

Northwest

Pennsylvania

Fishing Report



Reporting Date:

November 3, 2014

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

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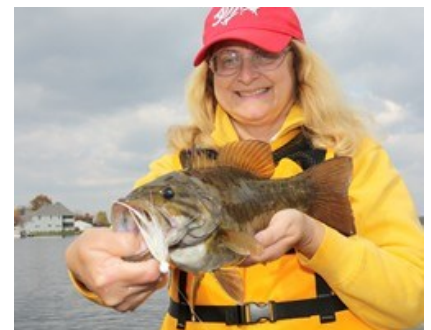
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The NW PA Fishing Report provides timely angling information for Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango Counties – covering all species and all waters open to the public. The fishing comments and photos are offered by regional tackle shops and area anglers, 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

Mid to late fall is my favorite time of the year to fish for big bass, walleye, pike and musky. Water temperatures falling from the mid-50s to the low 40s is prime time. Besides putting on an extra insulating layer of clothing, I never climb into any boat without strapping on my PFD. Simply put: Cold water kills! A lot of fishermen were upset when the Fish Commission instituted mandatory Life Jacket requirement for any boat less than 16 feet whether under way or at anchor during the cold water period a couple years back. Personally, I think the regulation is a positive. In high school, my fishing buddy's father upset his canoe while duck hunting. I remember the father later saying that plunge into cold water completely took his breathe away and he struggled to get air into his lungs. As I recall, the accident happened in shallow water and he was able to stand up. Had it been deeper, no one knows what might have happened since he was not wearing a PFD. Today PFDs are mandatory from Nov. 1 to April 30th for any boat under 16' and all kayaks & canoes.



NW PA FISHING REPORT for November 3, 2014

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

French Creek – Flowing through all four counties

Angler Al (Franklin); filed 10/29: "On Tuesday, October 28th, French Creek water condition was looking A-1. I got down to my rock pile around 6 PM and immediately caught a small 16 inch walleye on a 3/16-ounce Road Runner jig tipped with a medium size shiner. Thereafter a nicer 'eye came to the net. But I had rushed out without my camera – sorry no pictures. The best battle of the evening came when a 30-inch-plus northern pike picked up the 8" to 9" creek chub I had out. The fight was on for several minutes before I missed on my attempt to net it. You only get one chance, as the story goes. Seconds later the fish cut me off and slithered away into the depths."



Jim Simonelli (Erie); filed 10/28: "I was fly-fishing for musky on French Creek when this walleye grabbed my streamer. See photos."



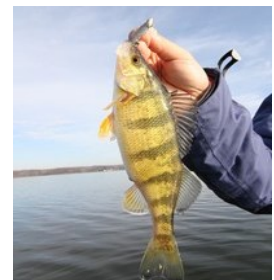
Jim Simonelli photos

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Dave @ Richter's Tackle Shop; filed 11/3: "Not many anglers fishing the lake right now – between hunting season and steelhead season and the high winds of late. I'm even hunting rather than fishing. Those who have been getting out are getting walleyes on blade baits – the Vib-E seems to be favored. I've seen some pretty nice keepers from the regulars. I heard they were catching small crappie and bluegills off the docks at Jamestown Marina now that the docks are open for fishing."

Hooker @ Hill's Country Store; filed 11/1: "I had a customer catch a bucket of perch and shoot a deer at the same spot on Pymatuning. Other than that, I've been too busy archery hunting or fixing those special Saturday carry-out meals at the store to get out myself."



Pymi perch/db photo

Conneaut Lake

Marilyn Black (Cochranon); filed 10/26: "Darl and I were on the hunt for BIG smallmouths today at Conneaut Lake. We caught a couple nice ones, but not one of those six-pounders that are swimming in the lake. Water temp was 55 degrees – perfect from

now until it hits about 44 degrees. Only two other boats on the lake fishing and one fellow on the dock catching perch. Where is everyone this fall?"

Game Lands Pond

Ed Lawrence (Corry); filed 11/4: "I caught this 10 inch bluegill from a Game Lands pond in Crawford County. A 2-foot largemouth follow a Jitterbug in to shore, but was a little wary and would not commit. I can't wait to return with live bait!"



Ed Lawrence photo

ERIE COUNTY

Presque Isle Bay

Al @ B.A.C. Bait; filed 11/3: "They are starting to get crappies and bluegills in Marina Lake and Misery Bay. A customer brought in a nice northern this week, too. I was out the other night and caught several steelheads in the Bay plus a 10 pound brown trout. The wind has hampered fishing this fall. If it would stop blowing, there would be more anglers out."

