

# NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

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

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. In providing information or pictures, you are agreeing to your comments being edited, and posted to websites and distributed electronically.

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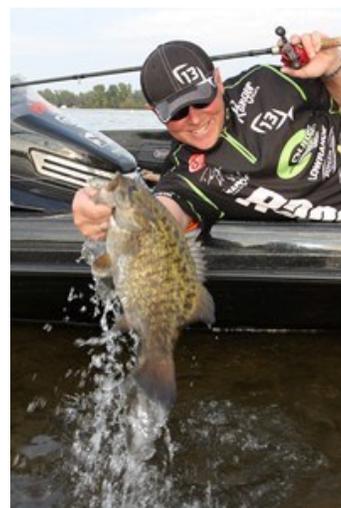
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## The Landing Net

*by Darl Black*

All the talk this past week among NW PA anglers has been the low water conditions – in the Allegheny River, in the Erie steelhead streams, and at Pymatuning Lake. We need rain! We also need more seasonable water temperatures. Unusually warm temps are preventing fall bites from kicking in. While “fishing” has been pleasant due to mild weather, “catching” has been difficult. However, I did have a success day with Dave Lefebre on PIB this past week during a photo shoot, catching my largest smallmouth of the year so far. But I’ll be looking for bigger ones before the snow flies!



## NW PA FISHING REPORT for October 13, 2015

This Report is brought to you by the PA Great Lakes Region tourism with additional sponsorship from Wiegel Brothers Marine and Gamma Fishing.

We answer the question *“What’s biting in the lakes, streams and rivers of Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango counties?”*

### CRAWFORD COUNTY

#### Pymatuning Lake

*Patty @ Poff’s Place*; filed 10/13: “Some anglers are catching walleyes on blades off the bridges. Small yellow perch are biting, but crappies are slow. The catfish bite has slacked off. Best Selling Lures at Poff’s Place have been **Vib-E** and **Heddon Sonar** blades.”

*Dave @ Richter’s Tackle Shop*; filed 10/13: “This past weekend the walleye bite on blades was pretty good. I’ve heard a lot about smallmouth bass this fall, too.”

*Norm @ Jamestown Boat Livery*; filed 10/13: “The blade bait for walleyes has been strong with a few guys reporting limits, but most anglers are catching 3 or 4 keepers. Crappies are hitting on the South End, too. Fish are being taken in 12 to 15 feet. Launching is okay at Jamestown ramp for normal fishing boats but I would not attempt a long deep keel boat.”

*Laurie @ Duck-N-Drake*; filed 10/9: “I wanted to let everyone know that I am now closed for the season. I will not open again till the ice breaks on the lake in the spring. Thanks to everyone for their business this past season, have a great fall & winter, and I’ll see you in the spring.”

Jim McClave (Andover); filed 10/12: “Darl, I have been out on Pymie three or four times this past week. Fishing various depths and trying different baits. The only fish we are catching are small perch and catfish. Looks like a windy week ahead, with some nights going down into the 30s. That might kick-start some fall walleyes – I hope!”

Robert Nypaver; filed 10/8: “I caught this 26 inch walleye on October 8 at Pymatuning Lake. I was trolling a blue & chrome **Hot-N-Tot** in 19 feet of water on the South End.” See photo at right.





RJ Graham (Tionesta); filed 10/4: "Darl, I fished Pymie today (10/4) in the cold and wind. We managed a good day with 3 smallmouths and 15 large-mouths, mostly on a ½-ounce mop jig offshore."  
(RJ's photos left and right)



### Conneaut Lake

Marilyn Black (Cochrannton); filed 10/12: "Monday was a holiday for me so Darl and I went fishing to Conneaut Lake in search of smallmouth bass. Usually we do very well for smallies in mid-October. But after searching shallow and deep for three hours with no hits, no misses, no fish of any kind – not even a pike – we decided to call it a day. Cloudless blue skies and a 20 mph wind had everything tight lipped and off their feed."

