

NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

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

The NW PA Fishing Report provides timely angling information for Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango Counties – covering all species and all waters open to the public. The fishing comments and photos are offered by regional tackle shops and area anglers, compiled and published twice a month. The NW PA Fishing Report is based on experiences, observations and opinions of individual contributors; information sources are considered reliable but comments are not independently verified. In providing information or pictures, you are agreeing to your comments being edited, and posted to websites and distributed electronically.

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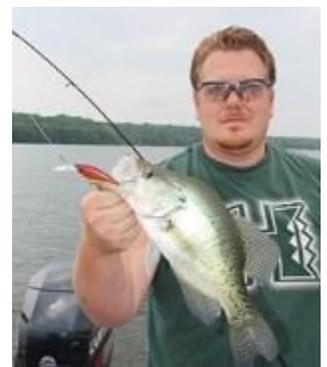
Black Knight Industries, Oil City (www.GammaFishing.com)

Wiegel Brothers Marine, Franklin (www.wiegelbrothersmarine.com)

The Landing Net

by Darl Black

If you like the weather we have been having lately, you will love the 10 day forecast – calling for cloudy, rain showers or scattered thundershowers every day. Not one day of sun. Shenango Lake is high with some ramp closed; the Allegheny is running at 9 feet at Franklin (usually around 4 feet this time of year); big blows on Erie have fish scattered; and even spring-fed Conneaut Lake with minimal run-off is high and dirty. So when you go fishing keep an eye on the weather and head for cover at the first sound of thunder or flash of distant lightening. One lake you will want to visit is Lake Wilhelm, which has become a shining beacon of light this spring for walleye and crappie catches.



NW PA FISHING REPORT FOR JUNE 15, 2015

This Report is brought to you by PA Great Lakes Region tourism with additional sponsorship from Wiegel Brothers Marian and Gamma Fishing.

We answer the question *“What’s biting in the lakes, streams and rivers of Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango counties?”*

FRENCH CREEK – Flowing through all four counties

Editor’s note: Given all the rain in the last couple weeks, French Creek has been running much higher than normal. It is currently bank full and the color of milk chocolate.

Bill @ Bill’s Bait Shop (Cambridge Springs); filed 6/15: “No reports of angler success on French Creek due to up and down flow – more up than down! Occasional pike caught.”

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Dave @ Richter’s Bait & Tackle; filed 6/15: “Walleyes continue to bite. Catching them by drifting with crawler harness off weedbeds and trolling crawler harnesses on bottom bouncers out deeper, and casting Bomber Long A’s at night. Bluegills have been spawning the last two weeks big time, but it is winding down. One customer caught a 22-inch large-mouth this week; photo on our website.”

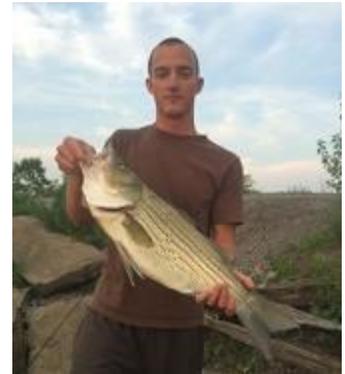
Norm @ Jamestown Boat Livery; filed 6/15: “The walleye bite around weedbeds is strong. A couple customers reported catching crappies in 8 to 12 feet of water.”

Laurie @ Duck-n-Drake; filed 6/15: “Last week they were catching walleyes by jigging the shallow near weedbeds and pulling crawler harnesses offshore. Bluegill bite on wax worms has been great. Not a great spring for crappie, however. We will be holding a catfish tournament later this summer. Also we are a source for locally made American Freshwater Fisherman Lures, including the often-asked-for Lucky Seven spinner hook.”

Brian @ Espyville Boat Livery; filed 6/15: “Weather has been terrible, but fishing has been okay for those going out. Over the weekend anglers were catching walleyes in 17 to 21 feet of water just south of the Espyville-Andover Causeway – off the New Bower Ramp area. The shoreline area between Espyville Marina and Tuttle Point has been yielding walleyes in 8 to 12 feet on worm harnesses. The Sand Bar off Manning has been yielding fish, too. And everyone is complaining about the zillion small perch hitting your baits.”

Sydney @ Robinson's Bait; filed 6-15: "No catch reports. All the stormy weather of late has kept anglers at bay. However, customers have been buying crawler harnesses and the Water Puppet Jig from Someday Isle Tackle, a new company based in Erie."