Thomas Watral's Bay Report

- Tuesday, October 28: "Across the Bay they are catching nice-size perch in the 10 to 13-inch range on minnows and Subiki Rigs; picking up some steelhead as well. Steelheads are hitting spoons in silver/orange or silver/blue. Crappies are hitting in the lagoons on jigs tipped with grubs; set the bobber at five feet. Perch bite should improve each week in the Bay until ice forms.
- Saturday, November 1: "I've been out in the wind and rain to fish Dobbins' Landing for perch as well as the new fishing areas on the old GAF site. I'm getting some large perch up to 14 inches. I'm leaving these areas with 30 nice-size perch. I'm getting them on my home-made grub rigs that glow in the dark. Customers are telling me the perch are on fire at the South Pier and the marina walls. Crappie jigs tipped with minnow are catching crappies. Steelhead are way up Mill Creek to the mall; one gentleman stopped in to say he caught 32 inch steelhead on a Joe Fly from Mill Creek. I still have lots of tackle and all sorts of bait for sale at 2407 McKinley Ave, Erie."

Erie Tributary Streams

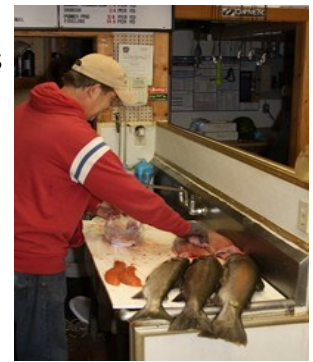


Elk Creek/db photo

Dan @ Elk Creek Sports; filed 11/3: "The streams are low and clear – the story of our streams. There are lots of steelhead in the streams but catching them requires a stealthy approach – such as staying out of the water to cast, or floating a minnow down into the pool from the pool above. Of course the wind lately has not helped on the streams or on the lakeshore. This is a very good returning run, but we need a good rain to get more action."

Jeff @ Poor Richards; filed 11/3: "There are decent numbers of steelhead in the creeks, but the water is low and clear. It requires special tactics to catch fish under these water conditions. You need to go to small flies – pastel color egg patterns; or a live minnow or single egg. Of course some customers have been catching; the fish have pushed further upstream. Rain later in the week may help us out."

Ric @ Trout Run Bait; filed 11/2: "Lot of anglers up fishing, but not everyone is catching fish under the low, clear water conditions. The really good steelheaders are catching them; however some guys may be snagging them with so many fish in the streams. I've been cleaning fish all morning."



Cleaning fish/db photo

Uncle John @ Elk Creek Campground; filed 11/2: "Guys in the campground had a very good weekend. More fish caught on Saturday than Sunday. I have people from all over the US and from all sorts of professions coming to stay at the Campground and fishing Elk Creek. We have webcams on the stream at the campground and show the feed on our website (www.UncleJohnsElkCreekCamp.com) so people anywhere can see when the fish are biting."



Elk Creek/db photo

Brian Mullaley @Uncle Johns Elk Creek Campgrounds; filed 11/4: "The fishing has been good here on the banks at Uncle Johns. The common baits have been pink salmon eggs, meal worms, skein and minnows. I did see a gentleman limit out on cocktail shrimp – perhaps they were fish with more refined taste. Most fishermen going further upstream are seeing high numbers of fish but they appear to be spooked and are not hitting. See photos of our guests." (Photos on Steelhead Season Photo page)

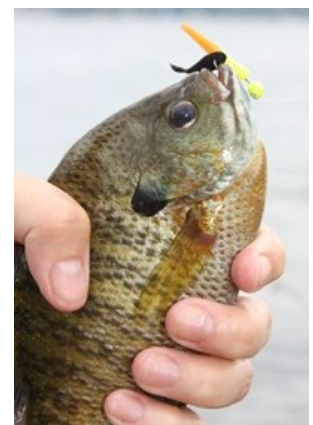
MahrKi's Report; filed 10/27: "The steelhead bite is on! I went fishing in Elk Creek for steelhead and there was no shortage of large steelhead. Anyone who has ever caught a steelhead can tell you what a tricky fish to catch. I found that if take a 3-foot leader of 4-pound test and tie it to a 15-pound test main line with an inline swivel, the fish will not see the leader but you can rest easy about the integrity of your line. Steelheads were biting minnows and small shiners, but other baits worth mentioning are night-crawlers, egg sacks (which I left in the fridge by the cheese for my Mom to find). To my surprise I even caught fish on Strike King Coffee Tubes. So if nothing else is working, tie on a Coffee Tube and give it a try!"

