

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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Pennsylvania' Great Lakes Region (www.PaGreatLakes.com)

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

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

The Landing Net

by Darl Black

With the exception of the last two weekends with three nice days back to back, showers and thunderstorms have been the prevalent weather pattern in NW PA since the first of June. For the most part, the Allegheny River, French Creek, Oil Creek and Sugar Creek have been high and muddy for weeks. Flood control impoundments Shesango River Lake and Woodcock Creek Lake have been high, off-color and uninviting to anglers. Here's hoping we have turned the corner on the rainy weather. We need a break and drying out period to bring lakes and flowing water down closer to normal summer levels. If we don't, the sun will be setting on the summer fishing season before we know it.



NW PA FISHING REPORT FOR JULY 13, 2015

This report is brought to you by PA Great Lakes Region tourism with additional sponsorship from Wiegel Brothers Marina 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: No reports from French Creek. Water level is finally dropping to reasonable fishing level and water color is improving.

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Dave @ Richter’s Bait & Tackle; filed 7/11: “The muskies are finally turning on. There have been a number of musky fishermen through the shop since the first of July; most of them are trolling. The fact that they are fishing means muskies are hitting. Walleye fishermen are also connecting with a few muskies. The walleye bite remains strong with the best catches from 19 to 15 feet in the South End and 10 to 11 feet in the North End; trolling plugs seem to be best approach. The walleye night bite is very sporadic. Silver cats (channel cats) are being caught everywhere. More people are finally targeting cats. We’ve got a phenomenal population of them in the lake, and those cats less than 20 inches are best eating – if you like catfish! Crappies are deep; only a few anglers are catching them.”

Sydney @ Robinson’s Bait didn’t have any customer fishing success to report this weekend, although she said the weekend of July 4th was good to many anglers.

Marilyn Black (Cochranon); filed 7/4: “This being Fish for Free Day, Darl and I started our 4th of July off by heading to Jamestown Campground to provide a fishing information session for kids. We talked to a number of shoreline anglers and helped a few with tackle problems or questions.”



Angler Al (Franklin); filed 7/4: "On Monday, June 29, Stan and I fished Pymatuning. We ended up boating 3 walleyes and 6 channel cats."

Jeff Reichel (Meadville); filed 7/3: "My son Jacob and I fished Pymatuning on the 3rd, from 8 am to 4 pm. I hooked 1 bass about 2 pounds from a weedbed on the North End. I fished a hump in the South End for a couple hours for panfish, catching 10 bluegills and 2 perch on drop-shot rigs in 12 feet of water. Quite a letdown since we fished PIB for smallmouth in May!"

Conneaut Lake

Editor's note: Nothing to report. Anyone who fishes Conneaut Lake in the next couple weeks, please send a report.

ERIE COUNTY

Lake Erie – East

RJ Graham (Tionesta); filed 7/12: "We fished Lake Erie today, catching many smallmouth bass and, unfortunately, many sheephead. We caught 36 smallmouths, mainly on tubes. About ½ dozen came from PIB, the rest out on the main lake."



RJ Graham's day on Erie

Tim @ North East Marina; filed 7/9: "WALLEYE - The best way to describe the walleye bite is that it's running hot and cold due to the full moon and bug hatches. Planer boards with shallow diving plugs and deep divers fished behind 5 colors of lead core are producing some really nice catches from Marina to state line in 72 to 105 feet of water. Best deep divers are **Reef Runners**, **Bay Rats** and **Renosky** plugs. On the shallow divers the Renoskys and Bay Rats get the nod. Inside bite in the shallower water is with worm harnesses fished on bottom at slow troll from Boathouses to Barrels on Freeport Beach. We are seeing at least three different year classes of walleyes being caught. PERCH – Bite is good off Twenty Mile in 26 feet of water. Jumbos and limit catches when they turn on!! Also perch in 52 fow off Greenfield and the W's. Best baits are live minnows fished on Sibiki Rigs. STEELHEAD & BROWN TROUT – some have been caught off the PA/NY line in 100 fow; incidental catches while fishing for walleyes. BASS – in 28 fow at the Ws and just west of Freeport Yacht Club in 18 fow; top lure is ¾ oz. jighead with **Venom Tube** in Goby color."

