

NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

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The NW PA Fishing Report is brought to you by:



Fishing with Darl Black

Information Service



Five-year-old Liam Romanosky delighted with his catch of a big Pumpkinseed from Presque Isle Bay

Landing Net by Darl Black

It's been a record-breaking hot summer. But things are starting to change as fall approaches. Just two weeks ago on Pymatuning, I had water temperature reading of 84 degrees on surface. This past weekend, the water temperature had dropped to 74 degrees. River guides Jeff and Pete have told me the Allegheny River temperature is starting to drop. As water cools, most fish species put on the feedbag. Predators look for big meals. Here's wishing everyone a big fish fall!



Captain Hook photo LMB's meal of a crappie

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.

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News Items

Harrisburg, Pa. (August 31) – The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat commission (PFBC) is pleased to announce a new state record Brown Trout! The fish was taken by angler Robert Ferraro, age 68, while trolling on the boat “Heartbeat” in 74 feet of water in the area known as the Condos, just west of the Peninsula. Identified by PFBC Fisheries Biologist Mark Haffley, the Brown Trout weighed 20 pounds, 9 ounces with a length of 33.75 inches; he judged the fish to be 6 or 7 years old.



Erie Brown official record

Harrisburg, PA – After two Fish-for-Free Days earlier this year (maximum allowed by state law), the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) has announced a \$1.00 fishing license for Labor Day, September 7, 2020. Just one dollar for residents and non-residents. You might consider taking a relative or friend fishing for a dollar on this coming Monday. Details at www.fishandboat.com.

Lake Wilhelm – The bridge that carries Lake Wilhelm Road (Rt 1009) over Lake Wilhelm will be closed to all traffic from Sept. 8 to 14, depending on weather. The bridge deck is being replaced. A detour is posted.

Count by County Reports

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Dave @ Richter's Bait and Tackle; filed 8/25: It's the same late summer song – a few walleyes going to those who work really hard. Musky bite better than usual for this time of year. Perch are chowing. Catfish everywhere! One of those hard-working anglers scored his personal best Pymatuning walleye this past week – Sam got a 29-inch 8-pound walleye! And musky hunter Woody Knis scores on his return trip to Pymatuning after taking the summer off.



Sam's 29" walleye

Vicki @ Duck-N-Drake; filed 8/31: Short and sweet – catfish and perch. Our last big catfish tournament of season is September 19th; contact us for details.

Russ @ Gateway Bait & Tackle; 8/31: Summer slow. Muskies still biting – they like the heat. Perch bite is picking up. Cooler temps on the way.

Brandi @ Poff's Place; filed 8/31: Lots of catfish, plus some monster cats! We had two big flatheads weighed earlier this summer – a 31 pounder and a 38 pounder. But last week, Linesville Marina reported a 40-pound flathead. Lake record?



Justin Staph
Woody Knis photo

David Graham (Tionesta); filed 8/28: I crushed the largemouth on a spinnerbait on August 23. Caught both brown and green bass, but the best four were all largemouth. I took first place and luncheon with four bass going almost 16 pounds. I was using an FX Custom Rod model WMB72MXF; being able to feel the blades of the spinnerbait thump was key to detecting bites. I can't say enough about these superlight, super sensitive rods. Pymatuning takes a backseat to no lake in the state with both largemouth bass and smallmouth bass. ([See photo in Livewell](#))



40-pound Flathead;
Linesville Marina photo



Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 8/21: Everyone said the crappie bite was off at Pymatuning. Well, I decided to find out for myself. It took a little time to figure them out. However, I made this catch of crappies by fishing my jigs right in the bottom mud. Thanks Garmin LiveScope. (See photo on left)
 Editor's note: Never tell NW PA's crappie guru that crappies aren't biting – you will end up eating those words!

Canadohta Lake

Jerry @ Timberland Bait; filed 8/31: Fish are still biting but the reports are few as many of the lake's summer residents prepare to return home. Of course, that means more room for local anglers to fish – and September-October is always a good time for muskies on this lake. I had postponed the Kid's Fishing Derby at my pond, but hope to hold it sometime in September. Watch the Timberland Facebook Page for details.