Ed Lawrence (Corry); filed 11/4: "I caught this 8 pound hen steelhead from the Erie tribs at the end of October. These fish fight so hard that it is a tug of war to bring them in. There's a ton of fish in the creeks this year!"

MERCER COUNTY

Lake Wilhelm

Vickie @ Fergie's Bait; filed 11/1: "Anglers are reporting the water temp at Lake Wilhelm is between 57 and 59 degrees, with the bite picking up. They are doing fairly well for bluegill off the Sheakleyville Bridge, as well as the Ice Skating area and Falling Run. Ants tipped with grubs or waxworm have been working. Fergie's top selling lures right now are Vib-E blade bait and Swedish Pimples – which indicates anglers are stocking up for the ice fishing season. We have Shappell S3000 Ice Shelters in stock, too."

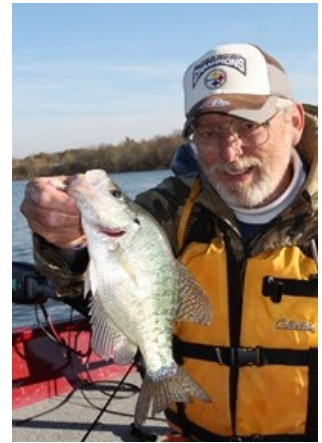


Wilhelm 'gill/db photo

Shenango Lake

Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 11/1: "The crappie bite was pretty good on Thursday. The fish were still in deep brush. Hope they get the water level down so those fish will be shallower – shoreline fishing will be better then."

Darl Black (Cochran); filed 10/29: "Jim McClave and I fished Shenango for crappies under a brisk wind. The bite was slow. We caught mainly small crappies, bluegills and white bass in 10 to 15 feet of water, with only a couple of respectable size. Observed several apparent schools of fish around brush and bridge piers, but could only generate a few bites. Jim loves to fish bridge piers, showing me a spot by one pier he used to fish from shore back when he was in high school, nearly 50 years ago."



Jim McClave with
Shenango crappie/db

VENANGO COUNTY

Allegheny River

Lou Letterle (Franklin); filed 11/4: "I fished the river a few times since the last fishing report. Not catching high numbers, but catching fish – including some walleyes. Most fish caught on jigs/grubs; some on live bait. I got a 29" 9-LB walleye yesterday. I have attached photos, but not so good pics."

Gene Winger (Oil City); filed 11/3:

- Week of Oct 20th – "Finding the big smallies stacked up all over the place, most in the 16" to 20" range, in five to six feet of water. We've been catching most of the fish on Winco Solid Body River Darters rigged with a weighted Tex-posed hook. Checked the Oil City pool several times and only caught dinks on Winco CW Smallie Delight Jigs."
- Week of Oct. 27th – "Weather has been a big factor this week. High winds and changing temps made for a few slow days on the river. Most of the best fishing however has been mid-day with Thursday being the best – picked up six smallies in less than an hour, all over 18" with the largest one going 21.5 inches weighing 5 pounds; this fish came on a Winco C.W. Smallie Delight. If you find bass stacked in 5' to 6' of water, they are still hitting the Winco Solid Body River Darter and River Darter Swim Bait. Also, starting to catch some larger smallies in the Oil City pool...winter bite is on its way!"

Chris Wolfgong (Oil City); filed 11/2:



- Oct 25th – "Finally managed to set aside a day for fishing. Hit the river with my cousin Ed Wolfgong and Dale Black. Dale and Ed had a good day, Ed catching six and Dale getting about a dozen. Ed had the largest one at 19 inches – see photos. I managed to land two and lose one. Fish were caught on hair jigs and tubes in faster moving water. Weeds were a pain – however, a day on the water is a day on the water."
- Nov 2nd – "For the second week in a row, I managed to hit the river with Dale. We fished from 10:30 AM until 5 PM. Although it was a bit chilly and there was snow on my porch when I left in the morning, it was a beautiful day on the water. Fishing was better than expected. I landed six smallmouths in the 15" to 17" range and one "keeper" walleye – also released. I caught all my fish on a leech bait drop-shot rig. Dale caught his on tubes and jigs. Most of the fish were in the deeper water on drop-offs. We caught a few in the faster water above the ice break."

