

# NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

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The NW PA Fishing Report is brought to you by:



Fishing with Darl Black

Information Service



Want to know what a 3-pound crappie looks like? Check out the cover photo above and learn more information under Lake Wilhelm section of Report.

## Landing Net by Darl Black

Early start to the fall cooldown, but a slow start to the early fall bite. But fish feeding activity is picking up across the region. Steelhead are expected to move upstream with latest rain. Largemouth and smallmouth bass are chewing in lakes and flowing water. Walleye bite at Pymatuning is picking up. Crappies are feeding in numerous lakes...including a 3-pound black crappie taken at Lake Wilhelm. October can be an outstanding month of fishing in NW PA Pennsylvania. But you've got to get out to experience it. Remember, October only comes once a year!

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 October 6, 2021**

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### **County by County Reports for Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango**

#### **French Creek – flowing through all four counties**

Pete @ SmalliesontheYough.com; filed 10/1: We started early today in the fog. Slow bite to start but it picked up as it burned off. We landed a total of 26, the biggest smallmouth went 18.5 inches. We used soft plastic swimbaits and tubes on 8-pound Gamma Edge Line in the clear water. (See photos below)



French Creek smallies via wade guide Pete Cartwright



## CRAWFORD COUNTY

### Pymatuning Lake

**Norm @ Jamestown Marina;** filed 10/3: Water temperature at 10 feet below surface is 64 degrees. Perch continue to hit, with some really decent size ones showing up; usually largest perch from Pymatuning are caught from now until ice up. Reports are increasing of anglers using blade baits to connect with walleyes; best bite in the evening. Many 'eyes caught during the day are sublegal. Marina will close for the season on October 31.

**Bean @ Richter's Bait & Tackle;** filed 10/3: Perch catches are climbing – including some real nice ones. Walleyes on blade baits in 12 to 14 feet of water. Musky bite is hot right now. Musky hunter Woody Knis landed and released four muskies this past week-end, and 8 the week before.

**Laurie @ Duck-N-Drake;** filed 10/3: The final catfish tournament of the season was a success; see photo of winners. Both increase in reports on walleye and big perch. Walleyes are being caught by trolling deeper water with Flicker Shads and Shad Raps. See photo of typical catch by anglers focusing on perch. Duck-n-Drake will close for the season on October 31. (See photos on right)



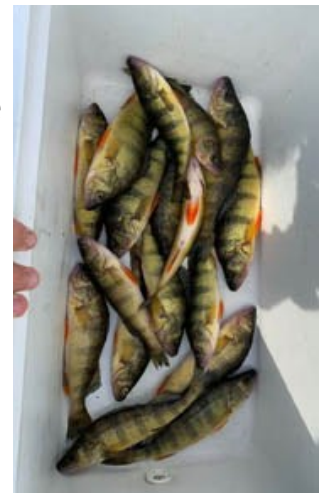
Duck-N-Drake photo of catfish winners

### Canadohta Lake



**Dave Ohmer (Erie);** filed 10/1: I've been fishing crappies at a number of smaller area lakes by kayak. Tagged this nice small-mouth with a crappie jig on a trip to

Canadohta Lake. (See photo above)



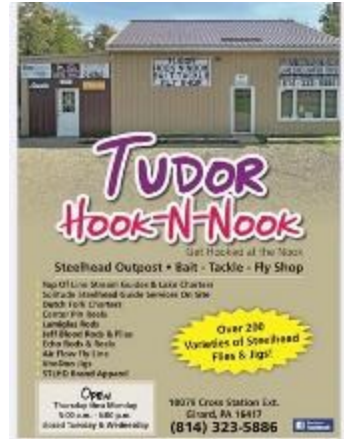
Duck-N-Drake Pymie perch catch by customer.



