

NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

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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



First steelhead on a fly rod for these brothers.

Solitude guide photo

Landing Net by Darl Black

After 60 years plus of fishing experience, I can say with confidence that October and November are two outstanding months for catching big specimens of several species. This fall, the first week of November clearly demonstrated that when conditions are right for big fish go on the feed, you had best be on the water. This past week, contributors to the Fishing Report caught some of their biggest fish of the year, including small-mouth bass, walleyes and crappies; it was a perfect week for steelhead and brown trout in the tributaries as well. Check out the Report for details.

First walleye for Bree; 6.5 pounds. Bryan McMillin photo



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 FROM CRAWFORD, ERIE, MERCER AND VENANGO

FRENCH CREEK – Flowing through all four counties



Al Bell @ Buttermilk Hill; filed 11/7: My friend and fishing buddy, Corey Breene, of Franklin, caught a humongous walleye this past week. Taken from French Creek, it was the largest walleye I've ever had the pleasure of taking a picture of. Armed with his 7'1" Ghost Duckett rod and Pflueger XT 3500 reel spooled with 8-pound Gamma Edge fluorocarbon line, Corey was casting near the end of a current run right at dusk. During a slow, twitchy retrieve, the 32.5-inch 14.5-pound walleye stopped the progress of the silver/black Rapala XR8 crankbait. Initially, Corey thought he was snagged, but then the fish responded and a lengthy battle began. With each small amount of line gained, the hawg walleye shook its head and took back the line as it progressed further up and

across the stream. After 15 minutes, Corey had worked the walleye close enough to successfully net the tired fish. Congratulations, Corey, on a fantastic catch. Well done my friend...PTL.

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake



Chris here all day

Bo @ BC Baits; filed 11/7: On November 1 each year, many area anglers celebrate Dock Day – the first day you are permitted to fish from the PA State Park marina docks at Erie, Wilhelm and Pymatuning. Slip renters must have their boats out the marinas by October 31, and anglers may begin fishing the next day. Dock season runs from November 1 to April 1. Right now, the Docks at Pymatuning are hot, Wilhelm docks are not. Just like fishing anywhere, location and timing are important. It may take some time to figure out which docks are holding the better fish, and when during the day they bite best. There were some nice



Ron with nice dock crappie.

crappies and bluegills taken at the Jamestown Marina docks this past week. A friend informed me that good size-perch were being caught over the weekend at both the Espyville and Linesville Marina docks. (Dock photos left and right)

Bean @ Richter's Tackle; filed 11/7: Our customers informed us many anglers enjoyed a good weekend at Pymatuning. Crappies were being taken in the shallows up by Espyville. The size of perch has improved as the water gets cooler. Anglers jiggging Sonars for walleyes are finding them willing to bite during the day, not just at dusk. We even had reports of several muskies being caught.

Brock Morocco (Hermitage); filed 11/5: The last pleasant weather days of October provided some really good shore fishing on Pymatuning Lake. I managed to land a few football-size smallmouth as well as some hungry catfish and one large carp. All were taken on stick baits cast from shore. One evening I landed well over 20 scrappy White Bass in 45 minutes by casting toward feeding seagulls. All fish were released after photos. (Photos on right and next page and in Livewell)



Marilyn @ Blackwolfe; filed 10/28: During our last trip to Pymatuning, we found wall-eyes uncooperative with only a 10 inch 'eye falling for a blade bait. Nor could we find any crappies in the usual November spots on the channel ledges or deep stumps on the points. So, we settled for catching crappies from a tree that years ago slid into the water on a steep bank. Tricky presentation with a blade bait amid tree limbs. Thank goodness for our **Garmin**. (Photo left)



Bryan McMillin; filed 10/26: Here is a pic of my daughter Bree with her first walleye. She caught it at Pymatuning on October 24 down by the dam, using a 4-inch shad colored swimbait on spinning gear with 8-pound **Gamma** Line. The walleye was 27 inches and weighed 6.5 pounds. Heck of a first walleye! Congratulations Bree! (See cover photo for larger photo)



1 of 20 white bass for Brock

ERIE COUNTY

Presque Isle Bay and Lake Erie

Tim @ Presque Isle Bay Angler Group; filed 11/8: Presque Isle Bay is loaded with perch. Angler reports from the group echo that larger desired perch are mixed in with many more "dink" perch. An angler needs to be patient and sift through the small ones to take home enough keepers for the next meal. Be prepared to move around the Bay to the many public access areas to find hungry packs of perch. Also, the docks in the state park marina on Presque Isle State Park are open for fishing; a mix bag of perch, 'gills and crappies are typically found there. Casting spoons off the ends of the marina docks may produce steelhead. Out in the main lake, lake trout, smallmouth bass and walleyes are being caught in 20 to 25 feet of water.

