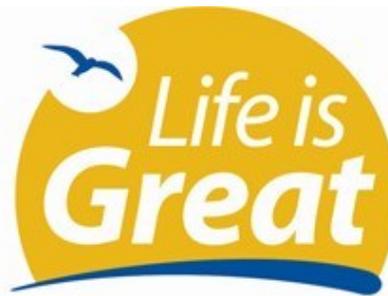


Northwest

Pennsylvania

Fishing Report



Reporting Date:

June 23, 2014

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

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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. If you would like to share your fishing experiences or photos from any waterway in the four counties, please email to Darl Black at darlblack@windstream.net. In providing information or pictures, you are agreeing to your comments being edited, and posted to websites and distributed electronically.

The Landing Net

by Darl Black

The unsettled weather which plagued us through the winter and into early spring continued through June with unusually high number of thunderstorms which left us with high and muddy creek, rivers and reservoirs. Fishing success has been up and down – up if you fish lakes which do not get muddy; down if you want to fish French Creek, the Allegheny River and Shenango Reservoir. But it is also a matter of dodging the multitude of stormy days in order to fish. Another big wave of storms is expected this week. Still if you can coordinate your fishing days, there is hot action on several waterways. Schools of huge walleyes are moving into PA Erie waters from the west. A second wave of bluegills has moved into the shallows to spawn on selected lakes. Catfish are hitting at Pymatuning, Shenango and in Elk Creek. Bass are biting on Lake Wilhelm – hopefully a sign of decreasing gizzard shad population. During high water, the dam outflows offer some hot bites – check out spillway action below Union City Dam, Woodcock Creek Lake Dam, Pymatuning Lake Dam and Shenango Lake Dam.



NW PA FISHING REPORT: June 23, 2014

Brought to you by PA Great Lakes Region tourism

What's biting in the counties of Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango?

Important alert

Beware E15! – Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission Executive Director John Arway addresses why boaters should be concerned about the EPA mandated increase of ethanol content in gasoline from E10 to E15 in his Straight Talk column in the current July/August issue of the PA Angler & Boater and what you should do about it. Must reading for anyone with an outboard motor!

Additional Tackle Shops contribute to the Report...

We would like to welcome Poff's Place Live Bait and Tackle (Rt. 285, Espyville), Robinson's Bait and Welding (Rt. 6, west of Linesville), and Duck-N-Drake (Pymatuning Lake Road, south of Andover, OH) as new contributors to the NW PA Fishing Report.

FRENCH CREEK – Flowing through all four counties

Editor's Note: It's been a rough year so far for anglers who like to fish French Creek. Given all the storms of late, French Creek has been un-fishable due to the high, muddy conditions through much of May and June. However, fishing success can be very good during high water around the mouth of tributary streams as these smaller streams clear first creating a defined color line where tributary water enters French Creek. A quick look at the creek on Monday showed it is receding but extremely dark – about the color of cocoa. But more heavy rain expected this week.

Jerry @ Timberland Bait; filed 6/23: "The outflow area of Union City Dam – which is French Creek – is red hot right now for pike, walleye and bowfin. Got to take a little walk to reach it, which is why it gets little fishing pressure."

Angler Al (Franklin); filed 6/22: "My brother Steve is visiting from California. I took him down to French Creek this evening. He used a silver/black **Hot-n-Tot crankbait**. Even though the creek is still rather stained from heavy rains, Steve managed to catch three average-size smallmouth bass." (See Livewell photo)

Edward Lawrence (Corry); filed 6/11: "Recently I lost a big musky near where Woodcock Creek joins French Creek. I was using a chub as bait. I had the fish in the net but when I dropped the rod to get both hands on the net to lift it, the musky flopped out of the net. Darn it!"



CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Patty @ Poff's Place (Espyville); filed 6/23: "Walleye action seems to be scattered – some shallow and some deep. There are lots of catfish being caught. White bass are also active mid-lake near the Linesville/Andover Causeway. This past week, I had 3 or 4 anglers report catching bowfins from Pymatuning."

White bass/ db photo

Laurie @ Duck-N-Drake (Andover); filed 6/23: "According to my customers, the walleye bite isn't consistent; fish are scattered in the shallows and offshore. Crappies are being caught on minnows in 12 to 14 feet of water. Bluegills are still shallow."

