

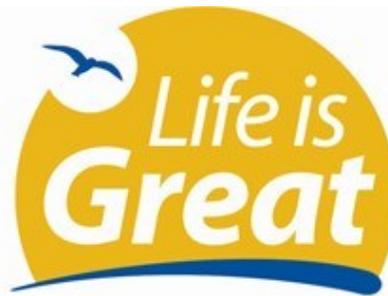
Northwest

Pennsylvania

Fishing Report

Reporting Date:

November 4, 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



With the up and down fall weather, fish catches have been up and down, too. I'm not going to attempt to predict what the next two weeks will bring – I can only hope fishing will treat me better than the past two weeks. Two items to be aware of. First, with the boats out for the winter, the docks at State Park Marinas at Pymatuning, Lake Wilhelm and Presque Isle Bay are now open to fishing. Same at PF&BC Marina at Walnut Creek; you can now fish the basin. Second, avoid getting a ticket from a Waterways Conservation Officer this fall and winter; cold water PFD reg mandates you must wear a PFD in a boat less than 16 feet on any water in the state from November 1 until April.



Northwest PA Fishing Report November 4, 2013

Brought to you by PA Great Lakes Region tourism

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

FRENCH CREEK flowing through all four counties

Al Bell (Franklin) filed 11/3: Angler Al's French Creek Diary

- Sunday, Oct. 26 – Since it was a tad windy, Stan and I decided to bank fish The French. We arrived at a spot just south of Cochranon around 3 pm, and by 3:30 pm I caught my first fish – a 16-inch smallmouth bass hit a **Venom Swim bait**. My other rod was rigged with a floating jig-head tipped with a large shiner. Around 4 pm it bounced and an 18-inch walleye was brought in. Thereafter two more 'eye about the same size were netted. Near dark, I picked up a 22 inch walleye by slowly retrieving the floating jig rig to shore. (See Livewell)
- Sunday, Oct. 27 – With the Steeler playing worse than I could handle, I figured at half time I'd throw a live baitfish in French Creek. A floating jighead setup yielded my only catch – a 26" northern smacked the 6" creek chub. Water level has dropped considerably, which moved the fish back into mid-current flow. Clear and bright outside may have them feeding through the night.
- Friday, Nov. 1 – Stan caught a legal northern this morning. It hit a creek chub as he was slowly dragging it in. I didn't have as much as a nibble. (See Livewell)
- Saturday, Nov. 2 – For two hours in the a.m., I battled tree limbs, leaves and other forms of floating debris on French Creek. Eventually stripped of my patience, I went home skunked.



Al Bell photo

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Dan Bickel, Pymatuning State Park Manager, filed 11/4: "Here is an update on Pymatuning in preparation for approaching winter."

- The boat mooring season ended October 31. Fishing is permitted on docks at the Jamestown, Espyville and Linesville Marinas from November 1 through March 31.
- We are currently reducing the lake to winter pool level. The current elevation is 1007.65 with a target drawdown of 1006.50 -1007.00
- The launch docks will remain in at Jamestown and Linesville Marinas until ice begins to form on the lake.
- PA Fish and Boat Commission cold water PFD requirement is now in effect

Dave Richter (Richter's Tackle) filed 11/4: "Number of anglers on the lake has dropped considerably since hunting season started. However, a handful of local anglers are making good catches of walleyes on blade baits over the deep water points in south end of the lake. If you are fishing when the walleyes are feeding (usually late in day), you are going to catch them. But the fish are not on all the time. The Jamestown docks opened up to fishing on Friday, and I hear there have been some nice crappies taken from the docks."

Chris Hall (Espyville Outdoors) filed 11/4: "Not many fishermen out on Pymi, but with duck season, fall turkey and archery season in full swing, I can understand why. Walleyes are being caught by boaters trolling **Berkley Flicker Shads, Lindy Shadlings** and **Smithwick Rogues**. Also had a few guys say they are using blades of all sorts (**Cicadas, Sonars, Vibra-Max**) with success in 8 to 12 feet of water. Also, a few guys are having success throwing perch pattern crankbaits from shore, such **Rapala Shad Raps, Rapala Floating Minnows** and **Lindy Shadlings**. Perch are being caught all over! I was out one day last week and kept 16 good sized perch all between 10" and 13". All were caught using **AFF Lucky Seven Hooks** with a chunk of crawler fished on the bottom." (See photo)



Chris Hall photo

Conneaut Lake

Bob Mohra (Fergie's Bait) filed 11/4: "We went back to Conneaut Lake this week for bluegills. Things had slowed down a bit. We took 20 nice 'gills home. We caught only bluegills – no crappies, perch or any other species."

