

# NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

Published by Blackwolfe Communications LLC

Issue: June 3, 2020

The NW PA Fishing Report is brought to you by:



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



Fishing with Darl Black

Information Service



A 7 lb. 3 oz. Smallmouth Bass from Lake Erie; Photo sent in by Ryan Fulks.

## Landing Net by Darl Black

You might hear an angler casually say "Fishing is really great in NW PA." However, I made a career as an outdoor angling writer for over 30 years, traveling to hundreds of places to fish during that time. Yes, certain regions have exceptional fishing for one of two species. But in my three decades of travel, I can say with authority that NW PA offers the most rounded fishing opportunities of any place I've visited for the widest selection of species. Furthermore, the best of the best fishing for a variety of species is taking place right now, right here. Review this issue of the Fishing Report to see just many species are being caught RIGHT NOW! And the size of these fish! Then, Go Fish!

The NW PA Fishing Report provides timely angling information for Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango counties. Fishing comments and photos are offered by regional tackle shops and area anglers. The NWPAFR is based on experiences, observations and opinions of individual contributors; information is considered reliable but comments are not independently verified. In providing information or pictures, you are agreeing to your comments being edited for clarity and brevity, and posted to websites and distributed electronically.

## NW PA FISHING REPORT FOR June 3, 2020

Published by Blackwolfe Communications, LLC

### News

Bassmasters of Crawford County: We have been approved by the Presque Isle State Park to hold our Father's Day bass tournament on in Presque Isle Bay only (with a mitigation plan). At this point in time, Erie County is still in the yellow phase. If they move to the green phase before the event, we may be able to relax some of these requirements. We are limited to 49 boats. Applications by mail are preferred. Contact Eric Marsh at [epmarsh@zoominternet.net](mailto:epmarsh@zoominternet.net) for more information.

NEW STATE RECORD Pending: Jonathan Pierce caught a 56.3-pound Flathead Catfish from the Schuylkill River last week. He used a trout head for bait. Once it goes through the certification process by the PA Fish Commission, it will beat the previous flathead state record caught last year by several pounds. Congratulations Jonathan! You can read more by googling Penn Live New State Record Flathead. (see photo)



## County by County Reports

### CRAWFORD COUNTY

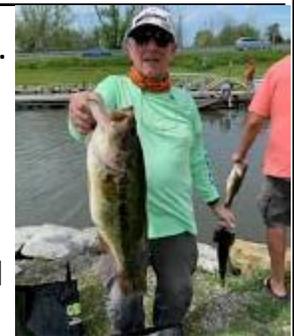
#### Pymatuning Lake

**Laurie @ Duck-N-Drake**; filed 6/1: The bluegill bite is on! Crappies, surprisingly, are still shallow in the North End. Word has arrived that walleyes are hitting in the North End stump field. Throughout the lake, walleyes are being caught shallow during the day by casting with a jig-and-crawler. Some walleyes are suspended in deeper water, hitting trolled Flicker Shads and Shad Raps. Lori, one of our customers, caught a nice musky yesterday. (See photo)



Lori with musky

**Russ @ Gateway Tackle**; filed 6/1: Crappie bite has tapered off some. Walleyes are being caught drifting with a floating jighead tipped with a crawler. We are still hearing about a number of muskies being caught – this has been one of best springs for musky that I can remember.



Ernie Page—5 lb. plus

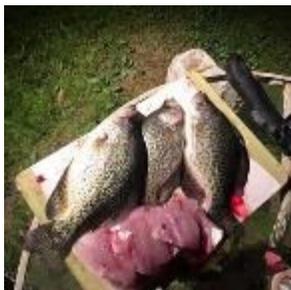
**Dave @ Richter's Bait**; filed 5/30: We start out for walleye, but found crappies instead. Kept a few for dinner. (See photo)

**Corey Bice** (Sharpsville); filed 5/31: Evening outing on Pymatuning resulted in my daughter Kinsley catching her first walleye. (See photo)



Kinsley's 1st walleye

**Marilyn Black** (Cochranon); filed 5/30: Normally we don't fish over Memorial Day Weekend due to the number of anglers on the water. But my work schedule has prevented me from getting out much this spring, so we went. Good thing. I caught my first respectable size Pymatuning smallmouth bass for 2020 on a **Galida's Grubz**, along with several smaller smallies and largemouths.



