

NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

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Issue: November 18, 2022

The NW PA Fishing Report is brought to you by:

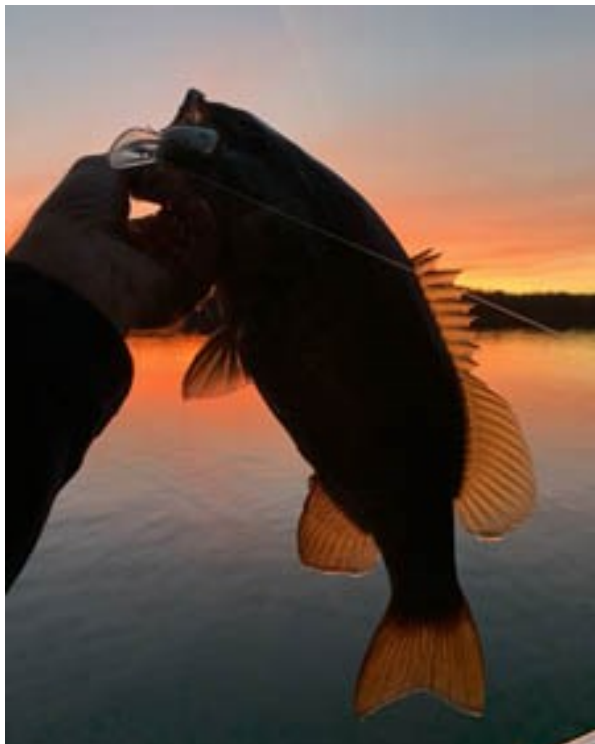


Pennsylvania's Great Lakes Region
crawford • erie • mercer • venango



Fishing with Darl Black

Information Service



Shenango sunset photo by Terry Wills

LANDING NET by Darl Black

For many serious anglers the best fall bite doesn't happen until the water temperature drops below 50 degrees. Some of the best Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, Crappie, White Bass and even Large-mouth Bass catches happen 40-something water...as well as the shallow water Lake Trout bite on Lake Erie. At the halfway point through November, water temperatures in area lakes and Lake Erie still held in the 50s. On some bodies of water, the water temp on the 11th was higher than on November 1st. But with the major cold front, snow and wind of recent days, plus a cold forecast, we are certainly looking at water temps in the 40s. However, it will likely be a short late fall bite without an appearance of Indian Summer.

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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Contact: Darl Black darlblack@windstream.net

COUNTY BY COUNTY REPORTS FROM CRAWFORD, ERIE, MERCER AND VENANGO COUNTIES

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Rich @ Richter's Bait & Tackle; filed 11/15: Not a lot of guys fishing in boats, but Jamestown docks have been busy. They are catching perch, bluegills and a few crappies off the docks. A couple reports of anglers in boats getting a few keeper-size wall-eye down by the dam.



October smallmouth by Captain Hook

Patty @ Poff's Place; filed 11/15: Only a few anglers are out. They continue to pick up perch here and there on the North end, along with the occasional walleye off the causeway bridge. One report of two guys catching crappies near Red Cross. Lake temp much warmer than usual for this time of year.

Bo @ BC Baits; filed 11/15: BC Baits celebrated "Dock Day" (first day anglers permitted to fish from state park marina docks in the fall) on Saturday, November 5th with prize giveaways to youngsters at the Jamestown docks.

I've been back over to fish docks several times since then. We've been catching a good amount of crappies and large bluegills, primarily at depths of 12 to 15 feet over 16 feet of water. Black medium Terry Bugs on 5mm Wonderbread Log Hopper jigs have been extremely productive for me. Also used an Eagle's Milk Mini Pickworm on a 4mm Wonderbread Log Hopper as a backup on slow days. Have not seen the usual number of perch caught from the docks, however. Hopefully the cold snap this week will bring more into the docks. (See photos below of the dock gang.)



Bo with crappie



Bo with bluegill



Bo with crappie



Dale Clemmer with perch

Darl @ Blackwolfe Communications; filed 11/15: Marilyn and I made two trips to Pymatuning since mid-October. The 3rd week of October, we were looking for smallmouth bass on Jamestown end— struck out (water warmer than we hoped). On November 4, we were targeting walleye and crappies. There were 100% more baitfish schools suspended in the far South end compared to the same area just two weeks prior...but no hungry walleye. Searched various shallow and deep cribs, brushpiles and stump-lined ledges – three small crappies were the total.

