

NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

Published by Blackwolfe Communications LLC

Issue: August 16, 2024

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



Lake Erie



Allegheny River



Shenango Lake

Landing Net by Darl Black

Yes, it's been a tough summer for fishing with the extreme heat, toxic algae blooms, too little water and then suddenly too much water. But anglers are still getting it done. Currently, the best late summer bites are Walleye on Lake Erie, Smallmouth Bass on the Allegheny River and French Creek, and catfish & white bass in Shenango River drainage.



Shenango River

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.

NORTHWEST PA FISHING REPORT for August 2024

Published by Blackwolfe Communications LLC

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

French Creek – Flowing through all four counties

Aaron @ French Creek Fishing Company; filed 8/10: Between low water conditions and stream blowouts, I was still able to spend some time fishing French Creek. Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass and Largemouth Bass are actively feeding and in good numbers. Small inline spinners and 3" FC Swimmers are very effective this time of year. Deep pools below riffles and deeper runs where water remains oxygenated are excellent areas to target these feisty fish. (See photos below.)



Pete @ Smallies on the Yough Guide Service; filed 7/23: French Creek was perfect for wading. We caught Smallmouth all day long using a variety of soft plastics along the bottom. The smallies were hungry. We landed fish from 8 to 18 inches long. The creek is in great shape with a healthy population of smallies. (See photo right)



CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Bean @ Richter's Bait & Tackle; filed 8/13: On the lower end of the lake some guys are catching walleyes in 15 to 17 feet of water on blades. Lots of white bass and catfish. Largemouth bass being caught along the shore cover. No reports on muskies caught recently. A few anglers are finding some crappies on deep structure.

Laurie @ Duck-N-Drake; filed 8/13: Yellow perch makes up the largest share of the catch in the mid-lake areas – along with catfish, of course. A couple guys stopped by who were catching perch wading along shoreline and targeting weedbeds. Walleye bite is slow.

Kala @ Poff's Place; filed 8/13: Same song from customers – perch and catfish. Everyone is waiting for fall cool down.

Captain Hook; filed 8/11: Not much going on in this heat. Fishing has been slow. I did get a nice largemouth Bass fishing from shore at Pymatuning one morning. It was first light so the picture is a little dark. Only thing I am catching on the Shenango River are catfish in the evening. Once it cools down the shoreline wading bite should pick up. (See photo right)



Woodcock Creek Lake

Brad (@ibefishing); filed 8/12: We got some decent crappies plus a couple carp with small jigs on 6 lb. line at Woodcock. The larger carp was 31 inches and weighed 12 lbs. (See photo right and in Livewell)



ERIE COUNTY

Kirk @ East End Angler; filed 8/13: Few tried to venture out on the rough seas due to recent storms so reports were scattered. I made it out late Monday so here is the report as of Tuesday, July 13...found very few walleyes inside the Mountain. Schools were scattered around 55 to 60 over 65 feet. However, outside the Mountain was loaded.

Lots of fish at 40 to 60 feet over 85 feet. Pink Renosky Plugs and copper-watermelon spoons caught the most fish.

Poor Richards; filed 8/13: Reports sparse due to weather last week. Some reported wall-eye between 58 and 75 feet on the west side. Some perch being caught.

Corey @ XTR Charters; filed 8/11: The last couple weeks the walleyes in PA waters (particularly off Presque Isle) have been in great concentrations in 65 feet of waters. Bigger walleyes can be found out in 70 to 90+ feet, along with steelhead. We have not had to run a single board this season for walleye. Most 4 person charters have been 2 to 3 hours (no, we do not throw back legal sized walleye caught below 30 feet; C&R of walleye is very unethical in the summer months). When we get into cold water or out in the 90' plus, we have been running riggers just below the temperature drop 65-75' down for steelhead. Buffalo Bill has been the only color of 3.5" spoon I have run for steelhead this season. My walleye set-up has been basic – dipsy 1.0 and 3.0, run back in accordance to the fish in the water column. We have been running faster surface speed for walleye than usual, going 2.9 to 3.2. Then making lots of turns and figure 8's when we get into quality fish. Color does not seem to matter – they are just outright mad and hungry! Have fun! (See steelhead photo)



