

# 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



Wilhelm gave up these hefty summer largemouth to Mark Melega during a bass tournament.

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## Landing Net by Darl Black

September – that in between month. Summer patterns are fading but a strong fall bite has not yet started. Things are changing, making for tough fishing on many waters. There are exceptions of course. Lake Erie walleye bite is still fairly strong, although the massive transient 'eye schools are in the process of heading back west. Smallmouth bass bite on the Allegheny remains consistently outstanding – a bit unusual for early September. By next month cooler temperatures will have many gamefish species putting on the feedbag plus the steelhead run will be underway.

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 September 2024

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County by County Reports for Crawford, Erie, Mercer & Venango Counties

### French Creek -flowing through all four counties

*Todd & Marcy @ French Creek Adventures Kayak Rental & Tackle Shop*; filed 9/10: Recent multiple-species catches from anglers on upper French Creek in Erie County.



## CRAWFORD COUNTY

### Pymatuning Lake

**Bean @ Richter's Bait & Tackle**; filed 9/12: The jigging blade bite for walleyes has started – at least for some anglers. Catches are coming from 15 to 17 feet of water on lower end of lake; some of the biggest walleyes of the season so far. Also hearing about a good number of smallmouth bass being caught, with some up to four pounds. Not even a whisper of crappies being caught.

**Patty @ Poff's Place**; filed 9/12: Not a lot of anglers out since Labor Day, so not much to report on. They are still catching a lot of catfish and white perch but no reports on walleyes or crappies on the upper part of the reservoir. The Espyville ramp has been dredged and should be open this week.

**Captain Hook** (Hermitage); filed 9/12: Shore fishing at Pymatuning has been tough in recent weeks. Only thing to report are a few mid-size bass I've taken early and late in the day. Looking forward to shore fishing to pick up as the water cools down. (See photo right)



### Conneaut Marsh



**Bo @ Fishing with Bo**; filed 9/12: Took some friends to Conneaut Marsh on Sunday evening. Even with the cooler temps we found 5 willing Bowfin. Using cut bait and larger BC Bait swim baits. A great time was had by all. These fellas had never encountered a Bowfin before. (See photos left & right; another in Livewell)



## ERIE COUNTY

### Lake Erie

**Rob @ Fish USA**; filed 9/10: Last weekend was another blow, so not much to report as far as walleye fishing goes. With the weather changing, the migratory walleye schools are planning their exit, and may have already started. That does not mean that walleye fishing dies off completely. There are plenty of resident walleye in PA waters, but you likely will not run across massive schools like we've seen all summer. A few steelhead have started to appear around the creek mouths, with a couple trickling into the lower

section of the tribs here and there. Anglers have been casting spoons such as Little Cleos and Kastmasters along the shore to catch a few. We are getting close to GO TIME!

**Brittany @ Poor Richards**; filed 9/12: Walleye fishing remains fantastic out in 80 feet of water early and late in the day. Some steelhead are showing up at mouths of the creeks, but still too warm and too low for numbers of fish to move into the streams. No reports of perch on the West Side. We are involved in the Fall Brawl this year; hosting sign-up party at the shop this coming weekend – check out Facebook Page.

**Kirk @ East Side Angler**; filed 9/12: Perch are schooling up on the East Side in 65 feet of water on the outside of the Mountain straight out of Shades Beach and in 40 to 60 feet of water straight out of North East Marina. There are some big perch! In the last three trips out, we boxed 210 perch with nothing under 10 inches – most were better than 12 inches. There is a strong current out there, and I've been using 2 ounces of weight when fishing minnows for perch. Migratory walleyes are currently in 85 to 95



feet of water across the East Side. There are also reports of apparently good number of resident walleyes in 30 feet. Walleyes are eating everything – plugs, spoons and worms. (See photos left & right)



**Denny Beggs** (Franklin); filed 9/11: I took my river jet Roughneck boat to Erie today. We launched from Lampe. A fishing friend and I used 3-ounce bottom bouncer weights with homemade worm harnesses and night-crawlers. Catching was very slow. We only landed a couple legal walleyes, four perch and one bass...released. (See photos left & right)