Stan Teitelbaum; filed 10/16: I fished Pymatuning for a couple hours in windy conditions before winterizing my outboard. Caught a 14" bass moments before leaving. (See photo on right)



Conneaut Lake

Marilyn @ Blackwolfe Communications; filed 11/8: Our highly anticipated late fall fishing on Conneaut Lake for oversized largemouth and smallmouth bass this year was a bust. In three trips to the lake, climaxing on November 8, we had only one respectable bass to show for our efforts – a 3.5-pound largemouth I caught on a Rat-L-Trap. I did lose a musky that went airborne three times in very shallow water. But all Darl could manage were a couple of pencil-thin pike in the 19/20-inch range. In addition, the normally outstanding jumbo bluegill bite was a wash as well. Saw a lot of panfish-size schools off weedbeds and on deeper structure but nothing was biting. Only came up with a couple skinny little crappies from 24 feet of water. The water temp was unusually

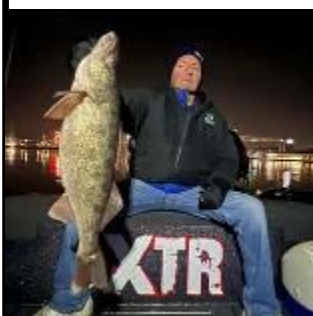
high for October and early November – never falling below the mid-50s; on our last outing the temperature had actually climbed three degrees from the week before! Screwy fall weather.

ERIE COUNTY

Lake Erie and Presque Isle Bay

Kirk @ East End Angler; filed 11/15: The lake trout are moving shallow, but fishing success is spotty right now. Lake temp has been too high and only in recent days has it fallen to around 50 degrees. There are lakers from 4 feet to 20 feet getting ready to spawn. Should be some in the North East Marina. In Presque Isle Bay, there is a night bite on walleyes from the docks and walls using suspending stickbaits. During the day, the perch bite is pretty good. With state park marina docks open, anglers are catching crappies and perch.

In recent weeks, clients with **Corey @ XTR Charters** have been making some exceptional walleye catches at night in the Bay and nearshore areas of the lake locating larger



PIB night 'eye

baitfish (shad) and casting SteelShad blade baits. In a phone call with him on the 14th, he indicated the walleye bite was waning because of tremendous numbers of emerald shad moving into marinas. With lake temp finally dropping to 52 degrees, he is now focused on lake trout – but is concerned if the wild weather coming this week will blow up the bite. (See photos left and right)



Lake Trout

Capt. George Mro Smallmouth Guide Service; filed 11/13: Late October and early November weather has actually been very warm thereby causing



Lake Erie water temp to rise from 49 degrees to 55 degrees. Good quality smallmouth – many over 5 pounds – are chasing baitfish in a variety of depths depending on bait location. Wind can really enhance the bite on moving baits like spinnerbaits and crankbaits. Some fish have been caught on blade baits but it has



been a little too warm for that bite. Ned rigs, tubes and dropshots rigs have been working in lighter wind conditions. Colder weather has arrived and I expect the bite to get better as the water drops into the 40s...if you are around baitfish in the right area! (See photos left and right)

Chad Prihode; filed 11/14: At the beginning of the month, bass were hungry in Misery Bay, hitting a white spinnerbait. Now that duck season has started on Presque Isle, it's hard to fish. I did manage a steelhead on a crankbait outside the chute. (See photo right)



Dave Ohmer (Erie); filed 10/26: Finally had some favorable wind conditions in late October to get out onto the Big Lake in my kayak. I've been having success catching small-mouth bass, walleye and lake trout by jigging a SteelShad rigged on 5-pound Gamma Touch fluorocarbon line. Most of my success has been in 25 to 30 feet along breaks on the shale floor. Be it a boulder or small ledge, structure rarely fails to hold fish regardless of time of year.

Erie Tributaries

Laurie @ Fishermen's Haven; filed 11/15: Streams were loaded with fish and fishermen before the rain last week roiled the tribs and kept many anglers at home. But streams should be in good shape for this coming weekend. Some of our customers continued to catch steelhead right through the high and discolored conditions. Anglers remark frequently about the average size of the steelhead this year – big ones! (See photo)



Bill @ Tudor's Hook-N-Nook; filed 11/15: It's going to be a good weekend with ample water in the streams and a fresh push of fish. It's going to be perfect steelhead fishing weather – cold and spitting rain and snow, good water color and plenty of big fish in the streams. I suggest streamers and egg patterns.