Richter's crappies



Linesville Livery photo



Marilyn's SMB

### Canadohta Lake

**Jerry @ Timberland Bait;** filed 6/1: Anglers on Canadohta so far this season have caught more musky, northern pike and walleye than I can ever remember. Saw a 30-inch and a 31-inch walleye brought in over weekend. However, the crappie bite has been terrible. Musky and pike have been feasting on golden shiners that are currently in very shallow water spawning. The shop has never been this busy. Everyone is fishing, and now we are having trouble getting terminal tackle – so much back ordered. Up at Union City Reservoir anglers have been catching a lot of pike.

## ERIE COUNTY

### Lake Erie & Presque Isle Bay

**Kirk @ East End Angler;** filed 6/1: Anglers are still catching walleyes at night casting from shore at most creek mouths. Also, night bite in the Bay off South Pier, Convention Center and Sheraton Hotel. Long minnow plugs are the ticket. There is a bunch of nice perch off the Convention Center as well. Out in the Lake, they have found good perch off Shades Beach in 55 feet of water. Walleye bite in lake on East side is a little light; anglers are picking some up in 20 to 30 feet during daylight from Point to Condos. Also, still catching crappies at Eaton Reservoir.

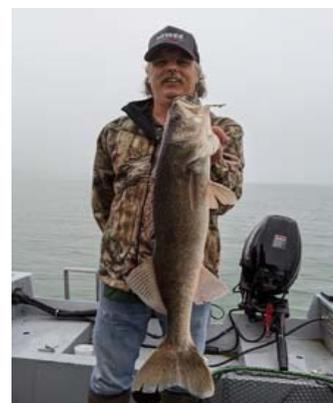
**Jeff @ Poor Richards;** filed 6/1: Walleye bite off shore picking up at mouths of creeks on West side; some limit catches now and then. Trolling in 10 to 35 feet has been effective day and night. Shallow running Bandits and Renosky plugs. Also casting green or purple bucktail jigs tipped with crawler. Perch bite is slow. Still some smallmouth in the streams but that is tapering down.

**Doug @ Elk Creek Sports;** filed 6/1: Elk is low and clear; not much action except catfish in lower sections. Some Perch in 45 to 50 feet off Walnut.

**Richard @ Someday Isle Tackle;** filed 6/1: Walleye fishing still remains decent. We've been getting a lot in the shallow water that are still spawning. Look for a lot of bottom structure. During the day, they are laying in the structure so jig around it. Use 1/8 and 1/4-ounce Water Puppets tipped with a crawler. Jig area thoroughly around rocks and boulders. You catch a little of everything...walleye, smallmouth and catfish. Have fun out there! (See photos)



Someday Isle Tackle photo



Someday Isle Tackle photo

**Mark @ MarkRoseFishing**; filed 6/1: Hello guys and gals. Fishing in Erie is great. You can catch them shallow a bunch of different ways. Had a two-day trip with guys from Virginia, and we caught over 200 smallies in two days. Get hooked up with bassonline today. Thanks, Capt. Mark Rose. (photo below)

**Ryan Fulks**; filed 5/31: Good day on the Lake near Shades Beach. Caught a 7-lb. 3-oz smallmouth bass on my son's custom painted jerkbait. Also, an 8-lb. 9-oz walleye on same bait while bass fishing in 10 feet of water, plus three more 'eyes in same area. (See photo below and cover photo)

**Damian Kuzmin**; filed 5/31: Here is a picture of Sophia Kuzmin's first walleye of 2020. It weighed 8-lb. 4-oz. We caught it in the Walnut Creek area. (See photo below)

**Dave Parisi**; filed 5/30: Son Tyler, Dan and myself had a great day on PIB smallmouth this weekend. (See photo below and in Livewell page)

**George Mrozinski**; filed 5/30: Taking some beautiful smallmouth in PIB this past week on tubes and Ned Rigs. (See photos below and on Livewell Page)

**Scott Selle**; filed 5/28: I attached a couple photos of Erie smallmouths caught on Memorial Day. I used **Mike's Custom Tackle soft plastic tubes** which I had won earlier this year on the Fishing Report. The bite was tough that day. However, I managed to boat some nice smallmouth plus rock bass on Mike's tubes. Shout out to Mike's Custom Tackle for making great baits! (See photo below and on Livewell Page)