Scott Lobins (Conneaut Lake); filed 10/11: "The other day I found a few nice sized bluegills on Conneaut – but not many...and they were deep – around 25 feet. Hit Pymie today but no success!"



*Darl @ Fishing with Darl Black;* filed 10/7: "On October 7 Fishing with Darl Black guests Tom and Bob enjoyed an outing on Conneaut Lake for bluegills with a few crappies in the mix as well. Bob was interested in learning about panfish in the fall, taking notes on lures and rods used along with type of location for fish. Our hot bait that day was **Charlie Brewer's 1" Panfish Slider** on a 1/16-ounce head with 7' **B'n'M Rods**. Seemed the blue-

gill schools in the moderate deep water of summer had moved back to shallower water."

### Woodcock Creek Lake

Randy Byham (Saegertown); filed 10/12: "Darl...I've always only fished French Creek and the Allegheny River, but living 5 minutes from Woodcock Creek Lake, I decided to give it a shot. Actually fished the edge the same way I fish streams, and surprisingly began catching

a few smallmouths. I decided to take Emma, my 8-year old granddaughter, as she wanted to try fishing out of her own kayak. We were only there about an hour and she was playing in the water more than fishing. I had one fish hit my plug but missed it, so I told her to throw her line in the same spot. One cast and the fish nailed her plug – a **Firetiger Jitterbug**. Emma caught the big one – a 3.5 pound, 19 inch smallmouth! It scared her so much pulling



Emma's big Smallmouth! Photo by Randy Byham

her kayak around that she only wants to fish out of the tandem kayak with me now. There were quite a few boats on the lake that evening. A couple of days ago I went back there but noticed there were no boats anywhere. When I got on the water, there was what I am assuming was a green algae bloom on the surface of the water and extending about 6 inches deep. Not sure if that is a yearly occurrence or not. But the fishing was fun while it lasted!"

## ERIE COUNTY

### Presque Isle Bay



Day on The Bay with Dave/ photo by db

Dave Lefebre (Erie); filed 10/11: "First time out with DB in 2015. Too much work to do on both ends, but in the 20 minutes we actually fished we had a blast. I caught one 3.5 lb. largemouth in the bay, and DB caught 2 smallies – a 4 pounder and 5.5 pounder. Perfect quick photo fish...not to mention Darl's biggest brownie of the year! Smallies were in 12-14 feet, taken on a drop shot 4" green pumpkin **Senko** and a black **1/16 oz. VMC Marabou Jig**. I caught the largemouth on a **Rapala DT 16** in Helsinki Shad on a 15-foot hump. Messing around for a set-up shot in the dying mats, I lost two largemouths on one of Darl's dumb frogs – one was

about 3.5 pounds. I went back out the next evening and caught a bunch cranking where I caught the one the day before! The Bay is in transition; aside from one or two places I'd say it's pretty tough right now."

### Thomas Watral's Diary (Erie)

- 10/6 – Went down to the Bay to check things out. Water was green color. Anglers were getting some perch at the Border Dock but nothing of any size. Biggest was 9 inches; caught with minnows on crappie rigs. No schools of minnows around – still needs to cool down more. Over at Union City Reservoir they are getting some nice crappie and pike. At LeBoeuf Lake, reports of pike and nice panfish.
- 10/12 – I went all over PIB today. At South pier, it was windy. Went to Ship Yard pier where smaller perch were being caught on Kastmaster spoons. At Border Dock, saw some limits of 9 to 12 inch perch on pink minnows. At Public Dock, no one doing any good. At Liberty Pier, saw some perch and crappies hitting on pink minnows. Stop by 2407 McKinley Ave to get the hottest baits.

### Steelhead Tributaries

*Jeff @ Poor Richards*; filed 10/13: "Steelheads are in the lower part of the streams but with low water very few fish are moving up. The bite is tough, with live minnows or single eggs the best thing going. Boats trolling near the mouth of the tributaries are doing fairly good. There were a couple lake trout caught out from Trout Run. Our best sellers this week were blue & chrome spoons for casting the surf." Photo of a 10 lb. 1 oz. Brown Trout.