Dave @ Richter's Tackle Shop (Jamestown); filed 6/23: "A good number of walleyes are being caught by those who put in the effort, and know the right presentation. The daytime deal is drifting with night-crawlers or casting crawlers to the edge of weedbeds. At night, the walleyes are keying on the alewives; cast a **Bomber Long A** or similar minnow plug over a weedbed and crank slowly. Crappies are being caught on deeper structure. Big bluegills are still around the weeds – I've been catching them on crawlers while fishing for walleyes. There are lots of channel catfish being caught, with some in the 27- to 28-inch range."

Robinson's Bait (US Hwy 6, Linesville); filed 6/22: "It's a beautiful morning on the north end of Pymatuning Lake. We start the morning at a brisk 54 degrees, with partly cloudy skies and expected high of 79 degrees expected today and winds out of northeast at less than 10 mph. I heard the crappie tournament went well with many big ones caught round Harris Island on minnows. Walleyes are being picked up on worm harnesses with crawlers. Bluegills are on the beds and hitting maggots/grubs/spikes. A HUGE bass was taken at the End of the Road by anglers trolling for walleyes. Robinson's Bait is fully stocked with live bait and our prices are holding steady. You can get a baker's dozen of crawler for \$2.00 here. Also, we have over 100 **Hot-N-Tots** to choose from as well a selection of other lures. And you cannot get less expensive ice anywhere - \$1.25 for 10 lb. bay. Come in and check us out."

Chuck Sari (Franklin); filed 6/22: "I fished Pymatuning with my son Kevin and grandson Reece on Saturday, June 21. We fished the North End near Linesville. Hardly anyone fishing compared to couple weeks ago. Again no wind so drifting was out of the question. We trolled **Hot-n-Tots** in silver and silver/green. Action was slow, but we managed to land three walleyes and several crappies. Two of the walleyes were 22 inches." (See Livewell photo)

Hooker @ Hills Country Store (Williamsfield, OH); filed 6/21: "Our customers at Hill's Country Store have been bringing in mixed reports with some making good catches of crappie and walleyes on Pymatuning, and others saying they spent the entire day searching and couldn't catch a cold. Meanwhile, the maiden voyage of Hooker II stepped in and continued treating guests to success on the water. We started fishing for walleye on the North End with the typical jig-n-crawler in 7 feet of water where fish have been for several weeks. With little success, we began working deeper. At 12 to 14 feet, we noticed walleyes biting when a gust of wind moved the boat faster. So we added weight and increased the boat speed to about 3 mph while following the 12- to 14-foot breakline. We filled limits with 17" walleye in about 2 hours. The next trip was June 16 and our quarry was crappie and bluegill. The ever present wind was making boat control an adventure. So we went to a technique learned at the Crappie Seminar last month. We employed long **B'n'M Rods** held in **Driftmaster Rod Holders** to "push" **Bobby Garland Baits** ahead of the boat; this is referred to as Spider Rigging. We were able to present our baits to crappies holding on structure in 10 feet of water. The key was to let the baits hang motionless. The soft yellow tips on the B'n'M Rods made it easy to detect a very light bite. This rigged out fished traditional cast and retrieve by a



Hooker photo

margin of 4 to 1. The bigger fish came on Swimming Minnow in a color called "Outlaw." For anyone interested in adding this rod to their boat, they are available at Hill's Country Store in Williamsfield, OH, on the south end of Pymatuning Lake for under \$100.00. If you mention this Report, I'll give you an additional 10% off the purchase of any B'n'M Rod or Bobby Garland bait in stock." (See Livewell photos)

Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 6/10: "I fished Pymie for gills on Monday, June 9th. I used a new bait from **Stubby Steve's** fish food bait company. These baits are similar to Berkley Crappie Nibbles but last a whole lot longer on the hook. I used white ones. I tore them in half to fit the small bluegill popeye jigs I use. Stubby Steve's Bait flat out caught fish. I caught a ton of gills, a few small-mouth bass and four crappies. I fished in 5 feet of water with a bobber. Give these baits a try. You'll be pleased you did."