## ERIE COUNTY

### Lake Erie Tributaries - See Steelhead photos next page

**Bill @ Tudor Hook-n-Nook**; filed 10/1: The grand re-opening of Tudor Hook-n-Nook will be Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. (Check Facebook page for directions.) We have lots of new items, from flies and spoons to rods and reels. Everything you need for steelhead. Fishing has been fairly good on the Pennsylvania tributaries for this early season. Steelhead are at creek mouths waiting to come in and others are in holding water in Elk Creek. With the rain from last night, the flow should be enough to spread then through the system. It's looking to be a good start to the season. (See photos next page)



**Jeff @ Poor Richards**; filed 10/3: The rain on Sunday brought some creeks up a smidgeon, but we need more flow to get a solid run moving up. There are fish in Elk as high as Girard. For streams, it's mostly a nymph or egg pattern game for skittish fish. Action in the lake at mouths of streams has been good weather permitting. Anglers scoring with blue/chrome and green/chrome spoons, as well as Power Bait, eggs, and minnows. (See photo next page)

**Jake @ FishUSA**; filed 9/29: There are a good number of steelhead in some streams but they have been heavily pressured and very spooky in the clear water. Anglers seem most successful with minnows and single eggs. With dropping temps, Presque Isle Bay panfish bite should be turning on.

**Kirk @ East End Angler**; filed 10/3: The Sunday rain we had on the east side of Erie apparently wasn't enough to bring the streams up as of Monday morning. With more rain in forecast for this week, streams may get the shot of water needed. Right now, the best advice I can give is to fish the lakeshore near the mouth of each tributary at sunrise. Try spoons, spinners, Power Bait and egg sacks.

### Lake LeBoeuf

**Dave Ohmer** (Erie); filed 10/1: I've been fishing LeBoeuf by kayak several times in the past couple weeks. Having success with crappies in 8 to 12 feet. (see photo on right)



## RECENT STEELHEAD SUCCESS ON PENNSYLVANIA'S NORTH SHORE

Lake Erie's tributaries producing now. According to expert steelhead anglers, with additional rainfall, fish are expected to spread throughout the system.



Ted Smith

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Melissa Theiss

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Steelhead season always starts on the Wall

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Tudor photo

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Tudor photo

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Tudor photo

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Poor Richards photo

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Tudor photo

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Tudor photo

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Tudor photo

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## MERCER COUNTY

### Lake Wilhelm

Editor: With the recent reports (or rather lack of reports) from Lake Wilhelm, considerable chatter has arisen about the fish populations in the lake. But this past week there was an encouraging post from Terry Jewel, moderator for the site, stating he has caught 10 walleyes in the past week or so; nine 'eyes came on a Shad Rap and one on a 'crawler. (See photo)



But what really caught my eye was a 3-pound crappie caught by Wilhelm angler Brenda Bush and posted to the page by Brad Bee. According to Joe Graft, he and Brenda were fishing with minnows when the big crappie hit. The black crappie measured 17 inches and weighed 3.2 pounds. (See photo a right and on cover)

Congratulations to Brenda – that is a monster crappie anywhere in the US. There must be something special in the water at Wilhelm, because this was the second crappie over three pounds caught from the lake in 2021. A 20-inch, 4.02-pound crappie was taken through the ice by Dan Wielobob in February.

### Shenango Lake

**Randy @ Fish West PA**; filed 10/2: As expected, with the cooler nights and days recently, fall fishing on Shenango is slowly picking up. Largemouth and smallmouth bass are feeding in both Shenango Lake and Shenango River, providing us some exciting fishing right now. How powerful are Shenango smallies? One hooked smallmouth in the river was estimated to be all of 20 inches when it went airborne...and broke me off. (See photos on next page.)

**Ken Smith** (Sharon); filed 10/1: Last week I was catching crappies by hang gliding jigs in 12 feet of water. The last few days that I've been out, I am now finding nice crappies among shoreline laydowns. I'm using a new bait from Bobby Garland – an Itty Bit Slab Hunter on a 1/32-ounce jighead suspended below a bobber. (See photos on next page)

**Gus Glasgow** (Harrisville); filed 10/1: last Saturday we fished the NEOH Crappie series on Shenango. Fishing was good, tons of fish, but big of 12 inches plus were hard to come by. We were able to take 6<sup>th</sup> place with 6.64 pounds for 8 fish. First place was only 8 pounds. I would like to know where the big fish are. With many of the best anglers in PA and OH but no big fish caught, it's curious. We easily caught 100 fish in the .50-.60 lb. range. (See all Shenango photos on next page)



## For 2021, Shenango Lake Provides Plenty of Action for Anglers

Shenango Lake and sections of the Shenango River continue to produce a variety of fish as we move into fall.