Mark Rose photo



8lb goz eye Ryan Fulks



Dave Parisi photo



Scott Selle photo



Sophia's first walleye of 2020



George Mrozinski photo



George Mrozinski photo

## MERCER COUNTY

**Brandon @ Consumer Direct Sports;** filed 5/31: Dad and I fished Lake Wilhelm this past



5 pounder for Brandon

week. Bass seem to be in all phases of the spawn, which lead to catching them from 1 foot out to 12 feet on points and ledges. We caught these two over the holiday weekend. Mine was a 5.18-pound pre-spawn largemouth and Dad's was a 4-pound post-spawn bass. I've been crappie fishing at Shenango this week too. Catching a ton of crappies between 8 and 13 inches, but having some trouble getting the big ones. Crappies have been stacked on 6 to 12-foot breaklines. (See photos)



4 pounder for Jerry

### Lake Wilhelm

**Bob @ Bubba Mak's Bait;** filed 6/1: The lake was very busy this past weekend. Crappies were what everyone was catching. Minnows were the number one bait. No word on bluegills yet.

**Cory @ Lake Wilhelm Marina;** filed 6/1: We have been seeing a lot of crappies come in. Decent catches of 12 to 13-inch fish. I've seen a few nice walleyes – not numbers but good size, including a 26-inch and 28-inch in the last couple days.

**Bo @ BC Bait Co.;** filed 5/30: We have been getting nice crappies in 10 to 12 feet of water all over the lake. BC Baits in Bubblegum have been our most productive color. (See photos below)

**Rich Frollini;** filed 5/31: I caught this 19.75-inch largemouth from the stumps on Wilhelm. This big one towed my kayak around until I finally landed it. What a fight! (see photos below)



Bo knows crappies



19.75 inch LMB for Rich Frollini



## MERCER COUNTY continued

### Shenango Lake

**Rich Como** (Sharpsville); filed 6/1: Fishing on Shenango Lake has been outstanding the past few weeks. All lake species are being caught at this time. Walleyes have started to feed shallow around the lake; limit catches reported. Hybrid stripers are feeding on points and some topwater action has begun. Lots of big channel cats are being caught. Ralph Scherer and I decided to fish the Shenango River for the white bass spawn to escape the heavy boat traffic. Lots of fish were present and the spawn was in full swing. Just about every cast produced a white bass – spinners type lures did the trick. Good fishing should be the norm now if the weather holds and lake level remains constant. (See photo upper right)



**Randy @ Fish West PA**; filed 6/1: Fish have really started to feed in Shenango. Many nice pike, bass, panfish and hybrids – all very active and some very big fish caught in the past two weeks. Now is the time to fish! More rain coming this week will really get them going. Enjoy! Tight lines, Randy. (See photo right and in Livewell Page)



Photo by Randy

**John Kolodziejski**; filed 5/31: Here is a photo of some Shenango crappies I took the Friday of Memorial Day Weekend. All were caught on jigs in 2 to 4 feet of water. The evening was quite peaceful due to prior rain which dissipated the boat traffic. We were on a large concentration of beautiful slabs, but this stringer was more than enough to harvest. (See photo on right)



Photo by John



**Kevin @ Luck is 4 Rabbits fishing program**; filed 5/30: I took my grandson Kyzaire Hill and my niece

Sierra Pickens fishing over the weekend. This was my grandson's first-time fishing for crappie with his new Ugly Stick rod and reel combo. He used a white jig-head and a white Bobby Garland 2-inch minnow under a bobber set at 18 inches. My Niece was using a green twister tail tipped with a minnow to catch her first walleye in only 24 inches of water. Both are students of Luckis4Rabbits fishing program. (see photos on left)

Shenango River

**Al Bell @ Buttermilk Hill;** filed 5/31: While fishing the Shenango River near Greenville, my friend Will Allison caught this 35-pound flathead catfish. The big whiskered beast smashed a 6-inch bluegill and then took off on a mighty run. The battle lasted 10 minutes before the fish found a large log to snag up on. Relentlessly, Will tugged to free it. Fortunately, the reel's 30-pound braid stood the test and he landed it. After a few pics, the monster was released. Congratulations Will!