ERIE COUNTY

Editor's note: I am in touch with tackle shops near Lake Erie every week for the weekly Erie Times-News Fishing Report and the every-other-week internet NW PA Fishing Report. All shops are reporting as of Monday, August 31, very few anglers have been able to get out to the offshore walleye schools since last Wednesday due to severe wind/wave conditions on Lake Erie. Their offshore reports are based on location of walleye schools almost a week ago. On the West Side, the band of walleyes has been at 60 to 65 feet, plus a deeper grouping at 70 to 75 feet. On the East Side, the word was 60 to 62 feet. There are scattered walleyes being picked up in shallower water, roughly 40 to as shallow as 20 feet. Everyone is hoping the winds lay down by Tuesday, September 1.



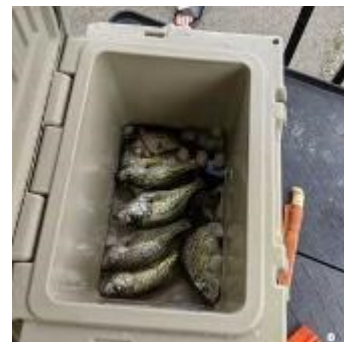
Jen Almeda

Tim Tomlin @ Presque Isle Bay Anglers; filed 8/31: Presque Isle Bay fishing has improved with panfish catch up all along the city-side piers and docks. Nice bluegill, perch and occasional crappie are hitting. Largemouth bass are still hanging out in deeper water, including the Channel. The walleye bite just outside the Bay is hot and cold. Some days, boats report limits easily, while on another day it's a grind to get a few. Some steelhead are showing up closer to shore so it's a sign of good things to come. Be safe!

Matt Romanosky; filed 8/28: My 5-year-old son Liam caught this nice pumpkinseed plus many more while we were fishing from shore at PIB. Great fun for kids! ([See cover](#))

MERCER COUNTY

Lake Wilhelm



Brad Bee; filed 8/29: Fishing at Wilhelm the last two weeks has been very good. Here are some photos of the largemouth bass and crappies which I've caught using jigs, in-line spinners and regular casting spoons. (See four photos above)



Latty Lat with Bo Bartholomew

Latty Lat; filed 8/28: I had a very good evening fishing Wilhelm with Bo Bartholomew of BC Baits. His baits catch everything. (Photo on left.)

Marilyn Black (Cochrannton); filed 8/27: Darl and I made a short trip to Wilhelm last week hoping to crank up a few off-shore bass and to maybe hook up with the big musky which Darl had lost nearly two weeks before while cranking for bass. Best we could muster were a handful of hungry largemouth but on

the small-size. Even tried the shallow weed mats for a pig – again basically small bass. (Photos on right)



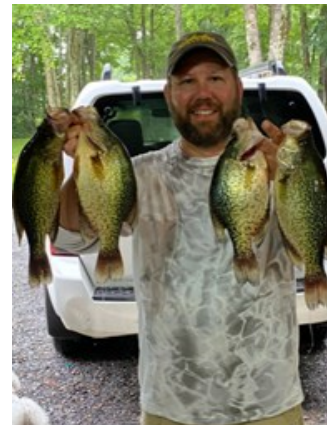
MERCER COUNTY continued

Shenango Lake

James Born; filed 8/30: Shenango Lake is great for crappies this time of the year. Here is a photo of my most recent catch. I used crappie jigs tipped with a maggot. (see photo at right)



Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 8/31: Here is my report for the week of Aug 23-27...The crappie bite was very good once the fish were located. One day they would hit any bait you put in their face; the next day I had to make changes. Biggest change wasn't color



