

NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

Published by Blackwolfe Communications LLC

Issue: August 11, 2021

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



Randy Hedderick holds one of the crappies caught from 20/22 feet of water on a Galida's Grubz fishing for hybrid stripers on Shenango Lake last day of July. Stripers would bite on cold front, but crappies did. I've made several trips to Shenango this summer, catching far more crappies than any other lake. Many of those Shenango crappies readily eat a 4" Galida's Grubz.

LANDING NET by Darl Black

Late summer can make for some tough fishing conditions in NW PA. Many anglers are taking a break until the water cools a bit. But if you are wanting to wet a line, here are some of places I would consider: (1) Erie offshore walleye – Gather 3 or 4 friends and hire a Lake Erie charter for a walleye trip; (2) Allegheny River and French Creek for smallmouth bass; (3) Conneaut Lake for big bluegills on points and humps in 15 to 20 feet of water; (4) Pymatuning Lake and Shenango River for catfish; (5) Shenango Lake for crappies; (5) Conneaut Lake Outlet at Geneva bridge and Custards Bridge for bowfin; (6) first few hours of daylight on any small lake for largemouth bass on topwater. 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.

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COUNTY BY COUNTY REPORTS

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Norm @ Jamestown Marina; filed 8/9: To be truthful, Pymatuning is in the late summer doldrums. Plenty of catfish and perch being caught, as well as fun with largemouth bass – but success on walleye, crappie and musky is at a low point. There are a few hardcore walleye guys still catching a few by trolling plugs with planer boards, and once in a while someone gets a few nice crappies – but for the average angler, this is a slow period.



Duck N Drake photo

Bean @ Richter's Bait & Tackle; filed 8/9/21: Catfish, catfish and more catfish. I've received a couple reports of anglers catching a handful of decent crappies in deep water – but it's not a consistent bite, and the numbers are not high.

Laurie @ Duck-N-Drake; filed 8/10/21: I had a customer stop in with a nice stringer of good-size crappies which he said were caught on minnows in deep water (see photo). Also today, H sent me a photo of his walleye catch while trolling a



Duck N Drake photo

Flicker Shad in 18 feet of water on South End. Other than that, the typical panfish catch has been a combo of yellow perch, a few blue gills and a couple crappies.



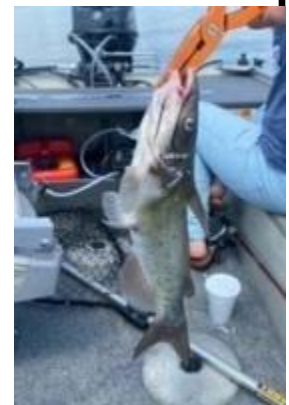
Gary Manville winner of Crappie Madness

This past weekend, we awarded the prizes to the top five entries in the 2021 Crappie Madness Brawl. First place prize – a boat, motor and trailer rig – was awarded to **Gary Manville** for his 2lb 4.4oz crappie. (See photo) Second through fifth were as follows:
2nd – Frances O'Rourke with 2lb 3oz crappie won..... \$6250
3rd – Terry Sowards with 2lb 2oz crappie won\$3745
4th – Howie Moore with 2lb 1.2oz crappie won\$1875
5th – Steve Uhrin with 2lb 1oz crappie won ..\$625

Russ @ Gateway Bait; filed 8/9/21: Some fish are being caught, but nothing noteworthy. A few anglers are picking up walleye by trolling weedlines, and crappies are being caught off the causeway at night – they seem to move up to feed after dark and move deeper in the day. Of course, perch and catfish are everywhere.

Patty @ Poff's; filed 8/9: Not a lot happening. There are some hard-core walleye guys still going out and bringing in a couple fish. Good reports on bass action, but nothing on crappies. Of course, if you are into catfish, this is the time to be on Pymatuning.

Chad Prihoda; filed 8/8: Catfish are hitting worm harnesses off Stacker Island. (See photos)



Chad Prihoda photo

Canadohta Lake

Timberland Bait Shop will hold their 15th annual Kids Tournament this Saturday evening, August 14 at the pond by their shop. For more information, visit their Facebook page.

