, and in little over a week, 1,150 crappies have come over the side of my boat. Friends and I have been able to take home a limit every day. I've also been catching some very nice largemouth bass in the 4-pound range."

RJ Graham (Tionesta) filed 10/3: "This past Saturday, I fished on PIB. We launched out of Chestnut Street ramp and went to the mid-bay humps in about 15 feet of water. Fishing Carolina rig with 2.5' leader, 1/2-oz. weights and 4" **Berkley Power Worms**, we picked up 25 largemouth bass and 8 crappies."

Thomas Watral (Erie) filed 10/2:

- Oct. 2 – Went perch fishing to the docks today. It was windy so we fished the east side of the dock. We got 20 nice perch in the 12 to 13 inch range on minnows, plus some nice bluegills on crawlers. Crappie fishing was slow at the Border Patrol Dock.”
- Sept. 30 – My step-dad and I slammed the big perch today. We each had our limit in 3 hours. They were hitting shiners about 15 to 20 feet out from the dock.

Lake Erie and Tributaries — In October the tributaries and ramps are very busy places.

Dan Seaman (Elk Creek Sports) filed 10/7: “As of Monday morning, Elk Creek is up a little and slightly colored. Steelheads are moving up-stream, and I expect this latest push to get up to Legion Hole and perhaps I-90 before the water starts dropping late Tuesday. Not enough rain to maintain a high flow, but hopefully enough to spread the fish out more – and spread out anglers, too. With no more rain in forecast, creeks will be low and clear by mid-week. Steelhead will hold in deep holes, almost uncatchable. However, if you focus your presentation on the tail out section of holes and the fast water, and undercut banks, this is where the catchable fish will be.



Anglers crowded on Wall at Walnut



Perch anglers out of Walnut

Mike (Trout Run Bait) filed 10/7: “Mad house here this Monday morning with phone ringing about stream forecasts. Streams going up enough to have fish move upstream, but water level and color will not hold. We need at least 3 inches of rain in watershed to sustain flow. Catching steelhead will be tough by Wednesday once again. But out in the lake, guys are catching jumbo perch in 25’ to 30’ –when the wind isn’t blowing.”

Jeff (Poor Richards) filed 10/7: “Got some rain last night and creeks are up a little. Enough to move fish upstream – doesn’t take much to move them since sitting at mouth so long. Will spread out fish and fishermen, but water will be low and clear in a day or two. In the Lake, they are doing very well on perch at 58 feet.”

Ed Lawrence (Corry) filed 10/7: “I had a chance to do some steelhead fishing. The fish are close to the mouths of the streams. I had luck with live bait. Fish were hitting worms, maggots, flies and shiners. I caught two nice females last week that were each 23 inches and 5 pounds. Hope to see more fish when water levels rise.” (See Livewell)



Steelheaders wading at mouth of Trout Run

David Polovina (Aultman) filed 10/7: “Bill Kokla and I likely made out last trip of the season for walleye to Erie over the weekend. We stated to fish around 12:30 NW of Walnut Creek. Everyone we spoke to had fish. Walleye were spread out all the way west to Conneaut, OH. We got our lines set and caught 7 ‘eye in an hour and 15 minutes. A storm blew in and we came in on high seas. We did not catch any steelhead. All our fish were suspended around 60 feet, fishing over 68 to 70 feet.” (See Livewell)

Thomas Watral (Erie) filed 10/7:

- Oct. 7 – Went to 4 Mile Creek very early. Hooked 6 steelheads, one after another. They were hitting orange eggs and **Power Bait**. Went to 12 Mile to give it try. Hooked 8 using live minnows; managed to land a limit and left, seeing lots of fish coming into the stream.
- Oct. 6 – Went out fishing at the docks. Talked to boaters; they said perch fishing was hot at 45 feet north of the Point. Other said some creeks were black with steelhead that had arrived; a popular lure for steelhead on this stream is the **Rooster Tail**.
- Oct. 4 – Went to 4 Mile Creek. Steelheads were up the 2nd falls with the rain. Single eggs and minnows were catching fish.

MERCER COUNTY

Shenango Lake

Ken Smith (Sharon) filed 10/5: “Shenango Lake is locked down due to the government shut down. Last time I was on the lake, crappies were starting to turn on. Don’t know when the lake will re-open, but when it does, I’ll be back out.”

Lake Wilhelm

Bob Mohra (Fergie’s Bait) filed 10/6: “Customers are catching walleyes on worm harnesses, mostly orange blades. Better area is the roadbed at the Three Post area. They are also catching crappies on minnows and maggots; bluegills on ants tipped with maggot or waxworm. I’m hearing about a few bass on black buzzbaits.”

Mike Horrobin (Jigger Tackle) filed 10/6: “Had the best news all season from a bass angler on Wilhelm this week. He showed me pictures of four largemouth bass all over four pounds which he caught and released. Did not say what he caught them on.”

Ernie Pate (Butler) filed 10/5: “Our club fished Wilhelm last weekend. It was tough. The best weight for 20 guys was four bass totaling 8.5 pounds – biggest fish was 4-3/4 pounds.”



VENANGO COUNTY

Allegheny River

Attention: FOP Fall Bass Tournament on river this coming Sunday, October 13; for more info contact Eric Heil.

Dale Black (Oil City) filed 10/6: “Frank Malek and I made a couple brief evenings runs on the river this past week. We caught some nice smallies, including ones around 20 inches.”