Will Allison

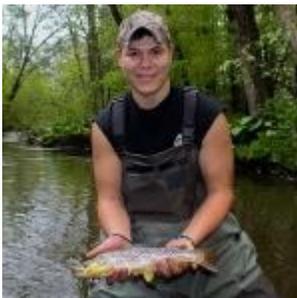


**Brock "Captain Hook" Morocco;** filed 5/30: I chase multi-species of fish all year, and right now Shenango River stripers are showing up along with active small-mouth bass. (This is below the Sharpsville Dam; don't know if they slipped through dam gates when small or if they moved upstream from mouth of Beaver River where they are also stocked.) Be prepared for stripers to burn your drag steady as they head down river in the stronger currents. River hybrids are excellent fighters and may require boosting your line strength given all the fallen timber. The best fishing is near dark or early morning. (See photos left and right)



**VENANGO COUNTY**

**Nick @ Wildwood Outfitters;** filed 5/30: Most of our guide trips now are headed to Central PA to enjoy some of the amazing hatches going on in that part of the state, but there are still some trout opportunities locally! Caddis and few sulphurs are hatching pretty regularly and trout are happily feeding on the. Water conditions are becoming an issue with limited rain and it's imperative that we receive continued precipitation to keep the season going. Sources of cold water and tributaries are becoming increasingly important since trout will congregate in these spots as summer progresses. (see photo on left)



Justus Lake

**Sue's Bait Shop;** filed 6/1: We have had reports of some walleyes from the Allegheny River and of course trout from Justus Lake. Justus Lake will continue to provide good trout fishing through June and into the summer because the lake is very deep.

## VENANGO COUNTY continued

### Lake Creek & Sugar Creek

**Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill;** filed 5/31: It rained heavily on Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, fouling up the streams for the weekend. However, my guests, Randy and Tina Shafer from Leetonia, OH, caught and released several trout near the junction of Lake



Creek and Sugar Creek. Most were caught on pieces of worm, but some were lured by a white and orange Trout Magnet – similar to a split-tail. Around lunch time on Saturday, I was showing them a cast and retrieve presentation that swims a small piece of crawler to emulate a minnow. Wouldn't you know it – I hooked into a nice trout! The 22-inch brown up quite a battle before I landed it. (see photos upper right)

### Allegheny River

**Joline @ Maurer's Trading Post;** filed 6/1: Our customers are being successful with smallmouth bass on the river using white curl tail jigs and Chatter Bait. No word on walleye.

**Jeff @ Keystone Connection Guide Service;** filed 5/31: The major warm up of the past two weeks, during which water temperature rose nearly 20 degrees, inspired significant movement by middle Allegheny River smallmouth bass. Smallmouth bass had been staging near spawning areas and were demanding on-the bottom presentations such as a finesse tube. As things warmed up, bass became more active and started responding to moving baits including flukes and soft swimbaits. During my last guide trip (May 30) smallmouth bass were clearly on beds and soft stickbaits like the Yum Dinger were most effective. With bass spawning and the post-spawn period looming (which is typically slow), I'll be focusing on river walleyes for a couple of weeks. (See photos below)

**Pete Cartwright @ SmalliesontheYough.com;** May 26<sup>th</sup> was a great morning to be on the Allegheny River. Fog to start this hot day. We got into the smallies early, catching some nice healthy fish. I caught one going 21.75 inches; it was a truly a big river smallie! We ended up with 22 smallmouths from 15 to 21 inches. (See photos below)



Jeff Knapp photos



Pete Cartwright photos

## **Area Guide Services contribute to the NW PA Fishing Report**

Looking for a trip on a Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango county water?  
Check them out!

**Dutch Fork Guide Service:** Lake Erie Walleye trolling, casting and jigging. Keith Eshbaugh; 724-884-3977; [www.dutchforkcustomlures.com](http://www.dutchforkcustomlures.com)

**Keystone Connection Guide Service:** Allegheny River Smallmouth, Walleye and Musky plus Pymatuning Walleye. Jeff Knapp; 724-902-6082; [keystone-connectionguideservice@gmail.com](mailto:keystone-connectionguideservice@gmail.com); [www.facebook.com/keystoneconnectionguideservice](http://www.facebook.com/keystoneconnectionguideservice).

**Mark Rose Fishing Pro Guide;** Lake Erie Smallmouth Bass. Contact 724-333-3898; [markrose@bassonline.com](mailto:markrose@bassonline.com); [markrosefishing.com](http://markrosefishing.com).