Keith Eshbaugh; filed 7/11: Lake Erie fishing has been really good. There are fish just about everywhere. If you get into small 'eye, sheepshead or white perch, pick up and move. Water in 55 to 60 feet has been good. We are currently fishing 75 to 77 feet for bigger fish. Using 3 colors and 5 colors of lead core line and Flicker Minnows. Also, Dipsy Diver with fire tiger harness, 2.5 setting at 65 feet back. Don't stick with one thing if not catching fishing. Renosky's Bombers, Thundersticks are all working. Or try slow troll or drift with Dutch Fork Butterfly Blade harnesses and you will catch fish at any depth. Spoons also catch walleye but smaller spoons trolled fast seem to get more short walleyes. (See photo here and on cover)



Scott Selle; filed 8/11: Here are a couple of Erie walleye that Rob and I caught. We got our limits trolling Bandits and worm harnesses recently. (See photos left and right)



Mark Melega; filed 7/15: On July 13 and 14 Lake Erie was flat as glass and the walleye action was as hot as the 90-degree air temperature. We got our fish at 60 feet deep with a crawler harness (either Firetiger and Silver Blue), with 1 and 2-ounce weights on 10-pound test Gamma Edge Fluorocarbon on spinning gear – great combo for detecting bites. (See photo right)



MERCER COUNTY

Lake Wilhelm



Brad B

Brad (@ibeeffishin); filed 8/11: Fishing has been tough, but we got some decent bass out of Wilhelm on jigs. The biggest bass measured 19 inches and weighed 4 pounds. (See photo left & Livewell)

Stan Teitelbaum; filed 7/27: It was a beautiful morning on Wilhelm and the bass were biting. I was fortunate to find several largemouth bass in the 15 to 17-inch range that like my lure. Here is a picture of one of them. (See photo right)



Denny Beggs (Franklin); filed 7/25: Here is a nice channel cat I caught from Lake Wilhelm on a crawler harness. (See photo left)

Shenango Lake and Shenango River



Randy @ FishWest PA; filed 8/13: The “dog days” are making for a tough bite for most species. However, Shenango anglers are managing to make some catches of bass, hybrid stripers, white bass and catfish when the fish are active before a cold front. Some good ones have been caught during the evening bite. Can’t wait for the Fall bite to begin...counting it down! (See photos below, on cover & in Livewell)

Chris McVey; filed 8/12: The month of July at Shenango Lake & River started off pretty good and then slowed way down. Painfully down. It has definitely been a tough stretch for catching fish. I did get some nice flathead catfish out of the river during the middle of the month, but the river bite eventually slowed as well. The crappie night bite up slightly but the quality hasn't improved. Here are a few pics for the Report. (see photos below



and
er)



COV-

John Kolodziejski; filed 8/11: Some of our family from Houston and DC travelled to NW PA for a visit the week of July 4th. We decided to take advantage of the cooperative white bass population at Shenango since the crappie bite remains disappointing in terms of fish size. Dianne and I decided in advance our group would deploy 1/8-oz leadhead jigs with curl-tail grubs. We kept it simple by locating the fish first, and then fan casting the area at various depths. I'm happy to report all six of us (with varying degree of fishing experience) hooked and landed numerous scrappy white bass. Grub color was not a factor since each individual chose their own color and no two were the same. The key was location and depth. (See photos below)



VENANGO COUNTY

Angler Al's Journal;

- Filed 8/9: I didn't spend much time fishing in the heat of July. Did venture out on a few occasions. Entertaining youth with opportunities at Justus Lake and my backyard pond. Eric McEllhanten's grandparents brought him by to get an introduction to fishing. I discussed some fundamental points, then he caught several nice fish from the pond. On another day, a friend from Florida met me at Justus Lake with her grandkids, Leai and Luke Little from Brevard, NC. They did exceptionally well in hooking and reeling in several 2 to 3-pound largemouth bass from the boat. My buddy Brian, who owns a jetboat, helped me entertain a couple out-of-town guests with a trip on the Allegheny; Dave and Zach caught and released 35 smallies that evening – mostly 2 to 3-pounders. PTL, the threads of fishing in my life made me smile and others, too. (See photos)
- Filed 8/13: Mike Galkowski and I did a late afternoon run to Justus Lake. With a slight breeze from the north, we drifted large 5 to 7-inch creek chubs and smaller 3 to 4-inch minnows. We caught several 13-inch largemouth bass, plus one 4.5 pound largemouth. But Mike was looking for a bigger bass. I suggested he go with the largest pieces of bait in the bucket – one of the 7-inch creek chubs. Soon after deploying the bigger bait, he hooked a 6-pound largemouth. Minutes after releasing the big bass. Mike hooked and landed his PB fish – a 42-inch, 22-pound Tiger Musky! (See photos here and river pics in Livewell Page)



The Pond



Justus Lake



Mike's PB Largemouth



Mike's PB Tiger Musky

Congratulations Mike on your Personal Best Largemouth Bass and Tiger Musky on same day from Justus Lake.