Conneaut Lake Marsh

Bo Bartholomew took 14th place in the first National Bowfin Tournament held this past weekend. Run online by Yak Bass, contestants from all across the US could fish wherever they wished, photographed their catch on a certified measuring board and submitted photos of their four largest bowfins online. Bo's four best bowfin were 23", 22", 21" and 21" – all from Conneaut Lake Marsh (aka Geneva Marsh). One way of looking at this tournament is the Geneva Marsh is the 14th best bowfin water in the US commented Bo, who is an official PF&BC registered guide specializing in bowfin trips.

ERIE COUNTY

Lake Erie

Kirk @ East End Angler; filed 8/9: Over a week ago, I had received reports from anglers of a school of perch in 57 to 60 feet of water off Shades. The word today is the perch have moved a little to the west. Also, the better catches of walleyes on the East Side are now coming from 70 feet of water. The second **Erie PA Walleye Tournament** is scheduled for this Saturday, August 14. You can go to www.eriewalleyetournament.com to look over information, but the online registration has been halted. The only way to register now is at the Captain's Meeting at Poor Richards on Friday 5 pm; only cash payment accepted.

Jake @ FishUSA; filed 8/3: Fishing around Erie has been hot when we can get on the water. Hard Northeast blows have been detrimental for a lot of anglers in smaller boats. When the beast of the lake finally calms down, fishing has been consistent for us. Running five colors of FishUSA Stealthcore Leadcore with a deep-diving plug like a Bandit or Husky Jerk have been putting numbers in the boat. Also, running spoons such as Dreamweaver Super Slim or a Michigan Stinger Standard have been a killer off the divers and downriggers, as well as dragging worm harnesses. Remember, for any of your walleye tackle needs, FishUSA's knowledgeable staff will be able to help you out!

Jeff @ Poor Richards; filed 8/4: To the west of Walnut, walleyes are in 65 to 75 feet of water, suspended at 40 to 50 feet. The best colors have been purples and greens.

Dan @ Buckets Charter Fishing; filed 8/8: Erie walleye fishing can't get any better than it is right now. Our boats are routinely limiting out in 64 to 80 feet of water. When I'm running my boat, the presentation is simple: trolling Bombers Model 24A on monofilament with enough weight to get it down to the depth of fish are showing up on the screen. Our fleet of boats will continue with charters until September 26th. (See photos)

Bill @ Tudors Hook-N-Nook; filed 8/9: Our friends from back home took a chance on the lake for some walleye this weekend, and picked up a Bay Rat Lures Spoon (Purple



Buckets Charter photo



Buckets Charter photo

Wish) from the shop for luck. It paid off with a one in a million tagged fish. Congratulations to Greg and company for a nice stringer and a \$100.00 walleye. Fish On!



Greg's \$100 tagged walleye

Bob @ Perch Pirate Head Boat; filed 8/4: We have shifted to 60 to 70 feet of water off the Condos, doing one trip in morning and one in later afternoon. Good numbers of our customers are filling their limits using the Western Basin cast-countdown-and-retrieve method with a weight-forward spinner tipped with a crawler, while other customers simply drag their crawlers.

Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 8/7: I fished Erie last Tuesday with friends Ron and Ed. We put 14 keepers in the boat. Four were over 22 inches with biggest going 29 inches and a little over 8 pounds on the boat scale. (See photo)



Ken's 8 pound walleye

MERCER COUNTY

Lake Wilhelm

Editor's note: We have received very few fishing reports from Lake Wilhelm anglers this summer. If anyone would like to share their photos and experiences on Lake Wilhelm for the remainder of the season in the NW PA Fishing Report, please email your comments with a catch photo attached to darlblack@windstream.net. Contributors for each issue are eligible for the prize drawing, including a spool of Gamma Line.