Darl Black (Cochranon); filed 10/27: "I finally took a break from Conneaut Lake and went to the river. Bill Logan and I fished from Franklin to Oil and back again. I really expected better results – especially since Dale Black mentioned that he and his uncle had caught 25 smallmouths on Sunday October 26. We only caught a half-dozen smallmouths and 1 walleye, with Bill catching the greater share on a Galida Grubz. I was trying out a new brand of tube in a new color – guess I'll go back to the old stuff next trip!"



Bill Logan/db photo



Logan's big smallmouth/
db photo



Ed & Dale/Wolfgong photo



Ed Wolfgong & 19" smb

Bill @ Griffins Bait & Tackle; filed 11/2: "Fishing has been slow with just a few diehard fishermen getting out. Here at Griffins Bait & Tackle we are gearing up for ice fishing season. We are stocking 6" and 8" hand augers, Schooley Ice Fishing Poles, HT Ice Fishing Rod & Reel combos, Eskimo Reels, Cicada lures, Challenger lures, Northland lures, Swedish Pimple lures, Moonshine lures, Rocker Lures, Storm lure, Kast-master Lures, Mr. Heater propane heater/stoves as well as propane. We also stock hand and foot warmers, stocking caps, gloves and don't forget life jackets for the cold water season. Don't forget to "Like" us on Facebook at Griffins Bait & Tackle Shop. Our page includes directions to our shop, business hours, phone number, email address and various items we sell. Stop in and see us. We are open 7 days a week, from 5:30 AM to 8:30 PM, with boat parking to get off the highway. March 2015 will be the beginning of our third year in business. Thank you for shopping at Griffins."

OVERFLOW from LIVEWELL starts here...



Marilyn on Conneaut Lake
with Big Brown Bass/db



Anglers on Pymatuning/db



PIB perch angler/db

The Livewell

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The Allegheny River is HOT right now!

Additional river photos on page 6



Lou Letterle with 29" walleye/Letterle photo

Boat of the Month: Newest addition at Wiegel Marine showroom —Kingfisher Extreme Shallow. Think Christmas present for the family! Don't let this one get away! Spring loaded seats for rough rides in standing waves (See photo below.



Gene Winger's 5 lb smallmouth



Bill Lux with a double



Dale Black

Dale Black with double

Steelhead Season Photo Page



1st steelhead for 10 year old
Brady Tonkin/db photo



Ed Lawrence/Lawrence photo



Parking lots full/db photo



Jim Rubin/ECC photo



Uncle John helps Chris Brugger
with his limit of steelhead/db



Elk Creek Campground guest



Elk Creek anglers below the Tube/db



Elk Creek Campground
cameras are watching/db

PROCESSED FOR PERFORMANCE



Black Knight Industries

Oil City, PA 16301

www.gammafishing.com

www.froghairfishing.com



Gamma Fishing Tip



November is blade bait time. In case you don't know, blade baits are those compact teardrop shaped thin metal fins with a molded lead head on the bottom front portion. The Heddon Sonar is the original blade bait. In the late fall and early winter, blades are fished along the bottom either by casting and using with a little pull-and-drop retrieve like a jig; or by vertical fishing straight down – working it like up and down like a yo-yo. When fished properly, blades are absolutely deadly in deep water for black bass, walleye, white bass, perch, crappies, big bluegills and even musky. And don't forget channel cats, too! Fishing blades vertically can quickly twist your line if you don't take a certain step: tying a quality swivel in line about 14 inches above the lure. Even with the swivel, after a day of blade fishing you will have twisted line.

Because changing line often is necessary, that's why I prefer to use Gamma Polyflex monofilament as a cost savings step. Gamma Edge fluorocarbon works, but it's expensive to replace every outing. Because you fishing straight down, it's easy to get a full rod sweep on the blade so line stretch isn't really a problem in the hookset. (Darl Black)

You can find Gamma Lines locally at the following NW PA Tackle Shops:

Consumer Direct Sports: www.cdssports.com

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

The winner of the spool of Gamma Line for this issue of the Fishing Report is **Ed Lawrence**.

Prize Pack Lures are 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; and Yum.

If you are the winner of this issue's Gamma Line or Prize Pack of Lures, please email your shipping address to Darl Black to claim your prize.