Marilyn Black (Cochran) filed 10/1: “Darl and I fished the river below Franklin on September 30 for about 3 hours. Not what we expected. Weeds were not bad, but quality fish were not biting. All were on the small side, some barely bigger than the lure; only one bass went over 2.5 pounds. Almost all came on soft jerkbaits.”

R.J. Graham (Tionesta) filed 10/3: "On Sunday, 9/29, Dad and I went to the river to fish the Oil City pool. We caught 36 bass; 12 were over 3 pounds. The rest were small. All our nice fish came from the tail waters of a fast water section, throwing a **Wacky Worm Tube**. The rest of the fish came on an old **Hippy Bass Jig** in the deeper water. Great weekend to fish." (See Livewell)

Destin DeMarion (Gove City) filed 10/3: "I finally wrapped up a long tournament season. On September 29, I made a trip to the river with Mark Hughes from the Bassmasters of Crawford County to fish smallmouth from his jet boat. We caught around 20 fish over 5 hours, but were surprised at the size – not one over 3 pounds. Still a good time. Most fish came on **Flukes**, tubes, jigs and drop shot rigs. The smallies seem to be transitioning to fall patterns. I expect fishing to heat up in the coming weeks and I can't wait. (See Livewell)

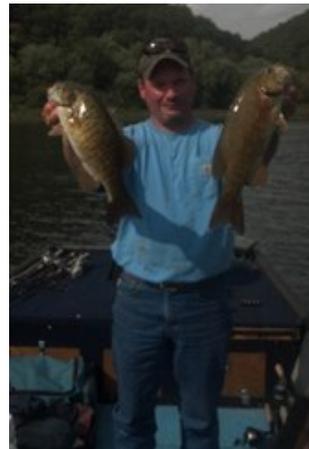
Justus Lake

Mike Horrobin (Jigger Tackle) filed 10/6: "I was out to Justus Lake the other night with the fly rod when a hatch of small black flies was coming off. I caught a mess of bluegills and small largemouth bass but no smallmouth bass."

Livewell Overflow - Allegheny River



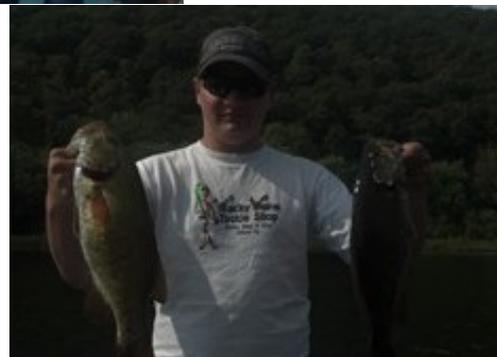
River SMB; Destin DeMarion photo



RJ Graham & Father on the Allegheny



Justin with FR CR LMB
Shay Photo



The Livewell

Brought to you by:



Dave Polovina & Bill Kokla on Lake Erie with
Final day walleye success. Polovina photos.

Still almost 3 months of river fishing left this
year; check with Wiegel for available boats.



French Cr musky/Letterle photo



Mike Brakeall & Tyler/DB
photo



23" steelhead/Lawrence photo



PIB perch/Watral photo

PROCESSED FOR PERFORMANCE



Gamma Fishing Tips

Darl Black: There is more to fall fishing than Lake Erie steelhead. Over the next 8 to 10 weeks – until lakes ice up – will be some of the best fishing of the entire year for smallmouth & largemouth bass, walleye, crappies, perch, pike and musky. While I'll continue to make trips to the Erie tribs in order to take photos, it is highly unlikely I'll wet a line. Crowds are not my cup of tea when it comes to fishing. Here is what my fishing schedule looks like between early October and mid-December:

- Once a week trip to the Allegheny River to fish for smallmouth and walleye, using jerkbaits, tube jigs and hair jigs.
- A run to Pymatuning within the next week to check out the smallmouth bass with rattle baits and topwater, plus fish for crappies.
- If the government shutdown ever reopens, I'll head down to Shenango Lake to fish crappies with Ken Smith.
- Time & weather permitting, I'll work in an outing on Woodcock Lake for smallmouth, walleye and crappie. Although an USACE impoundment like Shenango, Woodcock Lake ramp is open because it is located in the county park section of recreation area.
- One or two trips to Pymatuning in late October and November to fish for walleye with blade baits.
- Sometime this month a trip to Edinboro Lake and LeBoeuf Lake to try for a musky.
- A late October or November trip to Lake Wilhelm to see if I can get into the BIG largemouth bass which still live there but are hard to catch.
- Two to three trips to Conneaut Lake in late October and early November for BIG smallmouth bass, and to check on possible white bass down deep.
- If warm mild weather lingers into December, I will try Justus Lake for smallmouth & musky
- October, November and December trips to PIB for largemouth bass. PIB largemouth bite strong into December
- When the lakes begin to skim over with ice, I'll start fishing French Creek for walleye and musky

Winner of the spool of Gamma Line for this issue of Fishing Report: Steve Monoyoudis

Winner of the Prize Pack of Baits for this issue of the Fishing Report: Ed Lawrence

Lures for the Fishing Report Prize Pack supplied by: Case; Gene Larew; Get Bit Baits; Road Runner; Venom Baits; Yum; Zipper Worms.

Follow Darl as he fishes with angling experts around the country at

www.darblack.blogspot.com

Obtain the PGLR fishing brochure "Reel It In!" at www.pagreatlakes.com