Here are two news items regarding Wilhelm:

- Dan Druscheal and Gus Glasgow won the final Wilhelm Crappie Tournament Series Tournament this past weekend, as well as capturing the Championship crown. (See photo)
- The 1st Annual Skip Crawford Memorial Walleye Tournament is scheduled for Wilhelm on September 11. Contact Marcia Matthew for more information.

Shenango Lake

Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 8/9: Shenango Lake is coming down nicely. As of today, it's only a foot above summer pool. Crappie catching is good. I'm getting lots of black crappies in the 9 to 12 inch range from shallow brush, while white crappies are suspended over deeper water brush. Hang gliding is taking some of these fish, but I'm also getting a good number with a slide bob-



ber and jig combo. I fished four days with different friends in different areas of the lake and put limits in the boat every day. (See photos)



Randy @ Fish West PA; filed 8/8: The last couple days of July, the striper action suddenly slowed on the lake. So, we went bass fishing the first of week August to rebuild our confidence...and caught 30 fish including largemouth, smallmouth and white bass. Few days later, we took my grandson Chance and his friend Macon out on the lake; they enjoyed catching white bass and a couple smallmouth bass. (See photos)



White bass for Chance



Pennsylvania's Mr. Crappie

Darl @ Blackwolfe Communications; filed 8/1: The last two days of July, while attending the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writer Association's annual meeting in Mercer County, I had the opportunity to fish Shenango one day with Ken Smith and another day with Randy and Ace from Fish West PA. The lake was higher than normal, but slowly dropping. Ken put us on crappies suspended over brush piles in 16 to 17 feet of water. We got most of the fish by casting, counting down and retrieving. The next day was an attempt to catch hybrid stripers, which had been hitting with some reg-

ularity...until I brought a cold front to town. Randy, Ace and I could not scratch up a single hybrid under calm seas and a bright blue sky. We did manage to catch some white bass and crappies. On this day, I discovered the best trick for post-frontal crappies was bottom dragging a Galida's Grubz in Golden Shiner on a ¼-ounce head along the bottom of breakline in 22 feet of water – that was a new one on me! Bet Ken never had to scrap the bottom to get his crappies! (Photos)



Cold front crappies



Kevin Austin photo

Kevin @ Luckis4rabbits; filed 7/30: My uncle from Detroit was visiting recently so I took him fishing on Shenango. He used one of my custom luckis4rabbits hand-tied jigs to catch his first big crappie. I had him tightlining in 12 feet deep over 17 to 20 feet of water. We also trolled jigs. Luck is for rabbits; I'm going fishing. (See photo)

VENANGO COUNTY

Justus Lake & Kahle Lake

Pam @ Maurer's Trading Post; filed 8/9: We've had a rush on big musky plugs this past week. Don't know if anglers are heading to the Allegheny River or Justus Lake with those big baits...but maybe one or more of those customers will have a heck of a fishing story for us shortly.

Rick Shrout; filed 8/8: On Monday morning, August 2, I fished Justus Lake for a few hours and only caught three small bass on small tubes. On Tuesday (8/3), I fished Kahle Lake for the second time and got 10 bass on a small plastic tube from Mike's Custom Tackle. There are heavy weeds out to about 10 feet, so I fished the edge of it. Most bass were 12 to 14 inches – but something bigger broke me off.



Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill; filed 8/8:

I had a guest visiting from Edmond, Oklahoma. He purchased his out-of-state fishing license, and on Saturday morning August 7th, we make a trip to Justus Lake. During the cooler hours from 7 am to 9 am, we slow-trolled live creek bait. We caught several nice largemouth bass, one smallmouth



bass, a rainbow trout and a decent size crappie. However, once the sun rose, the bite was over. (See photos left and right)

Allegheny River



Rick Shrout; filed 8/8: Fishing the river on Friday night, I got skunked – but lost 3 fish I did not see, including something big. On Saturday, I returned to the river and ended up with 9 bass – all I caught on small plastics from Mike's Custom Tackle The biggest was 18 inches. (See photo)

Rick Shrout

Allegheny River (continued)