Special event: The Presque Isle Bay Anglers Group will conduct the 2nd Annual **Sam Tomlin Tackle for Tots Tackle Drive** for the Christmas holiday. Once again, the East End Angler and Tudor Hook-N-Nook will be our main collection partners. Please support these businesses by purchasing and donating new, unopened rods & reel combos, tackle boxes, lures and terminal tackle to be donated to local non-profits this Christmas. The shops will be busy with their fall/winter fishing sales, so consider joining the group on Facebook or Reddit for more information. – Tim Tomlin for PIB Angler Group.

Kirk @ East End Angler; filed 11/7: East End Angler shop has emerald shiners! Perch bite in the Bay on city side has picked up; now and then a walleye has been caught off the North or South Piers. There is action in the shallower water of Lake Erie for both smallmouth bass and lake trout. Bass are primarily in 25 to 30 feet; lake trout may be found even shallower and more towards North East.

Capt. George Mro; filed 11/5: The water temperature has dropped significantly to 52-53 degrees. Wind and waves were bad earlier last week. The smallies were biting if you could get out. They changed depths throughout the day as the bass followed schools of bait. Stay on the bait, and you will stay on the fish! (See photos below and Livewell)

Dave Ohmer (Erie); filed 11/6: Under calm seas, I caught a bunch of smallmouths today on Lake Erie from the kayak. The longest fish of the day measured just shy of 21 inches and weighed in at 5.3 pounds. It was caught jigging a Steelshad. (See photos below)

From the editor...**Brandon @ Consumer Direct Sports**: Word on the lake says this past week Brandon put on a clinic for his father Jerry, showing the former BASS tournament pro how to catch the football-shaped Erie smallmouth on a Steelshad jigging lure. Stop in at CDS in Grove City to say hello to Brandon and pick up some **Gamma Line**.



Brandon Hanna @CDS Hunt & Fish



Capt. Mro photos



Dave Ohmer photo



Dave Ohmer -smb by kayak

Lake Erie Tributaries

Bill @ Tudor Hook-N-Nook; filed 11/7: Fishing so far this steelhead season has been nothing short of amazing. With plenty of water in the systems and plenty of fish, everyone from beginner to experienced has been doing well. Let's all hope it continues into winter. Good luck to all. Fish on! (See photos below)

Dan @ Elk Creek Sports; filed 11/7: Lots of fish in the streams, but the bite will be tougher with water low and clear. No rain in forecast until weekend. Given stream conditions, the best baits are single eggs, jig & maggot or live minnow. Fly fishermen will be using small flies such as the Copper John. We are seeing some nice brown trout, too. (See photo brown trout below)

Jeff @ Poor Richards; filed 11/7: Steelhead anglers had a great weekend on the 6th and 7th. With current stream conditions, single egg or live minnow is best. Anglers are still fishing the lake at the mouth of Trout Run where both skein and spoons are catching fish.

Kirk @ East End Angler; filed 11/7: East side streams are low and clear until the next good rain. Steelhead are spread out in tributaries from the mouth to the headwaters. Here's my tip – look for shallow fast water to fish; active steelhead are likely in this faster water even if you cannot clearly see them.

Bob @ Solitude Steelhead Guide Service; filed 11/4: I have attached a photo for consideration in your newsletter. This was a really cool moment for these young boys. Both landed their first steelhead on a fly rod that morning. (See photo below and on cover)



Elk Creek Sports photo



Tudor photo



Tudor photo



Solitude Guide Service

Photo above on cover

MERCER COUNTY

Shenango Lake

Randy @ Fish West PA; filed 11/7: Shenango Lake water temperature has dropped in the low 50s and the bite has slowed a bit but we are still catching fish, including bass, small hybrid stripers and especially crappies. The courtesy docks are still in at the major ramps as of Monday morning. (See photos below)

Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 11/7: I continue to fish Shenango regularly for crappies. Last week had a good time with buddy Lenny Hubbard. On Sunday, November 7, I was back on the lake, landing over 40 crappies with a jig and bobber doing the job. One of those crappies was my largest of the season – a tad over 16 inches. (See photos below)



Ken's largest crappie 2021



Randy with SMB



Randy with LMB



Lenny Hubbard



Shenango Crappie Royalty



Randy with hybrid striper

VENANGO COUNTY

Justus Lake

Al @ Buttermilk Hill; filed 11/7: I went to the artificial only section on Oil Creek the other day. I rigged my fly rod for a tandem rig. I tied a Spring Lizard at the bottom and an orange egg pattern inline five inches above. I caught and released 23 rainbow trout. Most of them took the egg pattern. Also, PFBC stocked Justus Lake with trout on November 2.