Woodcock Lake

Steve Monoyoudis (Saegertown) filed 10/28: "I went to Woodcock for smallmouth this past week. With all the rain that we've had this year, Woodcock Lake has shown very little weed growth. However, there has been an algae bloom that has been going on for over a month. I've never seen one so late into the fall or last so long. Unfortunately, I did not manage to catch any smallmouths. But I did have about a 45" musky follow my four-inch **Chrome/Black Hubs Chub** – but no hook up."

ERIE COUNTY

Presque Isle Bay

Jim (B.A.C. Bait) filed 11/4: "Fishing in the Bay is great right now. The state park marina docks opened for fishing; customers are catching crappies in Marina Lake. There are brown trout and steelhead being caught regularly from the area of the Water Works, and brown trout in front of East Avenue ramp."

Thomas Watral (Erie) filed 11/3: Thomas' Erie Diary

- Oct. 27 – Perch fishing is on fire this week with nice perch taken from the docks and steelhead in the slip. I was using **Crappie Rigs by Eagle Claw** tipped with minnows for the perch. Perch ranged from 10" to 14".
- Oct. 29 – The colder water has the fish on a feeding spree. At the docks they were slamming 13" perch and at the Ship Yard they were hitting 10" perch. South and North pier were also hot. Steelheads were hitting minnows in the streams.
- Nov. 1 – Lots of steelhead in the creeks and big perch hitting the bay. But not many anglers fishing likely due to archery and duck hunting. Yesterday and today, we limited out on steelhead in 4 Mile Creek and Upper Walnut Creek by the Mall. The biggest steelhead was 29 inches; it hit a **Rooster Tail**. Creeks are fishable but lots of leaves in them.
- Nov. 3 – I went all around the Bay today to check on minnow schools and perch. Perch seem to be hitting everywhere. They range from 12" to 14". The hotspots are the Docks, Johns Slip, and Border Patrol Dock. Best bait is grubs or minnows on 1-oz. crappie rigs. Steelheads in Bay are hitting **Rooster Tails**."



Darl Black photo

Dave Lefebre (Erie) filed 11/1: "Alton Wackie, a friend from FLW Tour, was visiting for three days the end of October. On Monday, we caught 60 large-mouth bass, on Tuesday we caught 160 bass in a snow storm, and today we caught 30 bass and boatload of crappies. In three days we landed 250 bass – most were small in the 10" to 14" range, but there were several 4 pounders and one that went 5.5 pounds. Released them all. Darl came up to fish a couple days later – he has a habit of picking the nice weather days – not so good for catching fish. We caught a few largemouths fishing deep water but the bite was extremely slow. I think Darl ended up snagging a couple gar from a school apparently schooled near the bass in deep water." (See photos in Livewell)



Darl Black photo

Benjamin Page (PA Fish Commission) filed 10/24: "We had a great time hosting the National Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership meeting earlier this month. Biologists from Oklahoma, Iowa, Texas, Arkansas, Nebraska, Washington DC, Nevada and California had a chance to sample the fishing. Frank Malek, Les Hartman, Jerry Smith and Dan Grove took attendees out on the lake to catch smallmouth. We picked up two steelhead and smallmouth the first night trolling the mouth of Walnut Creek with **Jointed Rapalas** and **Reef Runners**. The next nights, trolling only produced smallies and rock bass. Our best night was Wednesday at the Yacht Club when the panfish bite was on. We caught bluegill, black crappie, yellow perch, rock bass and largemouth bass that night. We caught our fish on jigs tipped with half a crawler or shiner."

Erie Tributary Streams

Gary Heuble, Jr. (Poor Richards) filed 11/4: "After the blow out rain of Saturday, the creeks are in good shape today, Monday. Fish are way up the creeks now. Water flow is high with color but fishable. Baits to use right now are egg sacks and skein – big and bright. Level may drop some over next couple days, but more rain expected Thursday."