Becky @ Elk Creek Sports; filed 11/15: Reports of lots more fish moving up with the high water. Anglers are catching above average size steelhead this fall. We are seeing lots of 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 pounders. With changing conditions, an angler needs to have many tools in the basket to be ready for what the fish want. I'm hearing eggs, crawlers, and large steamers are taking fish in the high water – but that is subject to change.

Poor Richards; filed 11/15: We needed rain and we got it recently. Fresh fish moved up-stream, and now flow & water color are looking good for this weekend and into next

week. There are a plenty of fish in all the West side streams. The largest one weighed so far was a 15.9-pound monster.

Kirk @ East End Angler; filed 11/15: Since the recent rain event, all East side streams are loaded with steelhead right now. Upper Four Mile Creek is brimming with fish, thanks to the work done by the PF&BC to help the fish get upstream.

Aaron @ French Creek Fishing Company; filed 11/14: While our steelhead streams are known for inconsistent flow conditions, many anglers continue to find some great steelhead and brown trout. Egg sacks, sucker spawn and small nymphs are productive when water levels are low and clear. When water levels are high and dirty, streamers such as The White Death and Black Wooly Bugger have been effective. With air temps dropping into the low 30s and snow in the forecast, streams should remain in perfect condition for next few weeks. (See Aaron's photo below)

Robert @ Solitude Steelhead Guide Service; filed 11/14: The 2022 fall steelhead season is well underway. Fish are spread throughout the systems. The theme so far this season has been big fish. Very Big fish! It has not been uncommon to catch multiple 10-plus pound fish in the same day. The low and clear water conditions have certainly made things challenging over the past two weeks but the recent rainfall will improve conditions tremendously. Look for another fresh push of fish on the downside of this high-water event. Match your technique and offering to the conditions, and you will surely find success in the coming weeks. (See photos below from Solitude)



Solitude Guide Service



Solitude Guide Service



Solitude Guide Service



Aaron's photo

MERCER COUNTY

Shenango Lake and Shenango River



Randy @ Fish West PA; filed 11/14: With Shenango water cooling, the bite has slowed some but the past weeks were great fishing. Big hybrids were hungry along with some big smallmouths, crappies and catfish – seen in the accompanying photos. Late November does show some promise with temps rising a bit around Thanksgiving. (See photos above and in Livewell)

Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 11/14: Editor's summary of conversation with Ken...he continues to do well on crappies, and expects to keep fishing the lake until December 1st when he winterizes his boat. He notes the recently established creel and size limit on Shenango Crappies is paying off with bigger fish. Crappies are shallow in the wood. During four days of fishing with two buddies last week, they put over 100 crappies in the box. Most were over 10 inches. (See photos above)

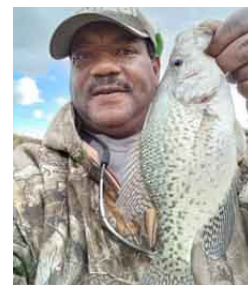


Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill; filed 11/3: Steve Bell and Kyle Ward of Franklin spent several hours on Shenango Lake for crappies on November 3rd. The water temperature was in the low 50s. Their bait of choice was a 1/8-ounce chartreuse jig with a 2.5" Berkley Gulp Shad. They marked several nice schools of white crappies in the 8 to 10-foot range. Casting and



counting down their jigs, they retrieved slowly to land over twenty crappies in the 10 to 14-inch range. (See photos left and right)

Kevin @ luckis4rabbits; filed 10/18: Here are some pictures of my catch yesterday from Shenango Lake. I was fishing about 4.5 feet deep with custom hand-tied luckis4rabbits jigs. I used blue on blue and purple on purple, using unweighted bobber. (See photo at right & Live-well)



Nijya Justice (Sharon) has been doing well on crappies, too. He submitted several photos—one appears her and others in the Livewell Page.



