

# NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

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Issue: May 11, 2022

The NW PA Fishing Report is brought to you by:



Fishing with Darl Black

Information Service



Allegheny River—Jeff Knapp photo



Fantastic week for smallmouth bass across the NW region. Let the photos do the talking.

Shenango Lake—Randy



Lake Erie—Capt. Mro photo



Pymatuning—David Graham

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 May 11, 2022

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County by County reports for Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango

### FRENCH CREEK – flowing through all four counties

**Aaron @ French Creek Fishing Company**; filed 5/9: Fishing is starting to really pick up for a variety of species around the area. Trout are still being caught throughout the stocked sections of French Creek. Drifting a French Creek Fishing Company 2-inch Sand Worm or Stonefly has been very effective. Panfish, northern pike and bass are biting around Presque Isle Bay using a variety of soft plastics under a slip bobber rig. Also, walleyes are being taken at mouths of Erie tributary creeks and from the South Pier.



### CRAWFORD COUNTY

#### Pymatuning Lake

**Bean @ Richter's Bait**; filed 5/9: The daytime walleye is picking up with fish being taken by drifting with crawlers or minnows on the South End. A 7-lb walleye was taken this week by trolling a crankbait. I'm still seeing a lot of big perch come in. And we are finally hearing about crappies being taken in shallow bays on the South End. Anglers have been catching and releasing some impressive smallmouth bass as well.

**Laurie @ Duck-n-Drake;** filed 5/9: I'm hearing the crappie bite up north was tough the last couple days, with the best catches being from around Red Cross area. A few walleyes are being caught by trolling shad-like crankbaits. Our first 2022 catfish tournament two weeks ago was a success; many channel catfish were weighed plus one flathead. We have a second catfish tournament on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Anglers in the Crappie Madness contest have been bringing in a good number of big fish. The leading crappie right now is heavier than last year's winner; maybe we will see a 3-pounder! (See photos)



Duck-N-Drake

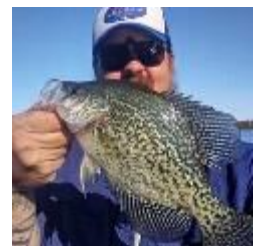
**Becky @ Gateway Bait;** filed 5/9: Crappie at Red Cross; perch off the causeway; and lots of catfish everywhere!

**Bo @ B.C. Baits;** filed 5/8: A quick trip to Pymatuning produced 24 mixed panfish (including some nice crappies) in 2.5 feet of water off a beaver hut using a chartreuse medium Terry Bug. (See photo)



Duck-N-Drake

**David Graham @ FX Rod Representative;** filed 5/8: This past week RJ and I finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in Crawford County's Open Tournament. We targeted a nice school of smallmouth with jerkbaits; we located the smallies during practice. Late in tourney, we went after pre-spawn largemouth bass with jigs and spinnerbaits. Every year it is different – this year the grass is way behind and the water temperature will not move out of the 50s. Always a new challenge – that's what I love about fishing the most. (See photo) Today, May 8<sup>th</sup>, in our club tournament I used my FX flipping rod to land a 6-pound largemouth. (See photo)



Bo @ B.C. Baits



**Brock "Captain Hook" Morocco** (Hermitage); filed 5/6: Not doing as much fishing this spring. But I did nail a nice walleye one evening at Pymatuning, along with several smaller ones I released. (See photo)



David and RJ Graham



## Conneaut Creek



**Adam Horne**; filed 5/4: I fished Conneaut Creek on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Trout are still there and active. I landed several on spinners and by tight-line drifting with a fly rod. Working the head and tail of riffles seemed to hold the most active bites. Also missed a steelhead – but it was a thrill to still have steelhead this far upstream at this time of year. Doubt they will be in the creeks much longer. Fish On! (See photos)