Crappie guru Ken Smith

Routine catch



Gus Glasgow takes 6th in tourney

Gus & Partner catch over 100

Fish West PA crew focus on largemouth and smallmouth bass while waiting for hybrid striper bite to kick in.



## VENANGO COUNTY

### Allegheny River

**Pete @ [smalliesoftheYough.com](http://smalliesoftheYough.com)**; filed 10/2: We started midday on the river. It was stained a bit and had a few weeds floating in the water. Water temp was cool. Smallies were eating pretty good. We found them in eddies along the banks. It was a bit tough wading today with the water level up, so we used the shoreline to get around and work the eddies. Bass were eating tubes from 412 Bait Co. on 8 -pound Gamma Edge line. The smallies ranged from 18 to 21 inches. (See photos below)



Guide Pete Cartwright & 21 in SMB



Allegheny Olive/Brown

**Jeff @ [Keystone Connection Guide Service](http://Keystone Connection Guide Service)**; filed 10/3: Smallmouth action on the middle Allegheny River continues to be very good. During numerous guide trips the past two weeks, we've boated dozens of smallmouth bass – including plenty of fat 15 to 19-inch fish. Rapala X-Raps, Zoom Super Flukes and Storm Largo Shad have been the top producers. Walleyes are also starting to show up in greater numbers. (See photos below)





## **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).

**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/).

**Fishing with Bo Guide Service:** Specializing in panfish in area lakes and kayak swamp trips for bowfin. Bo Bartholomew at [bcbaitshadley@gmail.com](mailto:bcbaitshadley@gmail.com); 724-704-1723

Prize winners — Names drawn for prizes. If drawn, you must send me your shipping address in order to receive prize. Prizes are not sent without individual contacting [darlblack@windstream.net](mailto:darlblack@windstream.net) with your shipping address.

Name drawn for spool of Gamma Line: Brenda Bush

Name drawn for prize pack: Dave Ohmer

Name drawn for pack of Galida's Grubz: Ken Smith

# 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)



River SMB taken on Mike's Custom Tubes



Shenango River SMB



Shenango Lake LMB on Blazer Bait Crankbait



Shenango Lake crappie



Shenango Lake SMB



Dale Clemmer's Woodcock  
Dan Outflow bowfin



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

### Gamma Tip from Dave Ohmer

In recent weeks, kayak angler Dave Ohmer of Erie has been fishing three of the smaller lakes in the region for crappies – Lake LeBoeuf, Canadohta Lake, and Sugar Lake. He has tallied over 300 crappies from his kayak on these waters, plus incidental catches of other gamefish – including northern pike on LeBoeuf and a 19.75-inch smallmouth bass at Canadohta. His primary baits are Trout Magnets and 1-inch Gulp Minnows, fished on an ultralight crappie rod. His line? Gamma 2-pound test.



"I dropped from 4-pound test Gamma to 2-pound test Gamma and it made all the difference," says Dave. "My catch rate went up. I think it is because the thinner line allows these small lures exhibit better life-like action."

How strong is Gamma 2-pound Polyflex? Well, the other day Dave informed me had broken his ultralight rod while fighting a big smallmouth bass. The 2-pound test didn't break – the rod snapped! Gamma 2-pound Polyflex has a diameter of 0.006" and break strength of 4.9 pounds. Gamma's molecularly altered line treatment makes the difference.





# 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

## Jeff Knapp with Garmin Tip

The sonar information provided by Garmin's Echomap series of chartplotters is outstanding. So much so that it often takes a bit of time to process. For this reason, I make good use of the unit's screenshot feature. On Echomap units this is accomplished by holding the "home" button for a few seconds. Doing so records the current screen to the SD card. Once at home you can pop the card into your computer and really scrutinize the shot. I do so anytime something of particular interest comes across the screen. This allows the user to learn how the unit displays fish (as well as various sizes and species); features such as bottom composition changes; how wood and weed cover appear. The accompanying screenshot shows a submerged tree located along a creek channel that is loaded with crappies. Nothing builds your confidence in sonar interpretation better than the verification that comes from actually catching the fish you suspect you are looking at. And that comes from a dedication to understanding sonar displays to the best of your ability, both on and off the water.