Adam Horner (Hartstown); filed 10/27: I fished the Shenango River from Big Bend downstream towards Shenango Lake looking for some late season trout but ended up with some beautiful perch. Spinners won the day, fished slow and jigged was the effective presentation. No giants, but consistent action. Fish On! (See photo)

VENANGO COUNTY

The Streams of Venango County

Angler Al's Diary

- Oct 25: During an excursion to catch creek baits, I bumped into Bill Treacy, who hails from Canonsburg, Pa. I introduced myself and shared with him that I go by is Angler Al. It was nice to learn he follows my reports in the NW PA Fishing Report about Sugar Creek and other trout streams. I asked Bill if he would like to text me his results to share with others. He kindly did!

"Hi Angler Al, so nice to meet you in person. I've attached three photos – all taken in my net so it is difficult to get much perspective. The largest, a rainbow, is about 17 – 18 inches and was caught on East Sugar in the SGL section. The smaller ones are browns between 8 and 9 inches, were taken near the bridge where we met. I broke off a couple nice ones as well. All were taken on a muddler minnow stream and released unharmed. – Bill Treacy." (Photos on next page)

- Day after stocking: I ventured over to the artificial only section on Oil Creek, the day after the Fish Commission stocked it, so I had lots of company. For the most part everyone was catching fish. Some guys were casting Rapalas, others used orange/chartreuse colored trout magnets, but most were fly casting egg patterns. I chose to use a #6 grindle bug as a dropper and a #10 prince nymph 18 inches above. I caught four rainbows on the bridge bug and 1 on the prince. They were solid 13 to 14-inch trout, all released to fight again.

- I spent an autumn day on Justus Lake with my friend Tom Hays, using the live creek bait we acquired. I caught several largemouth bass. (Photos in Livewell)

- Nov 6: Planed an adventure to Sugar Creek today. I had some red worms I thought would be perfect to drift in the current; also took my bait bucket to catch some creek bait. In the first pocket, I caught some nice bait. Headed to favorite trout spot, drifted a – 4-inch black-sided dace. It no more than hit the water when a hearty brown trout smashed it. I had a good look at it as it did three belly rolls right in front of me. The yellow belly, hooked jaw and vibrant red spots let me know this was a veteran fish of the creek. Sadly, that's where the game ended. I decided to remove my GoPro from my cap and do an underwater take, which caused me to drop my rod tip and give the brown trout the slack it needed to get free.



Bill Treacy



Bill Treacy



Bill Treacy



Angler Al

Angler Al's Fall Trout Tips

As a trout fisherman, I have learned that in the fall of the year bigger brown trout make a move from larger bodies of water to the mouths of many smaller feeder streams. Where these feeder brooks merge into the larger trout stream, such as tributaries joining Sugar Creek, the mouth of Sugar Creek at French Creek, Lower Two-Mile Run or Upper Two-Mile Run merge into the Allegheny are excellent places to look for big browns. Large live bait or minnow replica crankbaits are choices for spin fishermen. For fly-fishermen, try a big weighted-streamer in a shiner pattern, or the largest size wooly bugger or muddler minnow patterns.

Allegheny River

Jeff @ Keystone Connection Guide Service; filed 11/13: My Allegheny River guide trips during the past month have been both productive and challenging. We've managed a lot smallmouth up to 2 inches, but floating weeds, leaves and at time strong winds have hampered efforts. Bass have been in classic late fall locations, namely slower, deeper pools and boulder-rich shorelines with pockets protected from the current. Galida's Grubz, Jimmy D River Bugs hair jigs, Ned Rigs and blade baits have all accounted for fish. As of November 13, the river was blown out. The shift will likely be from smallmouth bass to walleyes once the river returns to a fishable level. (See photos next page)

Allegheny River continued...

Pete @ SmalliesontheYough.com: Editor's note - Pete has suspended his wade guide trips on the Allegheny for the winter. Winter wading is way too cold and uncomfortable for most clients, and weather is too unpredictable. I accompanied him on his last visit to the Allegheny a day prior to the river being blown out. With the water so low and clear, wade fishing from shore was not very effective. Pete did manage a nice fish or two, but it was a grueling process.