Dan Seaman (Elk Creek Sports) filed 11/4: "Streams are up and should stay up for few days. Hopefully rain later this week will be enough to keep flow without blowing them out. The 10 day forecast looks good – moderate temperatures, no major storms. As stream level drops and clears, bait anglers should go to single eggs, maggots and wax worms; fly fishermen should go from streamers to nymphs – the Prince Nymph has been hot."

Craig (Trout Run Bait) filed 11/4: "Fishing was poor over the weekend due to stream conditions, but right now creeks are in great shape. Fish are all over. Get up here this week."

Ed Phillips (New Castle) filed 10/30: "My wife and I went to the Tomato Patch on 20 Mile Creek on the afternoon of the 28th. As you might expect, creek was extremely low and very little current. There were quite a few fish in the pools but they were spooky. I managed to hook three but all three. My wife hooked one. The following day we were back in the morning and I was 0 for 2 again but my wife landed a big one which we had for dinner. The fish came on #14 and #16 nymphs with 6-pound test 9-foot leader. The fish in the slow moving pools were not active, but found some faster moving water where the fish would pick up a fly. I watched a guy doing well with spinning road and minnow. He would stand above the fish and float the minnow to the fish and jig it until a fish took it."

Lake Erie

Chris Hall (Espyville Outdoors) filed 11/4: "A couple of my customers were walleye fishing at night on Lake Erie, and said the walleye bite was on. They were trolling 1.4 MPH over 38 feet of water with minnow plugs running 10 to 17 feet deep. They were using **Smithwick Perfect 10 Rogues** and **Rapala Husky Jerks** with the Rogues outperforming the Husky Jerks by four to one." (See photos in Livewell)

MERCER COUNTY

Shenango Lake

Laurie (R&L Bait) filed 11/3: "With hunting in full swing, the fishing has dropped off in area waters. We had report of a big musky from Pymatuning Lake a week ago. And stripers are being taken at Shenango Lake near the Sharpsville end of the lake by trolling deep."

Ken Smith (Sharon) filed 10/30: "Having an outstanding week at Shenango – when the wind lets me out. The Corps is dropping the lake faster than I can ever remember but crappie fishing is still great. Catching them shallow on Sunday the 27th, then deeper on Monday and Tuesday. Took my buddy Jake Green out on Tuesday; he doesn't get out much during open water season. We hang-glided over and around deep stumps and brushpiles. We caught well over 60 crappies in five hours; jigs worked best. Jake tried minnows, but changed quickly to jigs when I landed six before he had one. I fished again today, the 30th with a couple buddies from Farrell. We put a lot of fish in our livewells by hang-gliding jigs tipped with minnows or **Berkley Nibblers**. Black/chartreuse **Southern Pro Hot Grubs** on a 1/8-ounce **Road Runner Head** did the trick. We had lots of nice fish, with the real big 16-incher as a kicker." (See photos in Livewell)



Ken Smith photo

Lake Wilhelm



Darl Black photo

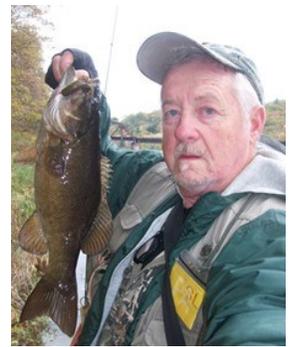
Darl Black (Cochranon) filed 11/4: "On Sunday I drove down to Wilhelm to check things out. I talked with Wayne Wacker who was checking water level, too; he is a local angler who likes to troll **Hot-N-Tots** on lead-core line for walleye at Wilhelm and Pymatuning. He had a pretty good day on large Wilhelm walleye several weeks ago but did not enjoy consistent fishing success on the lake. I also chatted with two bass anglers from Butler who were launching their boat. They fish Wilhelm occasionally, and indicated they had fairly good success this year with bass. Finally, I talked with Dan Halin and Pete Duffy – two anglers taking advantage of the open fishing on the state park marina docks. They were hoping to catch panfish from the deeper docks. I believe Marilyn and I will fish Wilhelm on Election Day."

VENANGO COUNTY

Allegheny River

Mike Horrobin (Jigger Tackle) filed 11/3: "River is high with lots of debris floating downstream from Saturday's rain. However, in the past week, there have been many reports of bank fishermen catching big smallmouths – 18" to 22" – from the river. Reports have been good for walleye on French Creek. Allegheny River and French Creek are by far the best fishing in the area right now."