Benjamin Page of PFBC Lake Habitat Section; filed 6-15: "On evening of June 11, after installing habitat structures at Pymatuning, PFBC Lake Habitat Intern Dylan Snyder, caught a 24 inch Hybrid Striped Bass on bread. Photo attached."



Dylan with Hybrid Striper

Jim McClave (Andover); filed 6/6: "On June 5th, my wife caught a slab crappie in 18 feet of water on a worm. The crappie still had eggs in it. Walleye fishing has been spotty."

RJ Graham (Tionesta); filed 6/5: "I had another great day on Pymatuning. We caught more variety of fish than ever before. First off we caught a huge 17 inch crappie and some other crappies over 13 inches; plus a 28 inch walleye and a few smaller ones. We got a 4 pound smallmouth bass plus 30-some largemouth bass. Most of the fish came on GAMMA Torque Braid and a Zoom Brush Hog with a Reins ½-oz. tungsten weight. The crappies came in 15 feet of water on a Jackall Cross Tail Shad on drop-shot rig near Tuttle Point. The walleyes and bass came from the grass." (RJ's photos follow.)



Conneaut Lake

Marilyn Black (Meadville); filed 6-7: "Darl and I fished Conneaut for a couple hours Sunday, June 7. The water was high and very dirty, and green weeds were hard to find due to aquatic vegetation treatment a few weeks ago. We were looking for bluegills, but found mainly pumpkinseeds – but the pumpkinseeds were larger than the bluegills. We talked with Mark Sizas and Gail Peterson; they had been fishing for several hours with only a few small bass to report. Hopefully next time we visit, the weedbeds will be coming back."

Canadohta Lake

Jerry @ Timberland Bait & Tackle; filed 6/15: "We had a great opening weekend of bass – lots of fish caught, including a 21 inch largemouth. Crappie bite was very good out in deeper water somewhere; customers kept returning for more and more crappie minnows."

Woodcock Lake

Bill @ Bill's Bait Shop; filed 6/15: "A number of my customers reported catching muskies and walleyes both in the spillway area below the dam and in the lake itself. Most were using live bait."

PFBC Lake Habitat Division supplied the following photos of fish recently gathered by electro-fishing from habitat structures placed in Woodcock Lake in recent years: Smallmouth Bass, Muskellunge, Walleyes. All were released alive..



ERIE COUNTY

Presque Isle Bay

Jim @ Lake Erie Bait and Tackle Shop; filed 6/15: "With all the wind and storms we have had lately, not many people are out fishing. However, I did have word this weekend of continued smallmouth success in the bay as well as several brown trout reports."

Al Moore (Cochran); filed 6/14: "I went to Erie today and had a great time. I caught 21 smallmouth bass – not one under three pounds. I got them flipping weeds in the Bay."

Thomas Watral (Erie); filed 6/12: "In PIB some limits of perch are still being caught. Bass are hitting everywhere with the best lure being topwater. Catfish are being caught on the South Pier on cut bait."

Lake Erie

Ric @ Trout Run Bait & Tackle; filed 6/15: "Wind has been blowing in every direction for past week or so. The Lake is stirred up. Perch are scattered, although some anglers are getting some in 40 to 50 feet on the west side – but they are here one day and gone the next. All the walleye charters are in search mode. The best 'eye catches were on West Side in 22 to 25 feet of water with worm harnesses, trolling 1 to 1.5 mph. I caught them good on Thursday pulling Ghost Blade Spinners from Dutch Fork Tackle. The Blue Ghost blade was the best. I have Ghost Blade Harnesses in stock; it is so easy to change out Ghost Blade colors with the changeable clevis."

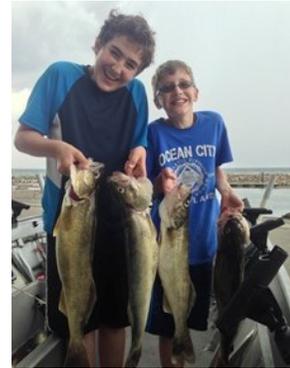
Rich Weber @ Erie Sports Store; filed 6/15: "Fishing on Erie has been spotty. One day the bite is very slow, the next day anglers are catching full limits of perch. If you were able to dodge the storms this weekend the perch were hitting between Walnut and Godfrey in 40 to 45 feet. That seems to be the depth over the last few weeks. Some walleyes have been taken in the Walnut Creek area fishing near the perch pack with stickbaits like Bagley and Bay Rat in 40 to 55 feet of water. Also, there have been walleyes caught in 20 to 40 feet between Trout and Elk using willow leaf crawler harnesses.