John Emerick/Poor Richards

*Dan @ Elk Creek Sports*; filed 10/13: "We need rain! The little drizzle we are getting today will not help. Steams are low and clear. Steelheads have been sitting in the lower sections for so long that some are pushing upstream even though their backs are sticking out of water in the shallows. These fish are not easy to catch – not enough current flow and water is too clear. Best time is ½ hour before daylight and ½ hour after sun sets. The lake fishing will likely be shot this week with the wind expected over the next few days."

*Andy @ Trout Run*; filed 10/13: "They are catching a few but the bite is tough. I heard there are steelheads as far upstream as the Legion Hole on Elk, and bunch of new fish moved into the mouth of Walnut over the weekend."

## MERCER COUNTY

### Lake Wilhelm

*John @ Fergie's Bait*; filed 10/12: "Nothing to report down here except some average size bluegills and crappies being caught. Water temp still too warm for good fall fishing – but we are looking ahead to ice fishing season with new ice shelters and rods in the store. The biggest news this week was about a bobcat killed on Georgetown Road just down from the shop!"

### Shenango Lake



Fall on Shenango: Marina at Clark/db photo



Fall on Shenango: crappie fishing/db photo

Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 10/13: "I did fish Shenango a couple times last week and did very good on numbers. My brother Rich and I caught over 80 fish on 10/7 using **Bobby Garland Baby Shads** on 1/16-ounce heads. We kept a limit for his in-laws that came in from Vegas. Most fish were on wood in 12 feet of water. Lots of them were 10 inches and little better. Same baits worked in the same areas with my older brother Bill the next day. We kept 35 for his fish fry with friends from New Castle. There is a very good bite going on now and should continue for another couple weeks until turnover."

## VENANGO COUNTY

*Bill @ Griffins Bait*; filed 10/11: "With hunting season starting up, we have been slow at Griffins Bait & Tackle. All we can do is rely on those diehard fishermen who don't mind the cold while searching the big ones. Cold water means extra emphasis on safety equipment. Make sure your PFD is in good shape. Cold water period is the best time for big gamefish to be eating on their fall binge. Eight-year-old Emma Brown caught a healthy 24 inch walleye on the Allegheny River while fishing with Mike Foyer; photo attached. Also, we have our fishing boat for sale; see specs below."



!4' StarCraft Deep V; 20 HP 4-stroke Yamaha (2012 with only 3.9 hours on it; lot of accessories with it. Also have a 9.9 HP Johnson and 6 HP Evinrude for sale. See them all at Griffins Bait & Tackle Shop in Cooperstown, PA or call 814-374-4523.

### Little Sandy Creek



Jeff Reichel (Meadville); filed 10/11: "I fished Little Sandy Creek in the Catch and Release Fly Fishing Only project at Polk over the weekend. I caught 9 trout all about 10 inches long. One was a brown and eight of them were rainbows. All were caught on size 14 Olive Hare's Ear Nymph. It was a beautiful fall day to be on the water." Above photos by Jeff Reichel.

### Allegheny River

Gene Winger (Oil City); filed 10/13: "It's hard to believe we're into October and the smallmouths are still scattered all over the place. With water levels below normal and water temps above 60 degrees, bass fishing has been very unpredictable to say the least. The best days over the past two weeks were Sunday and Monday after the hard rain on Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Once the river started dropping on Tuesday, the bite pretty much faded away. On Sunday, the 11<sup>th</sup>, Chris Wehr and I only boated 3 bass...all in the 15-16 inch range. We're catching most of our fish on **Winco's Laminated Wacky Worms** rigged Texposed with a **4.0 EWG hook** and a 1/8 ounce slip sinker. Also **Winco's 4.75" Solid Body River Darters** are still working in the fast, shallow water." (See Livewell photos)

Dale Black (Oil City) filed 10/13: "I drove all the way back from Indiana on Saturday night arriving just in time to hook up the boat and head to the FOP tournament on Sunday morning. While my son and I caught between 20 and 25 bass, only four of them were over the 15 inch minimum size. Our total weight for 4 bass was 5.7 pounds – no big fish. Fish came on **4" Dingers**. Out of the entire field at the tournament, only one team had the 5 bass limit. Our weight put us in about 4<sup>th</sup> place. Tough fishing for October."