Ken Smith photo

Conneaut Lake

Mike Martin (Cochranon); filed 6/22: "Over a week ago, John Wilpula and I fished Conneaut for bluegills. We found some on Midway Hump in 5 feet of water. We caught them on a black & green jig tipped with a piece of crawler. We took home 20 nice ones. This week, John and I were back on Conneaut. With an overcast sky, we thought it would be a good day for bass on topwater. However we only caught 2 largemouth bass and 1 smallmouth bass. The largemouth in the photo came on one of John's homemade plastic baits fished on a drop-shot rig." (See Livewell photo)

Woodcock Creek Lake

Steve @ Hubs Chub; filed 6/19: "With the spawn concluded, the big female smallmouths are starting to turn on again! I've been catching the biggies on a **3" Hubs Chub** in Black, and a 5-3/4" **Yamamoto Cut-Tail Worm** in Watermelon on a 1/4-oz. **Spot Remover** "stand-up" jighead. Fishing a Hubs Chub from the kayak has proven to be awesome when the action slows down. The Hubs Chub in-place presentation allows me to hone-in on the areas that I'm fishing. The vertical working angle of the bait allows the bait to stay in the strike zone longer, enticing even the most inactive fish into biting! Other anglers that I've talked with are not having the same success with their Spooks or Pop-R's. The action of the Hubs Chub is second to none! Also, walleyes are still hitting the Cut-Tail worm fished off points – the windy side has been best. Along with bass and walleye photos, I've attached a photo of the smallest walleye I've ever seen caught." (See Livewell photos)



Steve's Woodcock lures

Jerry @ Timberland Bait & Tackle; filed 6/23: "Walleyes and bowfins are being caught in the spillway below the dam."

Canadohta Lake

Jerry @ Timberland Bait & Tackle; filed 6/23: Jerry reports that some walleye are being taken on worm harnesses trolled outside the weedline.

ERIE COUNTY

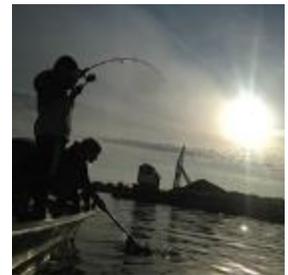
Presque Isle Bay

Al @ B.A.C. Bait; filed 6/23: "Some anglers are still catching a few smallmouths in the bay but the smallies are pretty much returned to the main lake. Customers are catching rock bass off the North Pier,

along with a few perch now and then. Bluegills are still spawning in Misery Bay and Marina Lake. There are good reports of perch in the main lake at 48' to 53' feet of water off the Point, plus walleyes in 55' to 60'."

Thomas Watral (Erie); filed 6/20: "A week ago on the Bay, nice crappies and large bluegills were hitting; creeks still had lots of stocked trout in them – including Mill Creek. This past week, the Bay continues to be the hotspot for sunfish and bass. The South Pier has been on fire with perch catches early in the morning. Best bait for panfish has been grubs. Don't forget I have my special hand-tied perch rigs and subiki rigs, along with good prices on other tackle at 2407 McKinley Ave, Erie, PA. Stop by to get tackle and the latest fishing information."

Jason Hagg; filed 6/18: "Please add my name to the Fishing Report list. I just got back from fishing PIB with my boys. Bass action along the piers was fantastic. But we spend most of our time targeting sheephead out by Buoy #9. What a blast! Caught fish after fish on light tackle and the boys had a most enjoyable outing!" (See Livewell photos)



Jason Hagg photo

RJ Graham (Tionesta); filed 6/15: "I fished PIB on Saturday and had a great day! I got one smallmouth pushing 6 pounds – it weighed 5.84 pounds! I caught most of my fish on **Power Team Lures Food Chain Tubes** and drop-shotting with a **Power Team Hammer Shad**. I also caught a few decent largemouths on a Carolina rig with a 4-foot leader and beaver bait on it. I got several 4 pound smallies and a number of 3-pounders. Bass were in 14 to 17 feet of water on the humps." (See Livewell photo)

Lake Erie

Dan @ Elk Creek Sports; filed 6/23: "There are still a few smallmouths in Elk Creek, but they are on the way out. Channel cat bite is on strong during the night in the lower part of the stream. The perch fishing is good in 38 to 40 feet of water off Trout Run and Elk Creek. Decent size walleyes are in 45 feet. The biggest walleyes are being taken by the Ohio line with limit catches in a matter of hours; many of these fish are 8 to 10 pounds. D'Arcy Eagan wrote in his Cleveland Plain Dealer outdoor column that this year is the best walleye fishing in years. Those big schools should be moving our way."