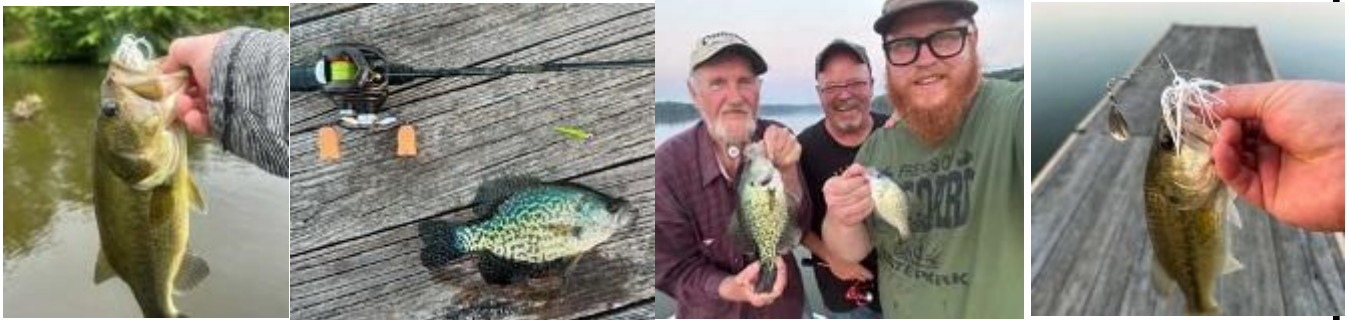
## MERCER COUNTY

### Lake Wilhelm

**Mark Melega**; filed 8/19: I took 1<sup>st</sup> place at the August 17 bass tournament at Lake Wilhelm with a 16.5 pounds, including a 5.01 lunker. The water was 76 degrees and stained. Not many live weeds so bass were deep and on structure. Black/Blue jig fished on 20-pound Gamma Edge line put them in the boat. (See photo right)



**Brad Bee @ibeeffishing**; filed 9/5: Not enjoying much success in past few weeks. Fishing has been tough at Lake Wilhelm. Best catches last week were a two-pound bass and a 10.5-inch crappie for me, and a 12-inch crappie for Rich. Still working with my buddy with the Death Shimmer Spinner Baits; we are working on a new finesse spinner bait. (See photos below)



**Matt Hrycyk** (Erie); filed 9/10: Matt reports he had been enjoying catching a mixed bag of panfish at Lake Wilhelm in recent weeks. (See photos left & right)



**MERCER COUNTY continued**

**Shenango Lake & River**

**Randy @ Fish West Pa;** filed 9/10: It's still summer on Shenango with water temps around 80 degrees and it looks to stay that way through the end of September. Fish are catchable between cold fronts but we look forward to dropping water temperatures in the fall! Tight lines, Randy. (See photos below; additional one in Livewell)



**Chris McVey** (Hermitage); filed 9/12: Catfishing has improved with the cooler nights. Water temperature has dropped into the lower 70s, getting fish to feed a little more. I would definitely welcome rainfall to really trigger the fish, but it looks like little rain is expected. This past week I did land my 2<sup>nd</sup> ever largest channel catfish of 19.5 pounds – largest channel since 2014. I would rather catch a 19-pound channel than 30-pound flat-head. (See photos below)



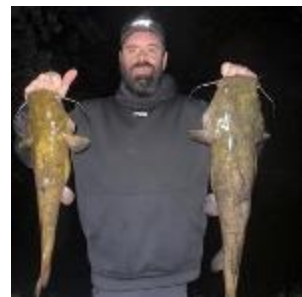
Flathead Catfish

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19.5 pound Channel Catfish

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Flathead Catfish

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## VENANGO COUNTY

### Allegheny River



**Jeff @ Keystone Connection Guide Service;**

filed 9/12: Middle Allegheny River smallmouth bass action continues to be outstanding. We're putting 50 to 60 bass up to 20 inches in the boat during a six-hour guide trip. Rapala X Rap jerkbaits have produced 75% of the bass, with



flukes and topwater getting the rest. Floating eel grass is starting to be a problem, and will get worse over the next few weeks. (See photos left & right)

**Pete @ Smallies on the Yough;** filed 9/11: Pete's Allegheny River diary & photos for late August and first week of September...

8-16-24 Allegheny - Another awesome day on the river. We caught a bunch of smallies in the 16–18-inch range using bottom bouncing baits. Weeds should start floating soon.



8-24-24 Allegheny - The weather has been great for wade fishing the river. The bite was great again today. The smallmouth took a variety of baits and are still in summer patterns.

8-30-24 Allegheny - Perfect conditions on the river today. Bass are still eating with summer patterns working. We landed a bunch of nice fish up to 19 inches.



9-4-24 Allegheny - The weather is still fantastic and so are the river conditions. The bite has been great every time on the river for smallmouth. I landed a bunch of fish in the 15–18-inch range. I use a variety of lures to land these hard fighting smallies.



9-6-24 Allegheny - The weather is still stable and so is the fishing. They are eating. The weeds are starting to float down now – not too bad yet.

9-10-24 Allegheny - The cooler night has the weeds breaking off and floating now – still not terrible, but it is a problem at times. That didn't matter; bass were eating everything I threw at them again.



## **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



# The Livewell

Brought to you by:  
Wiegel Brothers Marine  
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Franklin, PA 16323  
Phone 814-437-2077



Email: [Debbie@riverjetpro.com](mailto:Debbie@riverjetpro.com)



Submitted by Denny Beggs: Photo on left of 90-year old Bud Maxon holding a nice smallmouth bass caught in the Allegheny River at Franklin. He caught three—all similar in size within the first five minutes of fishing, on a Fluke.



Bowfin of Conneaut Marsh/ Bo's photo



SMB of Shenango Lake/  
Randy's photo



21-inch Allegheny SMB/Pete



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



Future Anglers of western Pennsylvania...the annual Western Reserve Fish & Gam Kids Fishing Derby at Buhl Park. Submitted by Randy at Fish West PA.

## **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

To learn more about all the Garmin units, obtain pricing, and for highly professional installation, contact G&G Marine Electronics at 724-290-9045 and ask for Gus.

## **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

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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