Pete Cartwright @ SmalliesontheYough.com; filed 10/13: "I fished the Allegheny for three days from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup>. Fishing was difficult at times dealing with floating grass and leaves; the bite wasn't the greatest. But at times the fish were very active; most fish I

caught were 14 to 18 inches. On the 12<sup>th</sup> I had two clients with me and the fishing was even harder with the wind knocking even more leaves in the water. But we managed 14 fish with the biggest going 18 inches.” (See Livewell photos)

Matt Watson (Franklin); filed 10/13: “I got out on the river on Monday night for a couple hours. Missed the first three walleyes until I figured out my hooks had been dulled on the rocks! Landed the next five walleyes by popping a **Rapala X-Rap** across the riffles; one was 24 inches and others were 18 to 20 inches – all released without harm. Still lots of weeds coming downstream and the rain tonight start bringing leaves into the water! Hoping for a good rain to wash things down.”

Ken Anderson (Tionesta); filed 10/13: “I fished the river on Monday the 12<sup>th</sup>. I got a 20 inch walleye on a live chub, and four bass – all less than 14 inches. Two bass took a **Reef Runner** crankbait.”

Jason Hagg; filed 10/12: “A group of 11 guys hit the river around Franklin on Sunday morning the 12<sup>th</sup>. A total of three legal smallmouths were caught, only one was over 15 inches. Fishing the morning hours this time of year continues to be a struggle.”

Angler Al (Franklin); filed 10/11: “Catman Stan Huefner boated two nice channel cats before 8 pm on the Allegheny. He’s thankful for the package of **Tru-Turn Blood Red Hooks** he won on the Fishing Report, as both fish were caught on them!”  
Photos on right of Stan taken by Angler Al.



#### RJ Graham’s Diary

- 9/30: I fished the river the other night. Struggled to catch a few decent smallies on tube jigs. Also fished Tionesta Lake, where I caught 3 bass over 3 pounds on a drop shot with **Robo Worm** using **GAMMA 7 pound Touch** leader with **GAMMA Torque** main line.
- 10/1: I fished the Oil City Pool tonight. Caught 15 bass on jigs. Wind was horrible and river was high & stained.
- 10/5: Stopped by the river on way home from Pymatuning. We caught a good number of bass on jigs and **Chatter Baits**.
- 10/9: I had a great night on the river. All fish came on **Flukes** and **KVD 1.0 Square Bill**.

## Along our waterways: The Osprey

Photos and text submitted by  
wildlife photographer Ed Atts

The osprey was a rare sight in northwestern Pennsylvania 30 years ago. Now this majestic bird with crooked wings exceeding 5 feet in width can be regularly seen winging over most of our lakes. The ban on DDT and an aggressive reintroduction program by various conservation organizations have contributed to the osprey's resurgence.



Osprey feed almost exclusively on fish. They either hunt from a perch or fly over the water, often hovering, until prey is located. The bird dives hitting the water with a loud splash. Four long sharp talons and spiny projections on the soles of their feet are effective adaptations for capturing fish. The main species I have observed captured are gizzard shad and bullheads.

Ospreys build a bulky nest of sticks sometimes rivaling an eagle's nest in size. The nest may be in a dead tree, on top of an electric pole, on a pole and platform especially erected for them by man, or high on top a cell tower. Once young ospreys fledge they migrate from Pennsylvania sometimes as far south as South America. They do not return back north until they are sexually mature at 2 or 3 years of age. Then mates are selected, territories established, nests constructed, and reproduction begins for the new pair.



As are all photos created by a photographer, Ed Atts images are copyright protected.

# The Livewell

Brought to you by:

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Allegheny River in Fall Colors/ photo db



Boat of the Month: Great deals on remaining boats at Wiegel Brothers Marine.