**Smallies on the Yough LLC:** wading for Smallmouth Bass on the Yough River, Allegheny River and other streams. Pete Cartwright; 412-215-6254; [pete@smalliesontheyough.com](mailto:pete@smalliesontheyough.com); [www.facebook.com/smalliesontheyough/](http://www.facebook.com/smalliesontheyough/).

**Wildwood Outfitters:** Fly fishing for Trout, Steelhead and other species. Nick DelVecchio; [www.wildwoodoutfitterspa.com/](http://www.wildwoodoutfitterspa.com/); [www.facebook.com/wildwoodoutfitters](http://www.facebook.com/wildwoodoutfitters).

Names drawn from among contributors for prizes:

1. Spool of Gamma Line: George Mrozinski
2. Pack of Panfish Baits; Dave Parisi
3. Dutch Fork Walleye Worm Harness: Damian Kuzmin
4. Pack of Galida's Grubz for Cover Shot: Ryan Fulks

Some extra prizes this issue. To claim your prize, you must contact Darl by email with your shipping address. Send to [darlblack@windstream.net](mailto:darlblack@windstream.net).

# The Livewell

Brought to you by:  
Wiegel Brothers Marine  
704 1/2 Elk Street  
Franklin, PA 16323  
Phone 814-437-2077



Email: [Debbie@riverjetpro.com](mailto:Debbie@riverjetpro.com)

**BIG FISH ARE BITING ACROSS NW PA—Get a Boat and GO FISH!**



Paul Stewart 's Pymatuning musky



Randy's Shenango Lake Hybrid Striper



George's Erie Smallmouth



Tyler Parisi's Erie SMB



Jerry Hanna's Erie SMB

## LIVEWELL OVERFLOW from Wiegel Brothers Marine



Dave Ohmar's PIB Smallmouth by Kayak

---

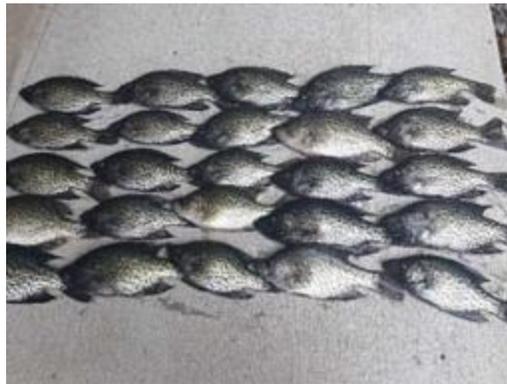


Someday Isle Tackle photo



Scott Selle PIB Smallmouth

---



Tionesta crappies—David Graham

---



Erie SMB—Parisi photo

---



Wilhelm Crappie—Bo @ BC Bait Co.

---



Shenango Largemouth—Rick Como

---



Black Knight Industries  
Oil City, PA 16301  
[www.gammafishing.com](http://www.gammafishing.com)

Gamma Line may be found locally at the following tackle shops:

- Consumer Direct Sports (CDS) near Grove City Outlet Mall
- Maurer's Trading Post, Franklin, PA

Guides know: They enjoy better Fishing Success with Gamma Line!



Shawn Smith with Jeff Knapp

---



Jim Stout with Jeff Knapp

---



Pete Cartwright—guide

---



Cartwright's client

---



Evan Hoover with Jeff Knapp

---

## GARMIN INFORMATION PAGE



- Real anglers share actual fishing experiences with Garmin units

Darl Black: If you have read this issue, you would have seen the BIG pre-spawn largemouth which Brandon Hanna caught from a ledge in Lake Wilhelm. Wilhelm has been one of my favorite largemouth bass lakes for 40 years. I remember a writer for the old Fishing Facts magazine talking about catching summer largemouths by trolling Spoonplugs on the submerged road beds in the lake. As my experience with sonar grew, I was able to find these offshore structure and ledges. Today, with my Garmin Down Vu and Side Vu, I've learned even more. This snapshot of a Garmin screen shows one of many drop-offs on Wilhelm, and the second picture is what I caught the last time I fished this spot. (Okay, it's not the five-pound-plus bass that Brandon caught, but you don't hit a homerun every time at bat.) However, you don't have to go to Wilhelm. Every area lake as a wealth of underwater structures holding bass and other species – Lake Arthur, Shenango Lake, Pymatuning Lake, Justus Lake and Woodcock Lake to name a few. Get a Garmin and Go Fish!