Allegheny River

Dale @ Gamma Fishing; filed 11/7: I finally took a break from work to fish on the river on Friday, November 5 and Saturday, November 6. The river has been high and dirty, but it was time for the late fall smallmouth bite. On Friday, I fished with Ron Carr of Pittsburg. It was an amazing day with bass after bass caught. Ron said he had heard stories of fishing the Middle Allegheny in the fall, but didn't believe how good it could be until now. We fished only a few hours but landed about 50 smallmouths. Almost all were brutes – 16 to 20-inch chunky smallies gorged on food – crayfish as judged by the remnants of partially digested food in the livewell. I got back to the office and called Darl and Marilyn to see if they could go Saturday. They were all in. We didn't start fishing until around noon. Marilyn and I fished while Darl ran the camera and landing net; he hardly had time to pick up a rod. We had boated 40 smallmouths by 3:30 when they had to leave. I went back out and caught about 20 more smallies before dark. All exceptionally nice smallmouth. Out of the 100-plus smallmouths caught and released in two days, only a couple of those fish were under 15 inches. It was my best day ever on the river for smallmouth quality and quantity. (See photo below)



Gamma fluorocarbon line and Mike's Custom Tackle Tubes closed the deal on Allegheny River smallmouth in November

Area Guide Services contribute to the NW PA Fishing Report

Looking for a trip on a Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango county water?

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/.

Fishing with Bo Guide Service: Specializing in panfish in area lakes and kayak swamp trips for bowfin. Bo Batholomew at bcbaitshadley@gmail.com; 724-704-1723

Solitude Steelhead Guide Service: Fly-fishing the tributaries of Pennsylvania. Bob Packey; 724-972-8813; solitudesteelheadguide@yahoo.com; www.solitudesteelheadguideservice.com

Prize Center—Names of following contributors were drawn for prizes. In order to collect your prize, you must email Darl with your shipping address. Otherwise the prize will go pack in the stash for a future drawing.

- Spool of Gamma Line: Bryan McMillin on behalf of Bree.
- Lure pack: Al Bell
- Pack of Mike's Custom Baits: for Cover shot of two brothers holding steelhead. (Bob Packey should contact me with an address for the boys.)

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

During October and November, there is little doubt that Lake Erie is the place to fish for bruiser smallmouth bass. Allegheny River, Pymatuning Lake and Shenango Lake are very good for fall smallies, but the #1 place goes to Lake Erie.



Brandon Hanna @ CDS



Capt. Mro smb guide photo



Yes, there are big SMB at Pymie.



Jeremy @ Blazer Baits



Capt. Mro smb guide family trips



Shenango striper fun, too

GAMMA *Lines*

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

If you have not tried Gamma Molecularly Altered Line – Polyflex Copolymer, Edge 100% Fluorocarbon, or Touch Super Fluorocarbon – you have no idea what you are missing. The special Gamma process creates a line with a much high break-strength compared to other lines of the similar diameter – yet the line is very manageable. Once you give it a good test on one outfit for a season of fishing, you will want Gamma on every reel. Here on some of the big fish taken on Gamma line this past week.



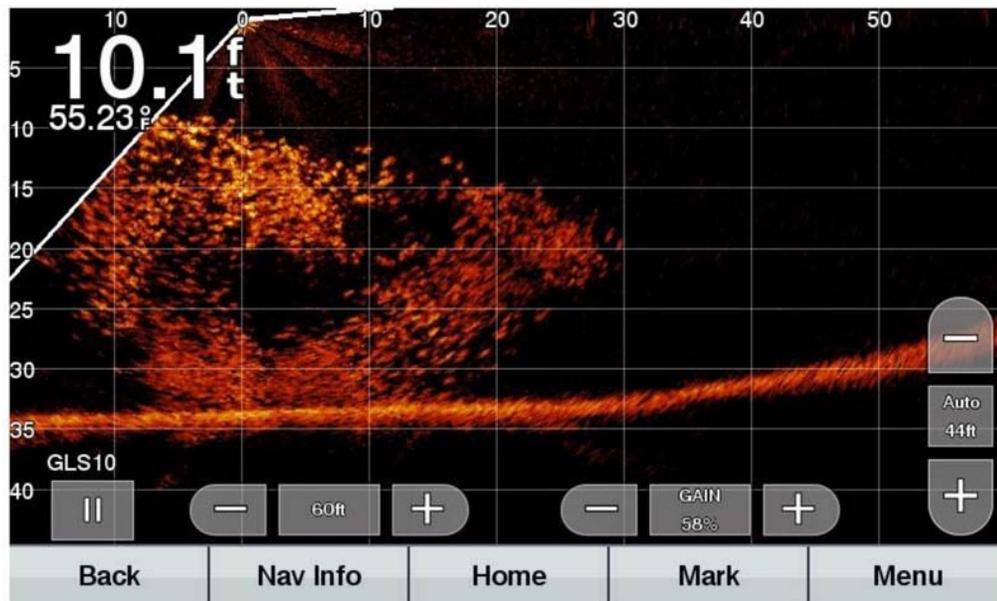
GARMIN INFORMATION PAGE



- 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



Just announced this week, G&G Marine Electronics is now an authorized Garmin Dealer. G&G Marine Electronics owner Gus Glasgow has been installing Garmin units for some time, but had not been able to sell them until paperwork from Garmin arrived. contract to You can now purchase your desired Garmin Fish Finder, LiveScope or Garmin trolling motor and have it professionally installed right here in NW PA. Check out G&G Marine Electronics Facebook Page for more information and location.



The above Garmin LiveScope screen shot supplied by Mark McQuown show a huge school of bluegills scattering as a predator fish busts right through the center of the school.