Our June fishing specials at Erie Sport Store include...all fishing lures 30% off, tackle boxes 20% off and we have just started a warehouse sale as we are moving our warehouse... outdoorsmen can save on ammo, camo clothing, fishing combos and much more."

Tim Truitt @ North East Marina; filed 6/15: "The Lake is setting back up with surface temperature in the low 60s. As of 6/11 the walleye bite is back on with limit catches in 42 to 58 fow (feet of water). Most fish came off boards using lead core 3-5 colors on deep diving Reef Runners, Bay Rats and Renoskys, trolling from west of marina to Shorewood. Some bottom chuggers did well off Boat Houses in 28 fow. Perch bite is inconsistent – yet good at times in 52 fow off 20 Mile Creek and 42 fow off Green Fields. Bite is very soft; Fireline on rods is a must. Lake trout bite is winding down in 80 to 100 fow with spoons trolled 75-85 feet down."

Jason Hagg; filed 6/4: "After an excellent trip with friends out of Walnut Creek on 5/28, the boys and I launched out of Shades Beach the following Saturday morning on the hunt for walleyes. Struggling early with only three in the box and a half-dozen non-target species, we made a run west to the Cans and stayed upwind of the launch with the on-coming storm activity. Turned out that 36 to 41 feet of water within five foot of bottom was on fire late morning – from the Cans almost all the way back to the launch. In little over an hour we put 11 in the box along with one jumbo perch, a nice smallmouth and four white bass. Then the storms came and we headed for shore. All walleye were caught using worm harnesses from Dutch Fork Custom Lures. All non-target species hit

the metal blades; none were caught on Ghost Blades! We will see if that pattern holds true as the season progresses.” (Following photos supplied by Jason Hagg)



Ed Lawrence (Corry); filed 6/14: “I caught several trophy size walleyes – largest on over 10 pounds – on Erie a couple weeks ago. I also had terrific smallmouth fishing on my trips to the big lake.”

Inland waters of Erie County

Thomas Watral; filed 6/12

- Crappies are hitting on Mini Foo jigs tipped with a minnow in the evening at LeBoeuf Lake by the old swimming area.
- The upper half of Six Mile Creek still has lots of nice trout.
- Best bait for trout at Lake Pleasant is corn; also getting large sunfish on green Power Bait from shore.

Ed Lawrence; filed 6/14:

- Still catching plenty of trout in many area streams and pressure is not an issue! All the large trout I caught this spring, including a 20 inch golden and 18 inch rainbow, were caught on spinners.

Bill @ Bill’s Bait; filed 6/15:

- Crappies have been biting at Edinboro Lake

MERCER COUNTY

Lake Wilhelm

Editor’s Note: Read the reports and see the pictures. Lake Wilhelm is on fire right now, especially for walleyes and crappies. A few large specimens of largemouth bass are showing up, too. Maybe the last couple severe winters have finally knocked down the gizzard shad population. Fisheries biologists and anglers postulate that the high number of shad in the lake was a significant reason for the downturn in gamefish catches in recent years. The shad explosion in the lake is due to excess nutrients entering the lake – most likely runoff from poor agricultural nutrient control practices.

Al Moore (Cochranon); filed 6/15: "I fished Wilhelm for bass yesterday. I struggled at first, but when I went deep on a point, in two casts I caught two largemouths on back to back casts! Each fish weighed just shy of 5 pounds each."

Angler Al (Franklin); filed 6/14: "I went to Lake Wilhelm early Sunday morning for a day-light start. I trolled for walleye dragging a crawler harness for about 2 hours before the nagging of small bluegills, perch and white crappie got the best of the crawlers I had picked. So I put on a Hot-n-Tot, moved out to 14 feet of water and picked up the trolling speed to 2 mph. BAM! A big fish hit the redhead Hot-n-Tot. And I do mean a BIG FISH! I battled it for nearly 15 minutes before it revealed itself. It was the biggest walleye I ever hooked. Without exaggeration, the fish would have topped 14 pounds and measured at least 34 inches. However, I'll never know for sure, as my fishing partner fouled on the netting process and knocked it free...I bit my tongue and told him it happens. I chalked it up as a catch-and-release. The shad forage in this lake has certainly fed the walleye well. I've spoken to many anglers who have taken good size walleye at Wilhelm this spring. I'll be back..."