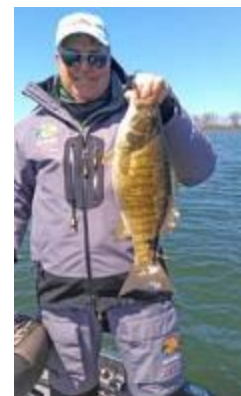


## **ERIE COUNTY**

### Presque Isle Bay & Lake Erie

**Capt. George Mro @ Bass Fishing Charters**; filed 5/9:

Lots of wind has Lake Erie a little stained which has slowed the smallmouth bite some, but there are still plenty of cooperative fish mostly in the 6 to 10-foot range. Moving baits like crankbaits and jerkbaits work well when the wind is ripping, then swimbaits, Ned Rigs and tubes at calmer times. (See photos at right)

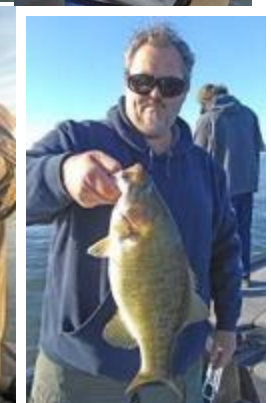


**Kirk @ East End Angler**; filed 5/9: Anglers are catching



Kirk's first walleye of 2022

perch off both the North and South Pier, but no reports of perch in the main lake. Smallmouth bass bite is strong in both the Bay and the main Lake. Lake trout have moved slightly deeper in the Lake to around 60 to 65



feet; reports are they are not schooled up as tightly as weeks ago but split into little pods. For right now, chances are better to land a walleye at night in the Bay off a pier or at the mouth of a tributary creek on the main lake than to go hunting them on Erie proper; suspending stick baits are the best baits. (See photos)

**Anthony @ Poor Richards**; filed 5/9: Lots of bass in the tributaries; steelhead have pretty much vacated the streams. Best walleye bite is casting in the Bay at night and at

west side creek mouths. I'm hearing about lots of northern pike being caught in the Bay, plus crappies and bluegills in the Head of Bay. Walnut Creek Access is finally open to all boats!

**Becky @ Elk Creek Sports;** filed 5/9: Elk Creek is at a perfect level for bass fishing; lots of suckers in the stream, too. Hearing only limited success at creek mouths for walleye due largely to persistent winds.



The Last Steelhead

**Bill @ Tudors;** filed 5/9: Nearly all steelhead have dropped back from headwaters of tributaries; there are some in the lower reaches near the mouths of stream. With approaching warm spell, all steelhead will be gone. More smallmouths have moved into some of the tributaries. The best



Now Smallmouth Hevean

lures for these stream smallmouths are in-line spinner like a Mepps for spin anglers or a large streamer for fly anglers. (photos above right)

**Keith @ Dutch Fork Custom Lures;** filed 5/6: Bass and pike in Presque Isle are chomping tubes, jerkbaits and crankbaits. Weeds are emerging, and bass are all over the place. Water temperature is just right for a good time. Lake smallmouth fishing is heating up with my buddy Capt. Elder from XTR charters catching a smallie over 7 pounds! If interested in a lake walleye trip, we will be out on the lake catching walleyes before anyone else. Check the Guide Page in this issue of NW PA Fishing Report for our contact information. (See photos below and 7 lb smallmouth in Livewell page)



## MERCER COUNTY

### Lake Wilhelm

**Bo @ B.C. Baits**; filed 5/8: I caught several crappies from 15 feet of water right on the first drop-off out from shore. Water temp was 54 degrees. I marked a large school of crappies on my Garmin as they were staged to move up to spawn. I was using an Eagles Milk medium Terry Bug. (See photo at right)



### Shenango Lake



**Kevin @ Luckis4rabbits**; filed 5/9: All the crappies I caught the other day had beat up tails, letting me know that the males are starting to make beds. It won't be long before the crappie spawn on Shenango. I was fishing my hand-tied jigs 12 to 18 inches below a Thill stick bobber on



my 9-foot Eagle Claw rod and 4-pound-test line. I used jigs in three different colors, and they all caught crappies. Messenger on Facebook from my Luckis4rabbits page for more information on my custom hand-tied jigs. (Photos)

