

# NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

Published by Blackwolfe Communications LLC

Issue: August 5, 2020

The NW PA Fishing Report is brought to you by:



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



**GAMMA**  
*Lines*



**Fishing with Darl Black**

**Information Service**



Donnie Horvath, fishing with guide Jeff Knapp on the Allegheny River, scores a very nice smallmouth bass.

## The Landing Net by Darl Black

It's that time of year. The period from mid to late July through mid-August is almost like Groundhog Day the movie. Once mid-summer patterns are established, the same-old routines day after day until cooler nights of late August start gradual cooling of lakes and rivers. On inland waters, it might seem that fish are not biting as well as they did in the spring and early summer. The truth is they are still eating, but there is so much more forage for them at this time of year that your lure or live bait presentation may simply get lost in the abundance of prey. On Lake Erie the deal is a little different. An influx of thousands of walleyes are eating their way through Pennsylvania waters; with prey being consumed rapidly, your lures appear very attractive.

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 August 5, 2020

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### News items

August 2, 2020; Erie, PA: Algae advisories posted at seven Erie County locations. It's unsafe for dogs to swim at the seven waterfront locations in Erie County, four of them at Presque Isle State Park. People are warned to keep their dogs out of the water because of harmful algal blooms. The sites are: Presque Isle Marina, Niagara Boat Launch, Ferry slip, Sturgeon Bay, Erie Yacht Club, Shades Beach in Harborcreek and Lake Cliff Boat Launch in Lawrence Park. Ingesting water infected with these algae toxins can cause gastrointestinal illness in dogs and can be life-threatening in some cases.

### County by County Fishing Reports

**FRENCH CREEK – Flowing through all four counties.**

***Jerry @ Timberland Bait***; filed 8/3: Several of my customers have been fishing French Creek by kayak and enjoying very good smallmouth bass catches.

CRAWFORD COUNTY

#### Pymatuning Lake

***Dave @ Richter's Bait & Tackle***; filed 8/3: With the windy conditions over the weekend, guys drifting with jig-and-crawler were catching numbers of walleyes. Every time we get wind and waves, the walleyes turn on-- but don't take chances really rough waves. The

guys trolling for 'eye in deeper water are getting a few as well as guys running side planers for suspended walleyes. I'm hearing about a lot of small perch, some decent bluegills and an occasional musky in the Shenango River. Not a single word about crappies. But of course, catfish are everywhere.

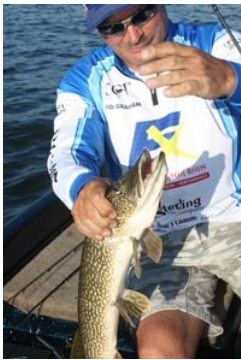
**Vicki @ Duck-N-Drake;** filed 8/3: Catfish! Everyone is catching catfish.

**Russ @ Gateway Tackle;** filed 8/3: Guys are catching a few walleyes here and there, plus a musky every once in a while. A few anglers are catching a few small crappies in the evening from the Causeway but nothing to get excited about.



Seeing lot more side planers on Pymatuning/

### Conneaut Lake



**David Graham** (Tionesta); filed 7/30: This past week, I spent a few hours on Conneaut with Darl Black, checking out the bass bite. The 'bass' bite was pretty good...they smacked my dropshot rig every place we stopped...aah, did I say they were Rock Bass! Got a couple large-mouth including the nice one in the photo, plus a pike. It was a slow afternoon. (Photos)



**Marilyn Black** (Cochrannton); filed 8/1: After hearing about David Graham's impressive catch of rock bass on Conneaut, I talked Darl into taking me over to the lake. But in two hours of fishing before a storm rolled in, all I could catch on a dropshot rig were bluegills and pumpkinseeds up to nine inches. Not a single rock bass!

### Canadohta Lake

**Jerry @ Timberland Bait;** filed 8/3: On most lakes, the bite starts to slow down by this time of summer. But here at Canadohta Lake, the bite is picking up. But there's also more people fishing than usual. Customers tell me they are still catching walleye by trolling the deeper water of the lake with spoons. And the lake's muskies are still putting on a show. One of my regular customers was trolling for walleye with a worm harness when a musky grabbed the bait. He had his hands full on the light rod he was using, but managed to get it up to the boat. Then it made one of those famous boat-

side lunges and broke the line – but not before he had a good look at the fish. He judged it to be over four feet long. The following week, another friend had a musky wash up on his lake front property. He put a measure on it – 52 inches. He could see a lure down its throat but did not try to get it out. While considering what to do with, the breeze came up and carried it back out into the lake. Don't worry – the lake will be growing more big muskies; the PFBC stocked 200 large fingerling muskies (14 to 18 inches long) in the lake two years ago.