James Born

of bait. Size of the bait was most important. From 1/8-ounce head in 17 feet of water to as small as 1/32 ounce as the week went on. Deep one day to suspended the next day. Hang gliding with slip floats was very productive every day I fished. My Garmin Livescope showed me that the fish were suspending higher in the water column as the week went on. Starting at a couple feet from the bottom to as high as 8 feet below the surface in 15 feet of water. The float made it easy to adjust the bait to stay just above the fish. Most fish caught were 10 to 11-inch black crappies with thick fillets. Don't hesitate to keep changing baits until you find the size and color that works best on a given day. A friend of mine from Benton, Kentucky once told me to trust my fish locator...if you see fish suspended in the water, adjust your depth setting and fish there. It's been working just fine. Enjoy your day on the lake. (See photo at right)

Randy @ Fish West PA; filed 8/30: Shenango Lake was fishing very good before last weekend's cold front slowed the fish down a bit. Hybrids were pushing bait mid-morning all week. I look for the same pattern with them this week as well. Panfish turned on really good before the front with limits being reported. The fall bite will start very soon with cooler temps expected this week so we will see you on the water. Tight lines, Randy...PS: Bryson is the young man with the largemouth. (See photos below)



Bryson



VENANGO COUNTY

Justus Lake

Sue @ Sue's Bait Shop; filed 8/31: We had a very young angler stop by to report catching a musky from Justus. Reports continue on trout being caught from the deep water of the lake near the dam.

Pam @ Maurer's Trading Post; filed 8/31: One customer stopped by so his young daughter could show us a picture of a 10-inch sunfish taken at Justus Lake. Unfortunately, he didn't send us a copy of the photo.

Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill; filed 8/30: My softball teammate Tom Hays, joined me for a last-minute trip on Tuesday evening to Justus Lake. Together we caught and released 12 largemouth bass. Four of them made the legal 15-inch mark. The photo is Mark's first fish of the evening. (See photo on right)



Tom Hays on Justus Lake

Sugar Creek

Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill; filed 8/30: I ventured down to Sugar Creek this week. I wanted to try for trout. However, the stream has been extremely low and water temperature wicked warm. This is a very adverse condition for trout. I went to one of my favorite locations, thinking the small minnows I brought might be able to get a trout to bite. It didn't happen. However, I did catch a nice smallmouth bass! (See photo)



Angler Al on Sugar

Allegheny River

Jeff @ Keystone Connection Guide Service; filed 8/30: I found the Allegheny River smallmouth bass action to be much improved over the past two weeks, with trips generally producing good numbers of smallmouth up to 19 inches. Most of the action is on Rapala X-Raps and flukes, with some coming on Storm 360 Searchbait soft swimbaits. The river came up slightly as a result of recent rain, which has also provided a bit color to the extreme water clarity, too. ([See photos on next page](#))

VENANGO COUNTY (Allegheny River) continued

Pete @ SmalliesOnTheYough.com; filed 8/30...since the last Fishing Report issue:

8/20 – Another bright blue-sky day on the river. Water temperature dropped and the bite picked up. Picked up some nice fish including a 20 incher on finesse baits.

8/25 – Cloudy morning and stormy afternoon. We caught a few smallies during the morning before the storm hit. Then we returned to river after storm passed. We landed a bunch of smallies up to 19 inches. Floating weeds after the storm were a problem. We used 6 lb. Gamma Edge to fish this crystal-clear water and land all those fish.

8/30 – We got out today. River was perfect. We got into smallmouth all day long, landing five which went between 19 and 21 inches – Big Fish Day! We were using soft plastics. (See photos below)

Jeff Knapp photos below—Allegheny River



Pete Cartwright photos below—Allegheny River



THANKS FOR USING TWO HANDS TO SUPPORT THOSE BIG SMALLIES—Editor

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

Keystone Connection Guide Service: Allegheny River Smallmouth, Walleye and Musky plus Pymatuning Walleye. Jeff Knapp; 724-902-6082; keystoneconnectionguideservice@gmail.com; www.facebook.com/keystoneconnectionguideservice.

Mark Rose Fishing Pro Guide; Lake Erie Smallmouth Bass. Contact 724-333-3898; markrose@bassonline.com; 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; www.facebook.com/smalliesontheyough/.