Mike @ mikescustomtackle; filed 11/13: The bass fishing was on fire in Oil City pool a couple weeks back, but the bite died when the water level dropped and the water temp began rising. The walleye bite for the most part has been non-existent; if you find any, it's mainly 6 to 8-inch 'eye. Good future stock but none for this year. Now that the water level shot back up, the bite should be on fire if you can deal with the cold. (See photo)

Angler Al @ Buttermilk Hill; filed 10/30: Joined my friend Brian Perry in his jet boat. Launching at Franklin, we headed north on the river. We worked 1/4-ounce jigs with chartreuse twister tails and tipped with large shiners. Boated seven walleyes with the biggest going 27 inches and 7 pounds. (See photo)



Jeff Knapp guide photo



Jeff Knapp guide photo



Jeff Knapp guide photo



John Ringle



Mike McFadden

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 Bartholomew 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

The Livewell

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Capt. Mro / Erie Smallmouth



Kevin Austin / Shenango



Jim Derr / Shenango Hybrid Stripper



Angler Al / Justus Lake



Tom Hays / Justus Lake



Angler Al / Allegheny River



Nijya Justice / Shenango Lake



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

“PERSONAL BEST” FISH TAKEN ON GAMMA LINE continues this issue and the December issue. If youi don't see your pic here, I am saving a bunch of Two-Pound line test photos for December.



John Reep 6lb 13 oz LMB Wilhelm



Brandon Hanna 6.5 pound LMB
Wilhelm

MORE ON NEXT PAGE

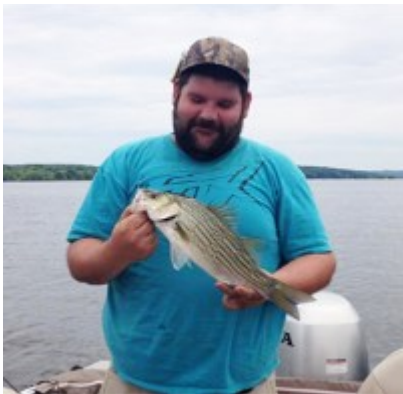
Personal Best catch on Gamma Line continues...



Eric Martin 2.49 lb Crappie @ Lake Arthur



Kevin Austin 2.2 lb crappie Shenango



Jim Wysocki hybrid striper SL



Ron Katchick 30" eye Shenango



Jovie Scott youth winner LOC Derby
21 lb King Salmon on 17 lb Gamma

MORE NEXT ISSUE

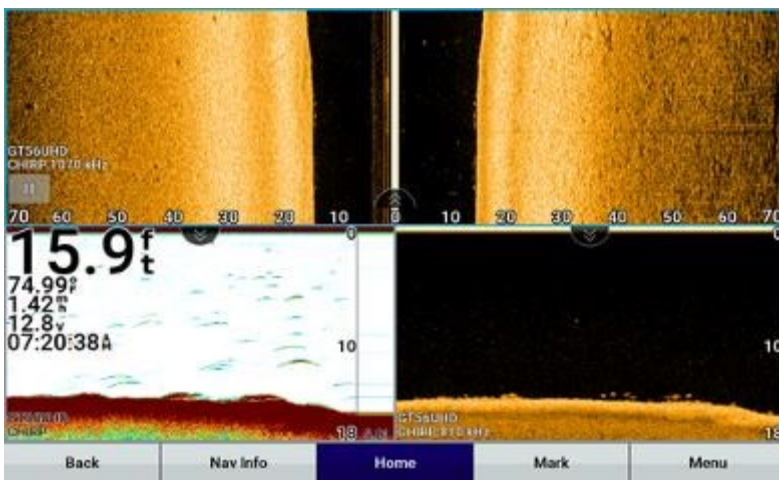
GARMIN INFORMATION PAGE



- 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 Jeff Knapp at Keystone Connection Guide Service

The outstanding detail provided by Garmin Echomap Chartplotters allows you to “sharpshoot” fish (i.e. spot them on sonar and then cast directly toward them). I rely on Side Vu on my Echomap Ultra w/GT56 transducer to spot fish in relatively shallow water – say 20 feet and less. In deeper water the combination of 2D sonar and Clear Vu reveals fish targets. When fish pop up on a sonar screen, I mark the location with a way point (I prefer the blue pin) which comes up on the screen of my Echomap Ultra which is linked to the Ultra. The boat is positioned to make pinpoint casts to the target area. Typically, a few casts are all that’s needed to trigger the fish (or not). Then it’s time to move on in search of the next target. This spot-and-stalk tactic has led to some outstanding trips this summer and fall on Pymatuning Lake, producing walleyes, white bass, smallmouth bass, crappies and yellow perch.



Pymatuning bottom



Pymatuning walleye

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