**Bill Logan** (Titusville); filed 7/27: Last Friday, I caught a small musky while fishing Canadohta, making it my 108<sup>th</sup> 'lunge landed. Also had a 3-footer follow my swimbait musky lure back to the boat two times, but could not get it to commit.

## ERIE COUNTY

### Lake Erie

**Kirk @ East End Angler**; filed 8/3: Before the big blow several days ago, the kayak anglers had been catching walleyes in relatively shallow water off Shades. Most were drift fishing with Erie Dearies or bottom bouncing rids. Boat anglers off Shades had been getting them in 45 to 58 feet. Up towards North East, the depth was 50 to 65 feet. After the big blow, there may be some shifting of the schools. In Presque Isle Bay, shore fishermen have been catching a variety of panfish off the Convention Center and the Holland Street slip.

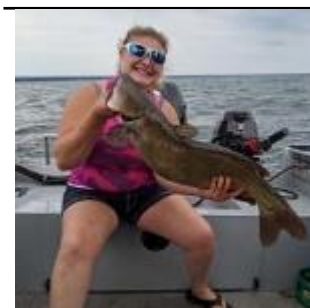
**Brittany @ Poor Richards**; filed 8/3: The last reports we had had the strongest walleye bite around 60 feet on the West Side, but nothing over the weekend due to the winds. Not a single word about perch. Steelhead are being caught on the east side just inside the Mountain.

**Doug @ Elk Creek Sports Store**; filed 8/3: The lake has been rough for a couple days but should calm down by mid-week. No recent reports because no one has been out. Elk Creek is low and clear – nothing of note being caught in the stream.

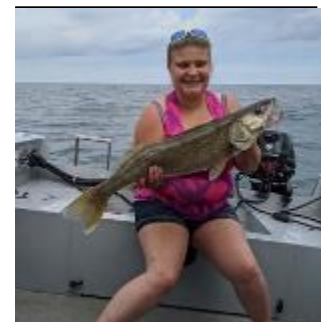
**Bill @ Tudor Hook-and-Nook**; filed 8/3: The bite has been very good the last few weeks, with walleyes still being found in the 55



SIT photo #1



SIT photo #2



SIT photo #3





Tudor's photo

to 65 feet of water. We are marking them from Avonia to the Point, with some good size ones in addition to eaters. If you are into junk fish, keep moving around until you find good wall-eyes. Some boats have gone deeper with success in 75 to 80 feet. So, don't be afraid to get away from the packs. Good fishing! (see photo)

**Richard @ Someday Isle Tackle;** filed 8/3: When you can get out on the lake, this is definitely the time to fill your freezer; lots of good eaters and a few big ones hanging around the bottom. It's also big cat times – in case you get bored fishing for walleyes. Troll or drift large weighted spinners or worm harness on a 3-way with a fat juicy nightcrawler. Keep bait within a few feet of the bottom. Try to hold about 1.4 to 1.7 miles per hour – works for cats and walleyes too. We've been putting the majority of our fish in the box mid-day when high sun and boat traffic push them back to the bottom. Our most recent trip on August 1, we had 7 big catfish and 29-inch and 25-inch walleye to round out our multiple limits. All during midday. (See photos on previous page and in Livewell)



Dutch Fork Lures photo

**Keith @ Dutch Fork Custom Lures;** filed 7/31: Lake Erie fishing has been very good, except when the east wind blows! Typical. Most anglers are targeting 40 to 50 feet of water off Walnut Creek. However, we have caught fish from the Ohio line to North East. A lot of walleyes will not bite, so we just move until we find biters. Tons of small fish, with some bigger ones mixed in. Worm harnesses on inline weights have been our go-to. But Dipsys, jet divers and spoons have been coming on strong, too. Steel-head and an occasional lake trout are being caught in deeper water with spoons on downriggers working best. If the fish won't bite going one way, change direction – sometimes they are that picky. (See photo on left)