Darl Black (Cochranon); filed 6/14: "I wanted to see for myself the improved catches I had been hearing about down at Wilhelm. So I called Jim and Chris Hall – the father/son team which had been trolling up a storm on Wilhelm in the last couple weeks. Thunderstorms postponed our trip but we finally got out on Thursday. Jim ran two Berkley Flicker Shads on his rods, while Chris tried a Flicker Shad on one rod and regionally made crankbait whose name I cannot recall. Before were out of sight of Launch #4, Chris already had a 14.75 inch crappie in the box. We fished for about 4 hours. There was constant action on the trolled baits, catching crappies, bluegills, pumpkinseed, perch, small largemouth bass and small walleye. No big walleyes as the team had caught the previous two weeks (and were pictured in the last Fishing Report). Still, I was pleasantly surprised – especially with the number of panfish taken by trolling crankbaits. Had it not been a sunny, calm day, the three of us felt we would have scored some legal walleyes. I second what Angler Al said in the Wilhelm report above: I'll be back!" (DB's Wilhelm photos below)



Vickie @ Fergies Bait Shop; filed 6/12: "The hotspots for walleyes at Lake Wilhelm have been around accesses #3 and #4, in approximately 15 feet of water. The walleyes coming in have been in the 4 to 7 pound range, taken on worm harnesses and minnows. Also decent panfish – mostly crappies on wax worms and grubs. The other good spot is off Launch #2 – however, the road along the south side of the lake is in such bad shape that few anglers are willing to drive down it. The fishing pier at the Marina has been a good spot, too; but anglers say you must have bug spray to fish from the shore. So far this year catches have been great. It could be an awesome season. We now have a topo map hanging in Fergies for all to see. Looking forward to bass season!

Bob Vogan (Franklin); filed 6/7: "I went fishing on June 6th to Lake Wilhelm with Scott Ryan and Mark Williams. I caught this 30 inch walleye while trolling. I was using a Bomber Model 4A in Ditch Craw – a lure I won from the Fishing Report awhile back. Tell PRADCO it works great!"

Shenango River Lake



Ken Anderson; filed 6/16: "I have fished Shenango several times recently. On June 7th, I got two good bass on plastics. On the 12th, I got 6 bass with three over 15 inches and had a pig hooked that jumped and tossed the hook. Three of the big bass came on plastics and three dinks came on a Booyah Spinnerbait. On this trip I saw a deer swimming the east arm of the lake – deer must have thought it was good day for tick bath. On the 14th, I got 13 bass – all dinks. One keeper escaped the net. My rider caught four and lost one. His keeper fish hit a Death Shimmer Spinnerbait. All fish were shallow and relating to wood."

Dave Horvath (Mercer); filed 6/15: "I was on Shenango Lake on Thursday, June 11. The lake was high and fishing had slowed from the last time I was out. I blame it on the high, stained water – you would need to drop a lure right on the nose of fish for it to be seen. However, I still heard from anglers that they were catching small crappies. Plus bass and pike were hitting Shad Raps. However, after weekend storms, I suspect Shenango will be high and ugly for some time."

Editor's note: Follow the level and ramp closing at Shenango River Lake on their Facebook Page.

Jon @ Consumer Direct Sports; filed 6/15: "With all the foul weather, we have not heard much about fishing success from customers. However, with bass season opening up, we sold a lot of Jackall Cross-Tail Shads and tungsten drop shot weights, plus worm harnesses. Most of these anglers said they were going to Erie."

VENANGO COUNTY

Bill @ Griffins Bait & Tackle; filed 6/14: "Here at Griffins we have been a little slow with the unexpected showers and thunderstorms. Sugar Creek and French Creek are high and muddy. Some reports of perch and crappies being caught at Sugar Lake. We have started carrying ribbon leeches in medium size."