Jeff @ Poor Richards; filed 6/23: "Customers are telling me there are three distinct depths for walleyes right now out of Walnut Creek: 25 to 37 feet for smaller, homebody 'eye; 45 to 50 feet for the big migratory guys; and another group over 60 to 70 feet of water. Most 'eye are coming on plugs, including **Reef Runner**, **Renosky**, and **Bagley** – plus a local made minnow plug called a **Bay Rat**. Perch are on the move this time of year, but 37 to 41 feet has been good this week."

Paul Stewart (Butler); filed 6/23: "I went perch fishing this past Saturday evening on the Danny O. We were dealing with an east wind, so fishing was slow all around; we only caught 10 perch between the two of us, but most were nice sized."

Andy @ Trout Run Bait; filed 6/23: "They are picking perch up in 38 to 45 feet of water – somewhat sporadic due to the prevailing NE winds of late. Walleyes are being taken over 35 to 40 feet and another school over 60 to 70 feet. Our hottest selling walleye bait is the **Bare Naked Reef Runner** (a natural minnow color). There was a 30-pound channel cat from Elk Creek this past week; cut bait is best for cats."

The Crew @ Erie Sports Stores; filed 6/19: "Perch fishing has been excellent on both the East and West side of Erie in 40 to 50 feet of water. Lately the perch have been right tight to the bottom. Walleye catches should start to heat up in the 30 to 40 foot spots and also out deeper in 55 to 70 feet. **Eagle Claw Lead Core Trolling Combos** and **Okuma Line Counter Trolling Combos** are now on sale and selling very well. The hottest selling walleye lures are **Reef Runners**."



Keith Eshbaugh @ Dutch Fork Lures; filed 6/19: "We fished Lake Erie out of Walnut on June 15th. We used **Dutch Fork Ghost Blades** on our worm harnesses with 1 ounce inline weights on a 6' leader. Trolling at 1.5 mph in 25 to 35 feet of water, we caught a limit of walleyes ranging from 3 to 8 pounds. With non-desirable species in the shallows with warmer water, we looked a little deeper for walleyes. We saw many people trolling crankbaits – catching sheephead, white bass and white perch. We caught a mess of white bass on metal blade harnesses but our plastic Ghost Blades caught more walleye than white bass." (See Livewell photos)

Ghost Blades

Union City Reservoir & Lake LeBoeuf

Jerry @ Timberland Bait; filed 6/23: "Customers are catching a heck of lot of crappies at LeBoeuf this past week. Union City Reservoir is giving up big bluegill, perch and some crappies. Live bait is best, especially minnows for crappies and perch."

MERCER COUNTY

Shenango River Lake

Sales associate @ Consumer Direct Sports; filed 6/23: "Once again this spring, Shenango Lake is way high and muddy. Several of the smaller ramps have been closed due to high water, but the Shenango Recreation Area Ramp (Clark) and Mahaney Ramp (Sharpsville) are open. I was over crappie fishing last week but didn't catch any. With Shenango being high, many of our customers are fishing local farm ponds and strip pits right now for bass."



Editor's note: Being in the area, I drove by Shenango on Sunday, 6/22, to check out the high water. I talked with a couple anglers taking their boats out at the ramp. They struck out on walleye, but caught a number of catfish. Another angler was fishing from the bank for crappies without success.



Lake Wilhelm

RJ Graham (Tionesta); filed 6/23: "Tim Johnston and I ventured to Lake Wilhelm this morning. After hitting a crow on the way to the ramp, we wondered how our day would turn out. (Isn't there some old superstition about a crow being bad luck?) Well, we launched at Ramp #4 and headed to the causeway. When I started dragging **Graham Jig** in the grass, I immediately caught a 3-pound largemouth. From there our day only got better! We went up lake a ways towards I-79 to one of my cranking spots and got a whole school of 3-pound largemouth fired up! Tim and I doubled up with fish during the frenzy. Tim caught lunker of the day with a 4.3 pound largemouth on a **Strike King Series 3 crankbait**. I also caught

several bass flipping the bank. What a great day on one of the area's best bass waters! (See Livewell photos)

Angler Al (Franklin); filed 6/15: "After church on Father's Day, my dad Bob and I went fishing on Lake Wilhelm. He used red worms and I used a black ant tipped with maggots. We caught 25 to 30 panfish in a couple hours, but no size to them."