Rob Selle



Scott Selle

**Scott Selle;** filed 8/2: Attached are a couple photos of Lake Erie walleye my son Rob and I caught this past week. We both caught a limit using Dutch Fork Worm Harnesses and Bandit Deep Divers in 60 to 65 feet of water. Rob's best was a 28 incher. (See photos on left)



Steve Bell

**Dave Parisi;** filed 7/31: Here is a picture of a 27.5-inch, 6-pound walleye I caught at Erie. (See photo on right)

**Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill;** filed 7/26: This past week my brother Steve Bell caught a hawg walleye, fishing 60 feet of water trolling a watermelon colored worm harness. The 32-inch walleye put up quit a battle! (See photo on left)



Dave Parisi

Presque Isle Bay—home to a wide variety of fish species

**Chad Prihode;** filed 7/31: Here are a few of the fish I caught in PIB throwing a Z-Man Leap Frog on Saturday morning before the sun got overhead. (See photos below)

**RJ Fulks;** filed 7/31: Here is a photo of PIB musky caught by my son Nick Fulks in July while bass fishing with a Chatterbait. (See photo)



Bowfin—Chad



Gar—Chad



Largemouth—Chad



Musky—Nick Fulks



Erie Sunset—Dutch Fork Lures



Erie Sunset—Parisi

Inland Erie County Lake

**Kirk @ East End Angler;** filed 8/3: Customers tell me the crappies are hitting at Lake LeBeouf on deep edge of the weeds, and at Eaton Reservoir. At Eaton the best area is around the aerators.

## MERCER COUNTY

### Lake Wilhelm

**Marilyn Black** (Cochrannton); filed 8/3: Early this past week, Darl and I ran down to Lake Wilhelm for a couple hours of fishing. We started out on one our favorite crappie spots – a flat that runs out to seven feet before suddenly dropping into 12 feet of water. Usually the crappies are holding around the row of stumps on the 8-foot breakline. But not today. With the Garmin, we did find crappies suspended at 8 to 10 feet several yards off the breakline. We caught about 16 fish in 45 minutes – all were 8 to 10 inches. Then we went bass fishing and struck out. (See photo)



Marilyn Black

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**Denny Beggs** (Franklin); filed 7/23: I had fun yesterday fishing with my daughters, Dia and Daria, at Lake Wilhelm. We were doing very basic fishing with pieces of nightcrawler and bobbers. We caught perch, crappie and bluegill – no size to brag about, however. Dia is home for a week from NYC (working for NYU Med Center) for the first time since Christmas. Daria is studying from home for the summer, and planning to return to Penn State next month for her junior year. In the photos, Dia has the purple shirt and Daria has the pink shirt. (See photos here and in Livewell)



Dia and Daria Beggs

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### Shenango Lake

**Ken Smith** (Sharon); filed 8/2: On July 27, I finally got my buddy Tim out on Shenango Lake with me. We caught and released at least 100 crappies in the four hours we fished. Most were just under the keeper size, but we managed to take a double limit of 9.5 to 11-inch keepers. Fish were in the 14-foot depth near and over brush. On August 1, I took Shawn out to get some fishing before the rain arrived. We put 32 keepers in the box before we got rained out. Same program as before but different area: hang gliding BG Baby Shads tipped with Nibbles. (See photo)



Ken is always on crappies

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in



## MERCER COUNTY continued

**Shon Derr**; filed 8/2: I've had good results trolling for walleyes on Shenango this summer. (See photos below)



Shenango sunrise—Derr

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Shon Derr

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Shon Derr

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Brock Morocco

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**Brock Morocco** (Hermitage); filed 7/31: Not much fishing to report with all the hot temperatures. But some late evenings on the Shenango River produced nice smallmouth bass and catfish for me. Of course, lots of bluegill and sunfish activity from the lake's shoreline with a simple bobber and worm – can't miss! (See photo)



Zac Clayton

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## VENANGO COUNTY

### Justus Lake

**Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill**; filed 7/26: I took my neighbor Zac Clayton for an evening of bass fishing on Justus Lake. Prior to heading to Justus, I caught creek bait from Sugar Creek. Zac had a good time putting the hook set to over a dozen fish. He landed them all except for a big largemouth which broke his line. Congratulations Zac, and best wishes at your freshman year of college. On Sunday morning, Stan Huefner and I returned to Justus for a couple hours. Although we caught bass, the bite was not as good.