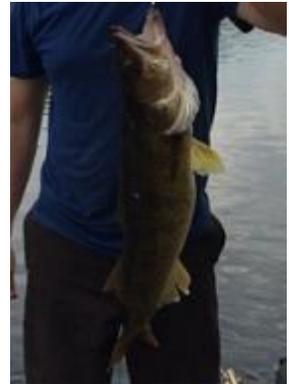
Allegheny River

Editor's note: With continued heavy rain, the Allegheny River is now blown out.

Pete Cartwright; filed 6/14: "I fished the river over the weekend. It was high and muddy. We caught two fish from the bank at Tionesta area using tubes on Saturday, 6/14."

John Hummel (Kennerdell); filed 6/14: "David Schry of Kennerdell caught a 30 inch walleye on the river near my place. He released it."

Ed Lawrence (Corry); filed 6/14: "A recent trip to the Allegheny on June 6 provided spectacular scenery. It also produced a hard-fighting 9 -pound flathead catfish and a couple pike over 25 inches. All fish were caught on live bait."



Hummel photo

Oil Creek

Ed Lawrence; filed 6/14: "I made it to Oil Creek in early June for fly fishing, catching several nice trout on bead head nymphs. I also caught some beautiful wild brown trout on a remote stream in Crawford County last week after a rainstorm. The largest wild brown was 14 inches and hit a worm."

Conneaut Lake Annual Bluegill Bev

Memorial Tournament results:

2015 CONNEAUT LAKE "BLUEGILL BEV MEMORIAL FISHING TOURNAMENT

Tournament Results and Report

Our 4th annual Conneaut Lake fishing tournament was held Saturday June 6th, 2015 with a total of 23 teams entered. Anglers were met with sunny skies for the 3pm afternoon start, along with that fun old north wind! Thank you to all the anglers, event sponsors, and Walt's Tavern.....

Total weight 5 Bluegill

1 st Place - Rich Galvin and Brad Watson	2.655 lbs.
2 nd Place - Gary Jeffery and Glenn Watson	2.440 lbs.

Total weight (Big Fish) Bluegill

1 st Place - Braden Baker and Tanner Rhoades	.655 lbs.
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Total weight 3 Crappie

1 st Place - Bob "King Crappie" Kessler and Doug Stallard	2.720 lbs
2 nd Place - Mike "Doc" Swick and Dakota Tabar	2.455 lbs

Total weight (Big Fish) Crappie

1 st Place - Bob "King Crappie" Kessler and Doug Stallard	1.055 lbs
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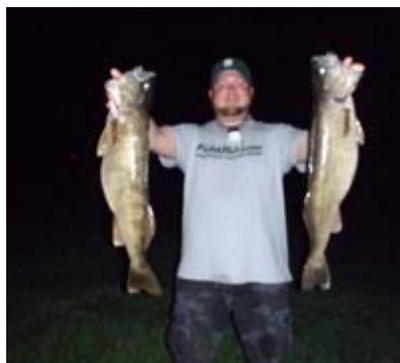
Wilhelm Walleye/Vogan



Wilhelm Crappie/Hall



Pymi Largemouth/Graham



Erie 'eye/Lawrence



Allegheny Flathead/Lawrence



Wild Brown Trout/Lawrence

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www.gammafishing.com

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Gamma Fishing Tip

You can find GAMMA line locally at the following tackle shops:

- Consumer Direct Sports – Grove City, PA
- Griffins Bait & Tackle – Cooperstown, PA
- Hill's County Store – Williamsfield, OH
- Maurer's Trading Post—Franklin, PA
- Robinson's Bait & Tackle — Espyville, PA

Jason Hagg is the winner of a spool of GAMMA Line for this issue of the Fishing Report. Please email your shipping address to Darl Black to claim your prize.

Jim Gronaw, outdoor writer from Maryland: "The Gamma Polyflex Line is one tough line. Smooth casting and durable, it continues to be a hit in my home fishing region. The Polyflex Gold in 4-pound strength is a lifesaver when it comes to subduing that accidental BIG fish while fishing for crappies and bluegills. Here is a photo of a 28.5 inch channel catfish I recently caught while bluegilling at a local park lake. The fish attempted to run into fountain cables, submerged pipes and overflow caps just yards away. But I stood my ground and kept pressure on the fish, winning a long hard fought battle. This is the strongest, most durable panfish line I have ever used. When I fish venues where bigger gamefish may roam, I have confidence that big fish encounters will end with me smiling at the camera with hog in hand!"