Wilhelm/ Al Bell photo

VENANGO COUNTY

Allegheny River

Pete Cartwright (Pittsburgh); filed 6/16: "Mike Lapkowicz and I fished the Allegheny River near Tionesta on June 14th; the river was high and muddy but we managed to catch 14 total fish; the biggest was a nice 28" walleye and an 18" smallmouth bass – caught on the **Get Bit Tubes** that I won in the Prize Pack. All the fish we caught came from one big eddy seam, fishing jigs on the bottom with tiny hops." (See Livewell photos)

Edward Lawrence (Corry); filed 6/11: "Recently a few of my friends and I headed down to the Allegheny River. My first cast produced a 28" northern pike! The fish bit a live creek chub. I caught and released several 14- to 16-inch smallmouth bass on YUM Craw Bugs and Lunker Hunt Swim Bentos. One of the bass was 20 inches long. Then we targeted catfish later in the evening but were unsuccessful. We plan to go back soon." (See Livewell photo)

Sugar Creek



Angler Al on Sugar Creek/
db photo

Angler Al (Franklin); filed 6/22: "On Saturday, June 21, my brother Steve and I hiked down to one of our favorite spots on Sugar Creek. On his first cast with a red worm, he landed a heavy 18-inch rainbow trout. There are still stocked trout holding over in Sugar Creek; they can be caught with properly presented live bait." (See Livewell photo)



Steve Bell with 'bow

Bill @ Griffin's Tackle Shop; filed 6/19: "Sugar Creek, French Creek and the Allegheny have been looking like chocolate milk all week. During the big storm on Wednesday, we lost power at midnight, so we had every portable aerator running to keep the minnows alive. Power came on at 2:45 am, just in time for me to shower and head to work. I've included four photos of fish taken by our customers; three of them were from Sugar Lake and the largemouth came from a local pond." (See Livewell photos)



Brown Sugar

Kahle Lake

RJ Graham (Tionesta); filed 6/15: "I fished Kahle Lake on the 15th. It was tough. Only managed 12 bass; most came on a frog lure and others on a wacky-rigged worm. Although tough, it was a fun day because I had my grandpa in the boat!"

The Livewell

Brought to you by:



Lake Erie

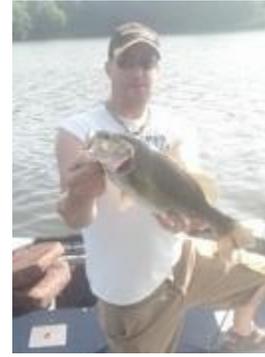
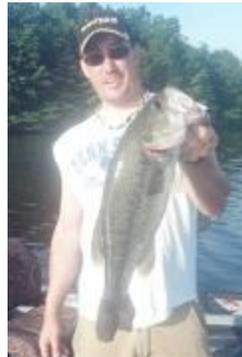


It's walleye time on Erie—just ask Keith Eshbaugh of Dutch Fork Lures



Boat of the Month: Wiegel Marine features three different brands of river jetboats., as well as boats for Lake Erie and smaller lakes. You will find one to exactly fit your needs and budget.

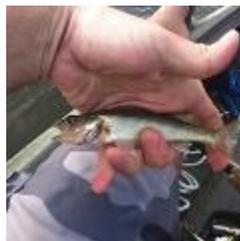
Lake Wilhelm: On the way back? Check the these photos of RJ Graham & Tim Johnston



Woodcock Creek Lake



Hubs Chub photo



Tiny walleye

French Creek



Steve Bell/Bell photo

Livewell Overflow

Photos from Griffin's Bait from Sugar Lake:



Chuck & Reece Sari with Pymie walleye caught on Hot-N-Tots



Jordan Scott

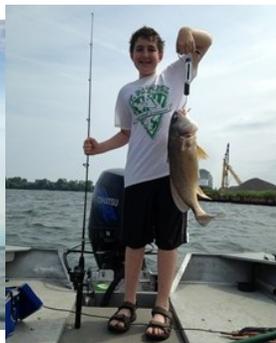


Jordan Scott

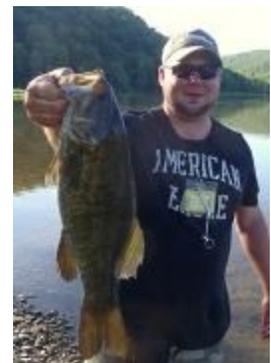


Ashley Myers

Presque Isle Bay—photos from Jason Hagg



Allegheny River—photos from Pete Cartwright and Ed Lawrence



PROCESSED FOR PERFORMANCE



Gamma Fishing Tips

Darl Black: Even though nylon monofilament, fluorocarbon and braided/fused line (superline) have shared the line market for many years, many questions arise as to what is the best line to use. Some anglers get hooked on a specific type of line and believe it can be used for situations. I disagree. I use all three based on the presentation and type of tackle I am using.