Lake Erie – West

Gary @ Poor Richards; filed 7/11: "Short and sweet...the perch are slow but the walleye bite is good in 45 to 55 feet and at the First Trench."

Dave Horvath (Mercer)

- Filed 7/5: "Since Shenango Lake was 8 feet over summer pool and all ramps were closed except the main ramp at the Campground at Clark, I jumped ship and went to Erie on the 3rd. Perch are not yet schooled, plus Friday was an east wind. Hate it. NOA weather called for 2 feet. The missed it again. We had mostly 2 to 4 feet all day. I ran to 73 feet and fished west. Ran Dispsy and crawler harness. All we caught were white bass and other junk fish. I wanted to alert those traveling to Erie that the lake has a lot of floating debris from the launch out to deep water. We saw whole trees at 9 to 12 miles out. Be careful."
- Filed 7/10: "Hi Darl. We had a great day walleye fishing on Lake Erie west side. Our two biggest hogs were 27" at 6 pounds and 28" at 7 pounds. We caught total of six walleye in 64 to 68 feet of water and dropped several at the boat– all nice fish. We also caught a load of white bass and some jumbo perch. All trolling plugs and worm harnesses. Perch have not schooled tight yet; one boat limits our and next door neighbor gets only a handful. See our photos of the big walleyes and jumbo perch."



Dave Horvath with walleyes



Dave Horvath with perch



Steve with perch

Angler Al (Franklin); filed 7/6: "Brother Steve and I spent a day on Lake Erie. The perch bite was slow but we managed a number of good fish on minnow harnesses at 48 feet down. We were approximately 3 miles northwest from Walnut Access."

MERCER COUNTY

Shenango River Lake

Editor's note: Recently Shenango has been high, muddy and suffered from a toxic blue-green algae bloom which can be harmful to people and animals if you are in the immediate area of the scummy bloom. All ramps except Shenango Recreation Area at Clark were closed over the 4th. I have not received any fishing reports from Shenango in two weeks. On July 4th, Marilyn and I stopped by the lake to check out conditions. As of today, water has receded to allow some additional ramps to open up. Go to Shenango Lake FB page to find the latest info; also posting updates on my FB page *Fishing with Darl Black*."



Lake Wilhelm

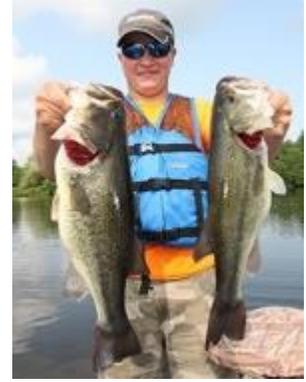
Vicki @ Fergies Bait; filed 7/11: "Customers have been reporting catching good numbers of medium-size bluegills. However, one customer brought in a 17" crappie with a 14" girth weighing 3.9 pounds – that sure is bigger than the average crappie!"

Marci @ Lake Wilhelm Marina; filed 7/11: "Walleye and bass are biting. We had several nice walleye entered in our fishing contest by young people this week. The biggest one was 26-incher caught by 13 year old Braden Sutter. Storm Hot-n-Tot has been hot! Check out some of the catches on Livewell Page."

Jeff Reichel (Meadville); filed 7/2: "Jacob and I fished Wilhelm from 10 am to 4 pm on July 2. We fished deep for bass most of the day without a bite. We fished about an hour and a half for panfish, catching 12 bluegills between 3 and 6 inches from 12 feet of water by drop-shotting."

RJ Graham (Tionesta); filed 7/2: "Darl Black joined me for several hours on the morning of July 2. The bite started out much slower than my two previous trips to Wilhelm. My better deepwater spots were not producing. Finally Darl connected with one over four pounds on one of his old original **Poe's** crankbait. Then I got a 3 pounder, and Darl got another 2-pounder. When Darl left, I went shallow and ended up catching 8 bass with the largest being four pounds." (Photos on next page)

Mercer County: Cranking Lake Wilhelm for largemouth bass



VENANGO COUNTY

Janice @ Griffins Bait Shop; filed 7/11: "With all the high water on French Creek, Sugar Creek and the Allegheny, it's been another slow week of fishing success. Some of our customers have been going to Sugar Lake to catch some panfish. The new **Berkley Flicker Shads** we have in stock have been selling like crazy; most anglers are taking them to Wilhelm or Pymatuning to troll for walleyes."