Steve Udick (Oil City) filed 11/2: "With the high water in the river now – it's up 6 feet plus, it's looking like walleye water. Shad Rap time! I'm pleased to have won **Venom Tubes** – I go through a lot of Venom tubes each year. I was out on the 30th before the big rain. I was surprised to find smallmouth still near shore in 42 to 46 degree water. I caught a 20-incher and couple 18-inchers in an area I had not caught a bass all summer long." (See photo)



Steve Udick photo

Bill Logan (Pleasantville) filed 10/30: "I made it out the other day. I had four hits in 4.5 hours, landing two bass. Then I went back to the spot I already fished, and in the next five hours, I landed 16 smallmouth bass, losing 6 more at the boat. I had a total of 30 hits on one tube and one **Venom Galida Grub**. Also caught one lam-prey." (See Livewell photos)

Pete Cartwright (Pittsburgh) filed 10/30: "We fished the Allegheny on October 26 and 27. River was up and stained, and water was cold with leaves. Not able to wade due to high water, we stuck to bank fishing. The bite was slow for us, but we landed a few nice fish in 16" to 17" range and small walleye. We observed an angler catch a walleye over 30 inches on a live creek chub. Photo is nice smallie caught by Mike Lapkowicz." (See Livewell photo)

Kahle Lake

Steve Fleckenstein (Clarion) filed 10/31: "Yes, I'm still fishing. Mainly some ponds in our area, and occasionally at Kahle Lake. We've been catching panfish on split tails and ice jigs tipped with maggots. Here is a couple nice panfish I caught from shore."

Livewell Overflow starts here!

Kahle Lake panfish - Steve Fleckenstein photos



Allegheny River Smallmouth -
Bill Logan photos



The Livewell

Brought to you by:

Allegheny River smallmouth



Mike Lapkowicz/Cartwright photo



Boat of the Month: Wiegel's has this Kingfisher Extreme river jet waiting for a home.

Shenango Lake - Shenango rocks in the fall for crappies! Ken Smith and friends are all smiles with the exceptional crappie fishing this past week at Shenango Lake; photos from Ken Smith



Livewell Overflow from Lake Erie

Presque Isle Bay with Dave Lefebre



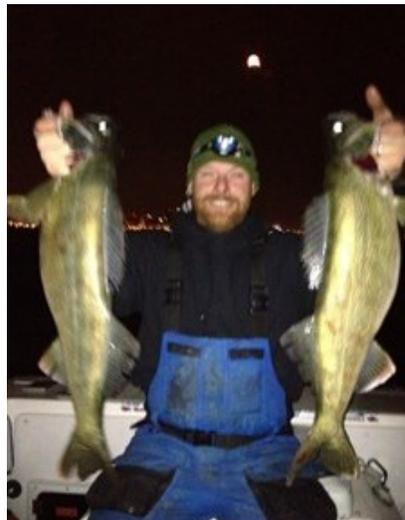
Darl Black photo



Snow-bow pike (check background)

Dave Lefebre photo

Lake Erie Walleye - Not everyone is caught up on steelhead in the tribs. These anglers are trolling at night on the main lake and catching some nice 'eye!



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Gamma Fishing Tips

You may have notice several anglers in the Report mentioning live creek chubs being used for walleye. This is the time of year that creek chubs and other large minnows are deadly on walleye in the Allegheny River and French Creek. You will need to trap the bait from smaller tributaries with a wire mesh funnel minnow trap baited with bread. Keep the bait in an aerated tank until ready to fish. I prefer using circle hooks to prevent deep hooking that may kill fish you intend to release (i.e. bass and sublegal walleyes). My line will be 6- or 8-pound Gamma Polyflex. Six-pound is strong enough for any walleye in the river, but given all the debris and flooded grass you may be fishing this time of year, 8-pound gives you an extra margin of security. As far as I am concerned, there is absolutely no need to fish live bait with a Gamma line heavier than 8-pound; it is an incredibly strong line. Go Fish!

Winner of the spool of Gamma Line for this issue of Fishing Report: Al Bell

Winner of the Prize Pack of Baits for this issue of the Fishing Report: Bill Logan

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.darlblack.blogspot.com

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