There are a number of critical differences between these three lines, but I'm basically looking at four characteristics when I make my decision which to use: (1) manageability (how it lies on the spool and does it cast without tangling); (2) does it float or sink; (3) break strength; and (4) how much stretch does it have. The stretch factor is related to the angler's ability to free a snagged lure; braid does not stretch, thus cannot be "sling-shot" free from a snag – therefore I refrain from using braid around hard cover, but rely on it for soft cover, i.e. vegetation .

Nylon monofilament (i.e. nylon copolymer line and Gamma Polyflex) is more manageable than fluorocarbon thereby making nylon monofilament handles much better on small spool spinning reels. Because Gamma Polyflex is the strongest nylon line I have ever used, I rely on it in 4-pound test for the majority of my panfishing. And because nylon line floats, I use it exclusively with topwater baits – usually 10-pound Gamma Polyflex on a casting outfit.

Gamma Edge fluorocarbon is my go to line on spinning and casting equipment for any type of jig or rigging situation which requires baits to stay down near the bottom. For example, I use 6-pound Gamma Edge on my tube jig rod, and never worry about breaking off a fish. Action-tail grubs/swimbait, worms, drop-shotting, blades and jigging spoons are lures I use on Edge.

Braid/fused no-stretch "superline" will be found on only a three of my outfits. First, my "frog rod" for fishing hollow-body frogs and swimming toad lures through matted vegetation. I also have a rod combo devoted to buzzbaits which has superline on it. Finally, I have a medium power spinning rod for drifting stick worms and soft jerkbaits in river currents, and for fishing wacky-rigged worms. In drifting baits in current or fishing slow sinking baits on slack line, the sensitivity and no-stretch characteristics of Gamma Torque braided line is just what is needed.

I trust this provides you some insight as to why no single line can do everything.

Find the spool of Gamma Line you need at the following NW PA Tackle Shops:

Consumer Direct Sports: www.cdssports.com

Hill's County Store: www.facebook.com/hillscs

Winner of the spool of Gamma Line for the month of June is **Jason Hagg**. Notify Darl by email that you saw your name and include your shipping address in order to receive a spool of Gamma Line of your choice.

Lures for the Fishing Report Field Test Prize Pack supplied by: Bobby Garland; Gene Larew; Get Bit Baits; Lake Fork Tackle; Lindy; Rapala; Road Runner; Scum Frog; Thill; Tru-Turn Hooks; Uncle Josh; Venom; Yum. Read the Report to see you are a winner. If you find your name listed as Prize Pack winner within the body of Fishing Report, email Darl with you shipping address. *NEW addition to the Prize Pack: As of the June issue, Hubs Chub has joined the NW PA Fishing Report Prize Pack.*

Congratulations to the winners of the Bluegill Bev Conneaut Lake Tournament:



2014 "Bluegill Bev" Fishing Tournament
Tournament Winners!

Heaviest 5 Bluegill (Total Weight)	Heaviest 3 Crappie (Total Weight)
Mark and Chase Miller 3.18	Frank and Alan Jablonski 2.64
Gene and Tyler Woodworth 3.09	Bruce and Sharon Hills 2.56
Heaviest Bluegill (Weight)	Heaviest Crappie (Weight)
Gary Jeffrey and Glenn Martin 0.66	Eric and Cooper Baum 1.19
Mark and Chase Miller 0.65	Frank and Alan Jablonski 1.025

Special thanks to our sponsors!

Lake View Ford - Carter Lumber - Navigation Co.
Michael Swick DMD - Anchor Beer/Chuck's Bells
Zelator's Golden Dawn - Knapp Buildings - Well's Tavern

THANK YOU ALL!

Follow Darl as he fishes with angling experts around the country at www.darblack.blogspot.com

Darl is on Facebook

Obtain the PGLR fishing brochure "Reel It In!" at www.pagreatlakes.com

Just sent into Fishing Report & deserving recognition



Steve Fleckenstein with 26" catfish
taken on 4-pound line



Rich Sari with 45 lb musky from
Pymatuning this past winter