Justus Lake

RJ Graham (Franklin); filed 7/9: "On Friday night I went to Justus Lake. We caught about 20 bass in a few hours of fishing. All fish came on drop-shot and **Senkos**."

Angler Al (Franklin); filed 7/11:

- July 4th – "For Fish for Free Day on July 4th I took my friend Pam fishing to Justus Lake. She caught 5 largemouth bass, 2 smallmouth bass and one rainbow trout."
- July 10th – "On Friday, my guest Karen Lovett from Gainesville, FL, purchased a 1 day out-of-state fishing license at Sue's Bait and Tackle Shop. We then proceeded to Justus Lake where she caught 4 largemouth bass and a big bluegill. Golden shiners on a long shank Aberdeen hook did the trick when trolled slowly along a weedbed near the swimming area."

Kahle Lake

Bill Logan (Pleasantville); filed 7/4: "On July 4th at Kahle Lake there were only 3 boats on the water. I took 12 bass on swim baits and lizards. The hawg of the group may have weighed 1.5 pounds. The rest were thin and short."

Allegheny River

Chris Wolfgang (Oil City); filed 7/5: "Dale and I hit the river this morning. The river is still up and pretty stained. I only had one bass on for a second. The fish hit a jerkbait as I was picking it up for another cast, then it threw the hook. The most exciting part of the morning is what we say swimming across the river between Oil City and Franklin. Picture attached of the black bear."



Pete Cartwright @ Smallies on the Yough; filed 7/11: "We fished the 4th of July weekend on the Allegheny near our camp. The Allegheny was high and stained so we targeted the tributaries. We caught a few nice smallies, but all the action was slow. Our fish came on **412 Baits** and stickbaits."



Pete Cartwright on the tributaries to the Allegheny River when the river was too high on the 4th.



Anglers taking it easy on the 4th of July at Buhl Park's Lake Julia. In Mercer County

The Livewell

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Boat of the Month: This new, fully rigged Express river boat with jet is waiting for you

Pymatuning results from the 4th:



Bowfin—Richter Bait photo



'Eye & crappie—Robinson Bait Photo

Angler Al takes his friends to Justus Lake where you can always catch something:



Karen Lovett of Florida



Pam with largemouth

**Livewell Overflow brought to you by Wiegel Brothers Marine in Franklin.
For all your fishing boating needs from river jets to 20 HP lakes to Lake Erie.**

Following several bad years, Lake Wilhelm has been yielding good catches in 2015:



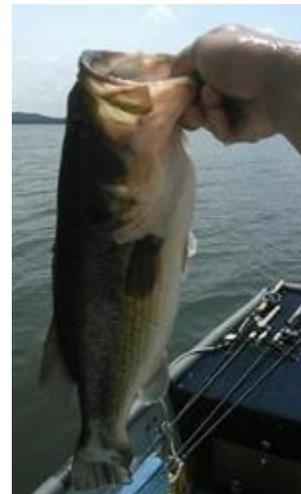
Braden Sutter with 6-3/4 lb walleye. Wilhelm Marina



Sam Mayham with 20" eye. Lake Wilhelm Marina photo



Charlie with 24.5" eye.



RJ Graham photo

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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

Dave Richter is the winner of tackle prize for this issue of the Fishing Report. Please email your shipping address to Darl Black to claim your prize.

This week's Gamma Tip is from bass tournament angler Frank Malek:

"Duff Kerle and I fished the July 12 NCBA tournament on Erie. We headed out on one of the best fisheries in the country. We were met with calm conditions, not usual for Erie. Our primary plan was to fish tubes on 9-pound Gamma Touch. We also used 6-pound Gamma Torque Braid with a 7-pound Touch Leader for drop-shot fishing. We weighed just shy of 17 pounds of smallmouths with a 5.98 lunker as our kicker. We fished everywhere from 42 feet to 15 feet, and found the fish we needed to finish where we did. We NEVER broke a fish off. The countless 10-15 pound sheepshead kept us busy all day long. If you want to fool 6-pound smallmouths then you had better be fishing the absolute best line around: GAMMA Fishing Line. Thank you Dale Black for the opportunity to represent a great line!"



Frank and Duff in the winner's circle