Allegheny River

Jeff @ Keystone Connection Guide Service; filed 8/11: Early to late July provided excellent fishing for Smallmouth Bass on the Middle Allegheny River, with fish up to 20 inches boated on numerous trips despite the hot weather and low, clear river conditions. Soft fluke-style jerkbaits and Rapala X-Raps produced nearly all the fish. More recently the river rose a couple feet and turned turbid resulting from thunderstorms and tropical storm. A recent scouting trip following the rain events produced plenty of river smallmouth with spinnerbaits and Rapala Riggins' Raps being the productive presentations. The higher water also ripped loose plenty of eelgrass. Floating grass will likely be an obstacle from now through fall. (See photos below)



Pete @ Smallies on the Yough Guide Service

- 7/14: We had an awesome day catching bass on the Allegheny today. The fish were shallow and feeding. A variety of soft plastics worked.
- 7/19: I met clients Scott and his son Ryan mid-morning for some smallmouth fishing on the Allegheny. The action was great, with fish eating all day. Bottom bouncing baits got it done. We did an 8-hour day with 11-year-old Ryan hanging tough the entire day.
- 7/22: Not only is he a great football player, but he is a great angler as well. I had the pleasure of fishing with Steelers Defensive Tackle Keanu Benton yesterday. We had a blast landing a bunch of hard-fighting river bass on the Allegheny. Good luck this season #keanu95 @keanu95 Keanu Benton.
- 8/11: The Allegheny had a slight stain today and was dropping. The weather was perfect 73-degree air temp. The smallmouth had the feedbag on, eating swimbaits. We caught two 21-inch smallmouths in heavy current. I also caught a bunch of bass in the 15 to 18-inch range, plus a 24-inch pike. I have open dates for wade trips on the river in September and October. Pete@smalliesontheyough.com. (See photos 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; fishinkeef5132@gmail.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

This issue's **PRIZE Drawing** is being handled a little different this time.

The name drawn for spool of Gamma Line is **Mike Galkowski**.

Normally one additional contributor would be drawn for a pack of baits, but I a backlog right now. So I drew eight names for bait packs. See your name below. Email me your shipping address and I'll send you a pack of Galida's Grubs or Mike's Custom Tackle Tubes (or Neds).

Angler Al; Captain Hook; Brad B; Denny Beggs; Randy Hedderick; Chris McVey; John Kolodziejski; Mark Melega.

If you do not contact me, prizes will roll over to a future drawing.

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

Never a dull moment — summer bites happen across NW Pennsylvania.



Allegheny River; Angler AI photo



Shenango Lake—Butch
Fish West PA photo



Woodcock Lake; Brad B photo



Allegheny River



Lake Wilhelm; Brad B photo



Lake Wilhelm; Marilyn Black photo



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

Guides, tournament anglers and everyday anglers in the know, know that Gamma has a line they can count on for every fishing situation.



Tournament Angler Mark Melega displays a couple big ones from Lake Arthur. "On this day, the main lake bass fishing was very good around shoreline structure early in the day, with bass taking black/blue worms. But by mid-day the hot temperatures had the fish feeding out on roadbeds where they smashed my shad-colored crankbait. My reels are spooled with 16-pound Gamma Edge Fluorocarbon."

Smallmouth Bass Wade guide Pete Cartwright has all his reels spooled with Gamma. His go-to line for fishing jigs, tubes, swimbaits and other soft plastic baits is 8-pound Gamma Edge. "I never lose a big smallmouth due to line failure when Gamma is on the reel." (See Pete's current reports on Allegheny River and French Creek in this issue of NW PA Fishing Report.)



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: Ever wonder what the Linesville Stump Field on Pymatuning Lake looks? Well, courtesy of Gus at G&G Marine Electronics you now can see the amount of wood debris on the bottom with Garmin Side-Vu image. Awesome! Pretty sure in the upper right corner I see a 1/8-ounce Lindy Fuzz-E-Grub that I lost in that mine field about a decade ago. Contact Gus at the number above to see about having a Garmin unit installed on your boat.

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

FishUSA

Poor Richards Bait & Tackle

Tudor Hook-N-Nook At Elk Creek Sports

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

French Creek Fishing Company

Galida's Grubz

Luckis4rabbits

Mike's Custom Tackle