Pete @ SmalliesontheYough.com; filed 8/6: I finally was able to back on the Allegheny River today. The water had been high, but it was perfect for wading today...and the smallies were eating. I used soft plastic from 412 Bait Company and swimbaits to land a bunch of 13 to 18-inch smallmouth bass. I still have a few openings for guide trips. (See photos below)



Jeff @ Keystone Connection Guide Service; filed 8/8: Recent guide trips on the middle Allegheny have been very productive. Lots of fish averaging 12 to 14 inches, with a few big ones up to 19 inches in the mix. Spinnerbaits were hot when the river was still high and off color. But that died down now that the river has dropped and cleared. The vast majority of fish are now coming on suspending jerkbaits. We are also seeing lots of little smallmouth from the 2020 year-class – good sign for the future! (See photo)



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; keystone-connectionguideservice@gmail.com; www.facebook.com/keystoneconnectionguideservice.

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.

Bo's Guide Service: Specializing in panfish in area lakes and kayak swamp trips for bowfin. Bo Bartholomew at bcbaitshadley@gmail.com

Contributor's names drawn for prizes follows. To claim your prize, you must contact me by email with your shipping address. In the case of the Gamma Line, please detail the type of line and pound test. Must contact Darl at darlblack@windstream.net to receive prize. Thanks.

Gamma Line: **Rick Shrout**

Pack of Galida's Grubz for cover shot: **Randy Hedderick**

Prize lure pack: **Chad Prihode**

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



Erie Smallmouth—RJ
Graham



Erie walleye—Ken Smith



Kinzua Pike—Rob Selle



Kinzua Pike—Scott Selle



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
- East End Angler, Harborcreek, PA; 814-898-3474



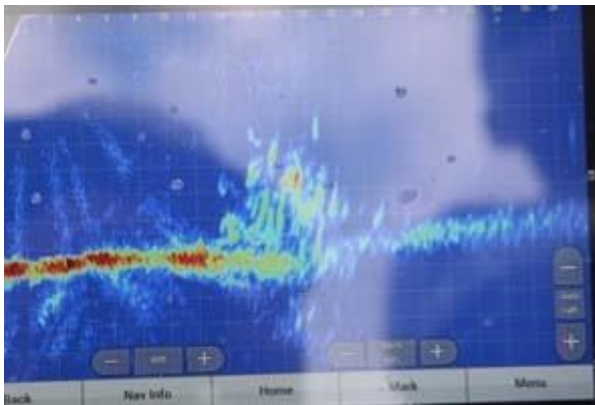
Gus Glasgow and Dan Druschel wrapped up the 2921 Lake Wilhelm Crappie Tournament Series with a win, and sufficient points from the other two events to the overall point champion team. Gus attributed their win to figuring out where larger crappies in the lake holding, plus use of Garmin LiveScope and Gamma Line. "There were great events and great people to be around."

GARMIN INFORMATION PAGE



- Real anglers share actual fishing experiences with Garmin units
- For professional local installation of Garmin units, contact G&G Marine Electronics at 724-290-9045

Darl Black: One day this past week, I headed down to Lake Arthur to fish for a couple hours with Gus Glasgow of G & G Marine Electronics. Gus had installed my recent Garmin unit, and had promised a tutorial on LiveScope as I debated about installing it on my boat. It was too hot and too sunny afternoon to say that it was pleasant out. Overhead sun made reading the screen difficult. But Gus had found a couple brushpiles not far from the Rt 528 Launch, so we didn't have to spend time hunting. When he cut the outboard and dropped the LiveScope transducer in the water, this was first time I would be fishing with this unique sonar.



"See those marks? Those are crappies hovering around 6 to 8 feet over a brushpile about 18 feet in front the boat," noted Gus. As I watched, some marks disappeared and others appeared as the fish turn one way or the other. Gus had a hand-tied hair jig on a slip-bobber rod, with the depth set for 6 feet. He flipped out an 18-foo cast, the bobber stood upright when the jig reached depth and held steady for about 30 seconds before it started moving off and went under water. One sweep of the rod, a few cranks on the reel, and Gus had the first crappie in the boat. He repeated the exercise, time and time again. Slick!