**Randy @ Fish West PA**; filed 5/9: Shenango Lake water level is what we call Spring high but fish are moving shallow and getting active. Good reports of crappie, white bass, walleye, bass and even catfish are coming in daily. It will just get better from here on out until the dog days of summer arrive. On Monday, I landed a 3.8-pound white bass – my Personal Best. Tight Lines, Randy. (See photos below– Jim Derr with LMB)



Randy with PB white bass



## VENANGO COUNTY

### Sugar Creek

**Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill**; filed 5/7: The Fish Commission's annual 2<sup>nd</sup> stocking of Sugar Creek usually occurs on the first Thursday in May. They put several thousand trout into the stream. Mostly rainbows and browns, a fair number of palominos. Using spinners and drifted Trout Magnets, Mikey broke his personal record by catching 39 trout in a single day! Paul Crider from Warren, Pa, was fishing near us; he landed this colorful 18-inch palomino. He caught it on a home-made CP Spinner. In addition to all day Thursday, Mikey and I also spent a couple hours on Friday and Saturday trout fishing on Sugar. Our combined total catch and release for that period was 94 trout. Most of those were caught by Mikey on orange, white & red, and pink Trout Magnets. I caught most of mine on pieces of nightcrawler. Thanks to the PFBC for their great trout stocking program; anglers appreciate the job they do! (See photo at right)



Paul Crider

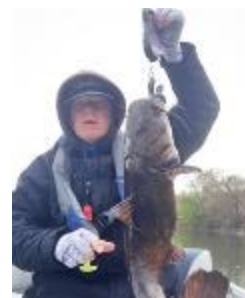
### Allegheny River

**Jeff @ Keystone Connection Guide Service**; filed 5/8:

Though the high water continues to plague the middle Allegheny, I've managed to squeeze in a few more guide trips between such events. Those outings produced excellent numbers of smallmouth bass up to 20 inches on Ned Rig-style finesse plastics, hair jigs and Galida's Grubz. Fish have been taken in moderate current in mid-depths of four to eight feet of water. Once the river recedes from the most recent deluge, I expect smallmouth bass will be found in pre-spawn staging areas and will move onto spawning flats as the water warms. (See photo upper right)



**Alan Shrout**; filed 5/8: The bite was slow for us on the Allegheny this past week, but I did hook into an 8-pound 4-ounce flathead catfish. He hit a swimbait. He gave me a fun battle! (See photo right)



**Pete @ SmalliesontheYough.com**; filed 4/27: My wife and I fished the Allegheny on April 25<sup>th</sup>. It was a warm day and smallies were eating. We caught them on everything we threw, from soft plastics to crankbaits. We landed all sizes of smallies – from 10 inches to 20 inches. What a great time to be on the water! (See photos left and right)



## **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](http://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](mailto:keystone-connectionguideservice@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

**Solitude Steelhead Guide Service:** Fly-fishing the tributaries of Pennsylvania. Bob Packey; 724-972-8813; [solitudesteelheadguide@yahoo.com](mailto:solitudesteelheadguide@yahoo.com); [www.solitudesteelheadguideservice.com](http://www.solitudesteelheadguideservice.com)

### **Prize Drawing...**

Anyone who appears on the cover of this issue is eligible to receive a pack of Galida's Grubz, Mikes Custom Tubes or pack of Luckis4rabbits hand-tied jigs. To claim your prize, email me you shipping address.

Spool of Gamma Line: Kevin Austin

Species specific lure pack: David Graham

To claim your prize, email your address to [darlback@windstream.net](mailto:darlback@windstream.net).



# 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)



Allegheny River—Jeff Knapp photo

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7 lb. Erie smallmouty—XT charter

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Pymatuing 6 lb LMB—David Graham

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Pymatuning—G&G Marine Electronics

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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 Darl Black

Right now! This is my favorite time to be on almost any area lake to fish for smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, big crappies, rock bass and white bass. With water temperature between 50 and 60 degrees, all these species are in the shallows, and you really don't know what you will catch on your next cast.

Marilyn and I will rig four 6-1/2 to 7-foot med-light or med power spinning rods with a finesse single hook bait such as 2-inch tubes, Ned Rig, wacky-rigged Yum Dinger, Galida's Grubz and small hair jigs. All reels are spooled with 6-pound Gamma Edge.