Gene Winger and friends on the Allegheny:



Gene



Gene



Todd



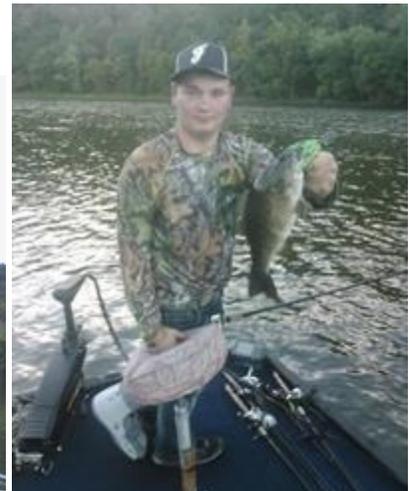
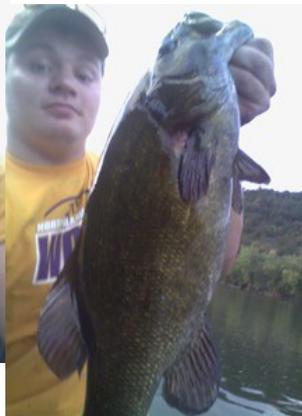
Bill

## Livewell Overflow — More smallmouth from the Allegheny River

Pete Cartwright and friend:



RJ Graham at work on the river, trying to take a good selfie:



The Titusville Herald reported Gage McCann (left) and Bodenheimer landed a paddlefish from the river in the area of Tionesta during the last week of September. The fish was estimated to be three feet long. According to the paper, this is only the second paddlefish caught in Pennsylvania since 1919. Both the PA Fish & Boat Commission and New York DNR have programs to re-establish the paddlefish to the Allegheny River; paddlefish must be released if caught—as this one was.

Photo by Shannon Kerr

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Oil City, PA 16301

[www.gammafishing.com](http://www.gammafishing.com)

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## Gamma Fishing Tip

You can find GAMMA line locally at the following tackle shops:

Consumer Direct Sports – Grove City, PA

Griffins Bait & Tackle – Cooperstown, PA

Hill's County Store – Williamsfield, OH

Maurer's Trading Post—Franklin, PA

Robinson's Bait & Tackle — Espyville, PA

\_\_\_\_\_ is the winner of tackle prize for this issue of the Fishing Report.

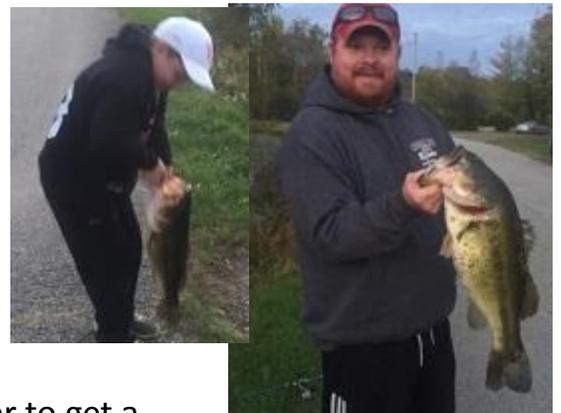
Please email your shipping address to Darl Black to claim your prize.

### GAMMA TIP PAGE



Kyle and Rodney—2nd major  
Championship in single year

Well, Gamma Pro-staff members Kyle Schoenherr and Rodney Neuhas did it! Back to back wins in two separate end-of-season crappie championship tournament circuits. In September they won the Crappie Masters Championship. Last week they won the Crappie USA Tournament Trail Championship. What an astonishing accomplishment! Congratulations, men! We will try to have an interview with Kyle for the next Fishing Report.



Closer to home, Gavin Smith caught his biggest largemouth of the season from Edinboro Lake using GAMMA Torque Line. Gavin said the fish was too heavy to holdup for more than one picture, so his father Jerauld Smith did the honors for Gavin in order to get a great photo of this pot-bellied bass. They didn't say what lure was used, but my lure guess is a one of the various hollow-belly frogs or a spinnerbait. What lure do you think?