Wildwood Outfitters: Fly fishing for Trout, Steelhead and other species. Nick DelVecchio; www.wildwoodoutfitterspa.com/; www.facebook.com/wildwoodoutfitters.

Contributor names drawn for prizes. To claim prize, you must send email to darlblack@windstream.net with your shipping address. Failure to respond before next Fishing Report, prize goes back into drawing.

James Born—drawn for spool of Gamma Line of your choice

Matt Romansky—Package of Galida's Grubz for cover shot of son with big 'seed

Brad Bee — drawn for lure prize pack—choice of panfish, bass or walleye

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



David Graham with the win and
lunker at Pymatuning tourney



Dave Parisi with nice Erie SMB taken
on dropshot



Jesse Burdette with Shenango River
Flathead Catfish.



Dale Clemmer with Conneaut Lake
smallmouth bass



Black Knight Industries

Oil City, PA 16301

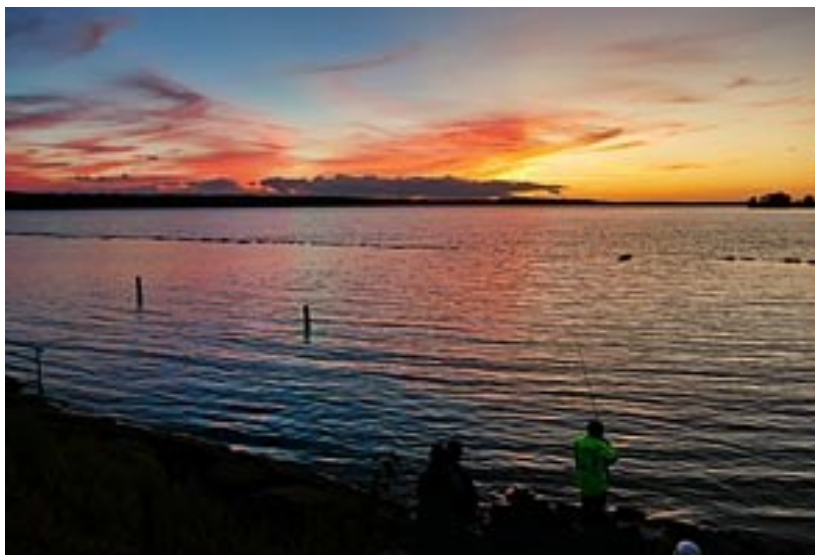
www.gammafishing.com

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**

Fall is BIG fish time! Dale at Gamma Line says if you haven't changed your line all summer, now is the time to spool on fresh Gamma line so you are prepared to battle bass, walleye, pike, musky, crappies, trout and steelhead. Edge Fluorocarbon, Polyflex Copolymer, Optic Yellow Panfish line, or Torque Braid—Gamma has it. If you cannot find what you need at the local businesses above, contact Dale through Facebook or Gamma's website www.gammafishing.com.

In the meantime, enjoy one of James Scott's Pymatuning Sunset photos!



GARMIN INFORMATION PAGE

- Real anglers share actual fishing experiences with Garmin units



Darl Black: On a recent outing to Pymatuning Lake, Marilyn and I decided to visit one of the old homesteads located under the water at this 14,000-acre shallow impoundment. Although this was a location which I had fished occasionally for more than 20 years, I could never figure out exactly what was down there until I got my first Garmin GPSMAP with SideVu sonar about six years ago. I spent several days running the lake, checking spots I had fished over the many years. Previous sonar units simply indicated “something” sticking up from the bottom – perhaps a brushpile, crib or maybe some rocks. However, the SideVu screen clearly shows what is down there. I found bridge foundations, building foundations, large felled trees and for-sure rock piles. On this particular spot, there are at least two rock foundations from old buildings – likely from a house and barn. At the correct angle you can see steps leading up to a doorway. There is also a long ridge of chuck rock, likely gathered from the farm field to form a fence or save for future buildings. On this day, it was our first trip of this too-hot summer to this particular homestead. Marilyn made the cast with a skirted jig with double tail trailer that knocked on the front door and a smallmouth answered. Caught-Photo-Released.