### Sugar Creek

**Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill**; filed 7/26: Last week, Mikey Galkowski, Stan Huefner and I went to the Allegheny for catfish. We launched from Oil City marina and went south. We anchored in 14 feet of water, and presented live and cut pieces of creek chubs and bluegill to the bottom feeders. Shortly after dark I got out first run – landing a 20-inch flathead. Mikey got the next several cats with the largest being a 25-inch channel cat.



## VENANGO COUNTY continued

### Allegheny River

**Jeff @ Keystone Connection Guide Service**; filed 7/31: Allegheny River smallmouth bass fishing has been challenging the past two weeks. I've seen a pattern where the action is slow early in the morning, then picking up toward late morning and early afternoon. Filamentous algae has been an issue, particularly during sunny days. Reaction baits like soft swimbaits and Rapala X-Raps have accounted for most fish, although we've shown them a wide assortment of options including grubs, finesse tubes, Ned Rigs, topwaters, soft swimbaits and Yum Dingers. (See photos belo)

**Pam @ Maurer's Trading Post**; filed 8/3: Our customers report catching good numbers of panfish at Lake Wilhelm. Other customers have been seeking larger fish in the Allegheny River, including muskie, although the predominant catches have been smallmouth bass and northern pike.

**Bill Logan** (Pleasantville); filed 7/27. On July 27 I landed a 35-inch musky from the Allegheny River on a Medusa musky bait. It was in the same spot I lost a much larger musky just three weeks ago. (See photo below)



Jason fishing with Jeff Knapp



Jonathan fishing with Jeff Knapp



Bill Logan's 108th musky

## **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; [keystoneconnectionguideservice@gmail.com](mailto:keystoneconnectionguideservice@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 for prizes** — to claim prize, you must contact [darlblack@windstream.net](mailto:darlblack@windstream.net) with your shipping address. Prize must be claimed before next Fishing Report in two weeks.

Spool of Gamma Line: Chad Priohode

Lure prize pack: Shon Derr

Fishing Report Cover shot: Donnie Horvath—choice of pack of Galida's Grubz or pack of tubes from Mike's Custom Tackle.

# The Livewell

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Phone 814-437-2077



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



RJ Graham on Lake Wilhelm



Lake Arthur crappie success—Parisi & friend



Lake Erie by SIT



Wilhelm—Denny Beggs & daughter Dia.



Lake Arthur—Parisi family does it again



Lake Erie by SIT



Lake Erie by SIT





Black Knight Industries

Oil City, PA 16301

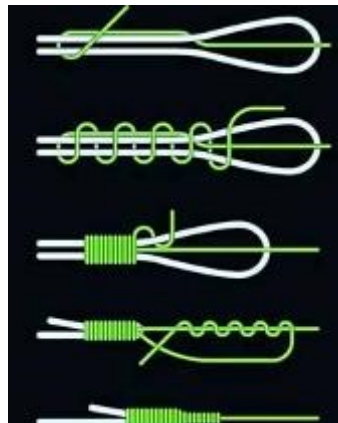
[www.gammafishing.com](http://www.gammafishing.com)

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

#### Gamma Line Tip from Jeff Knapp:

Fishing the clear, warm middle Allegheny River this season requires anglers to give special consideration to tackle. On spinning tackle, I'm a fan of braid line with fluoro-carbon leader. Though smallmouth bass aren't necessarily line shy, it makes sense to lengthen leaders. Bass are often finicky so it pays to put as much to your advantage as possible. Typically I use about three feet of 10-pound test of Gamma Edge fluoro-carbon line as leader, but I stretch that to four or five feet under these clear water conditions. I use an Albright knot to connect the Edge to 15-pound Gamma Torque braided line.



## GARMIN INFORMATION PAGE

- Real anglers share actual fishing experiences with Garmin units



Gus Glasgow of Butler County (founding member of the Western PA Hardwater Tournament Series) is a electronics guru who loves to install and tinker with all types of sonars. He recently made the switch to Gramin on his 20-hp boat and his big bass boat. The photos he provided are an outing two weeks ago with his kids on Lake Arthur where they trolled for crappies. “We landed about 60 crappies in just a few hours using the Gramin Force paired with my 102sv to pull crank-baits.”