Then we simply pick out a flat bank with gravelly bottom with some scattered emerging vegetation and wood cover, position the boat between 6 and 8 feet of water – so we are within an easy cast of shore line – then run the bank on the electric. Dozens of fish will be caught, including a few bruiser bass in the 3 to 4-pound range. An occasional walleye turns up, or big carp, and usually one of us hooks a muskie. Gamma Edge 6 pound handles all comers; it's the best line for finesse jigs or small grubs.

# GARMIN INFORMATION PAGE

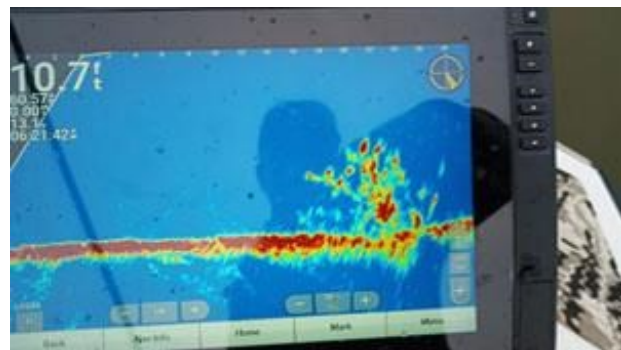
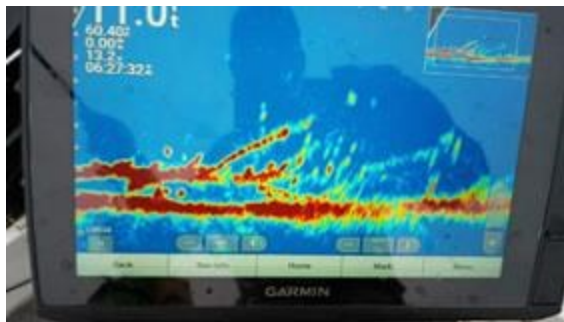


- Real anglers share actual fishing experiences with Garmin units
- For professional local installation of Garmin units, contact G&G Marine Electronics at 724-290-9045

## Garmin Tip from Gus Glasgow at G&G Marine Electronics:



The picture of my two boys each holding a fish was from this past week on Lake Arthur. Those fish were stacked on off-shore brush in 10' of water. I couldn't tell if they spawned or not, but every pile I went to was loaded with fish. I used the LVS34 to pick out the biggest fish, catch it, and move on. I have little time to fish, and LiveScope helps me save time finding and catching. All fish were caught on hand-tied jigs that I made myself. All fish were caught via sniping with a 14' rod. I can sneak right up on these fish with my Garmin Force trolling motor. It's brushless making it almost completely silent in the water. Fish do not spook at all with a brushless motor. Check the screens below.





## **DIRECTORY OF FISHING REPORT SUPPORT**

The following agencies and business may be found on Facebook pages.

**PENNSYLVANIA GREAT LAKES REGION** (Regional tourism association is prime sponsor of the NW PA Fishing Report)– County organization listing provides information on Activities, Shopping, Lodging, Restaurants and Special Events

- Crawford County Convention & Visitors Bureau

- VisitErie

- Visit Mercer County PA

- Oil Region Alliance

**AREA TACKLE SHOPS** – Regularly provide information to NW PA Fishing Report on status of the public waters fished by their customers. Support these shops.

- Erie County

  - East End Angler

  - Elk Creek Sports

  - FishUSA

  - Poor Richards Bait & Tackle

  - Tudor Hook-N-Nook

- Crawford County – Pymatuning

  - Duck-N-Drake

  - Poff's Place

  - Richter's Bait

- Crawford County East

  - Timberland Bait

- Mercer County

  - Consumer Direct Sports Supplies (CDS)

- Venango County

  - Maurer's Trading Post

**LOCAL TACKLE MANUFACTURERS** – They supply the prizes for giveaways on the NW PA Fishing Report.

- B.C. Baits Custom Tackle

- Dutch Fork Tackle

- French Creek Fishing Company

- Galida's Grubz

- Luckis4rabbits

- Mike's Custom Tackle