

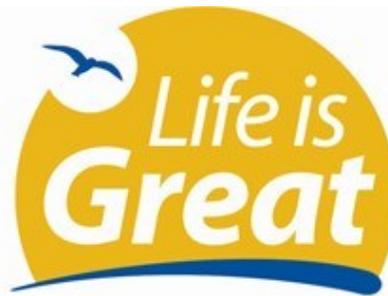
## Northwest

## Pennsylvania

## Fishing Report

**Reporting Date:**

**August 4, 2014**



**Pennsylvania's Great Lakes Region**  
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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](mailto: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**

I'm sounding like a broken record each week...too many storms, too much rain. I made a quick calculation last evening – I've spent more days cutting the rapidly growing yard grass than I have fishing this summer! No more. My goal for August is to fish more and cut grass less! Of course there were bright moments in July, such as a week ago when Marilyn and I visited the North East High School "Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs" Perch Tournament out of North East Marina on Lake Erie. Marilyn was interviewing the teens and adults for an article, while I was the photographer for the day. In the process, the NW PA Fishing Report picked up North East Marina as a Report contributor.



Hooked on Fishing crew at the Perch Tournament

## NW PA Fishing Report: August 4, 2014

### Brought to you by PA Great Lakes Region tourism

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

#### FRENCH CREEK – Flowing through all four counties

James Whitman (Cooperstown); filed 7/31: "My sons CJ and Jason caught several nice smallmouth bass from French Creek on July 30 before the storm hit. They were **Jointed Rapala Minnows**. The creek has been producing a lot of bass this year, especially right before a storm hits, or the day after the storm (rising water). My sons have been fishing the lower end of French just north of Franklin." (See Livewell photo)

Scott Rushe; filed 7/31: "Accompanied by a couple good friends, I had the opportunity to fish French Creek when the flow was reasonable. On July 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> we landed 14 legal-size walleyes with the largest going 23.5 inches, several nice smallmouth bass and one 33" musky. The following weekend provided equally good fishing with 2 nice-size walleyes on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Then on the 26<sup>th</sup> we landed 4 smallmouth bass ranging from 16 to 18.75 inches. All fish were caught above Venango, PA using a combination of worm harnesses, **Flukes** and **Rebel Crayfish** crankbait." (See Livewell photo)

Angler Al (Franklin); filed 7/30: "After work on July 25<sup>th</sup> I found time to hit French Creek. I had in mind to use a couple black and yellow spotted salamanders I found. These fellas were 9 inches long. Upon entry to the water, they like to dive, so I rigged one of them on a big floating jighead. Much to my surprise, on my first drift with the bait, a huge 19" smallmouth wolfed it down. The bass weighed in excess of four pounds. Upon releasing the fish, I proceeded to catch another smallmouth of equal size on the other salamander." (See Livewell photo)



Angler Al photo

David Vance; filed 7/26: "While trolling with **Jointed Rapalas** on French Creek (my favorite plug to troll), my father and I caught 4 walleyes ranging from 19 to 23 inches. We also lost one. We even had two on at the same time!"

#### CRAWFORD COUNTY

##### Pymatuning Lake

David @ *Richter's Tackle Shop*; filed 8/4: "My dad and I have been fishing the night bite for walleye with long minnow plugs in the shallows – we're still catching a few! Best topwater plugs at night are **Rapala Minnows** and **Bomber Long A**. During the day, a few walleyes are being caught by drifting jig & crawler or trolling the popular **Hot-n Tot** plugs. A couple of the regular customers report catching at least a couple legal walleye every time they troll Hot'n Tots."

Laurie @ *Duck-N-Drake*; filed 8/4: "My customers are still catching walleyes by trolling **Hot'n Tots** and **Shad Raps** in 20 to 23 feet of water, moving at a fairly good clip."

Patty @ *Poff's Place*; filed 8/4: "The Lake Association held the kids' fishing derby this past weekend with many kids catching fish, including some 24" to 27" walleyes plus two PF&BC citation crappies."

Angler numbers are down at Pymatuning in mid-summer so I do not get many reports, but I like to say there are fish to be caught this time of year - however you've got to come on over and put in some effort into fishing."

Hooker @ *Hill's Country Store*; filed 8/4: "Finally, the crappies and bluegills are on the deeper humps and brush in 13 to 15 feet of water where they should be this time of year. I took a family carp fishing over the weekend. We used canned corn and had a blast. We hooked up a number of big carp, but didn't land anything. The entire family enjoyed the attempt to land these fish on light tackle. Then Saturday night I took a group out for catfish. The catfish didn't turn on until 11 PM but when they did, it was crazy with 15 to 16 inch channel cats – perfect eating size. When you get the blood in the water from the chicken liver bait, there is no stopping these fish."

Dave @ *Espyville Outdoors*; filed 8/4: "Not many people fishing this week. I did have one customer get a 22 inch walleye off Tuttle Point."



Reichel photo

Jeff Reichel (Meadville); filed 8/2: "My son Jacob and I fished the North End of Pymatuning on 7/27 from 10 AM until 4 PM. We caught 5 bass and one catfish all from our first spot of the day. All bass were 14 inches or longer with the biggest about 16 inches. All were caught either flipping worm or jig-n-pig around weeds and lily pad beds. On August 2, we were back on Pymatuning, fishing from 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM at which time storms chased us off the lake. Again, the first spot we fished was the best spot of the day. We caught 2 bass and missed 2 more in 5 to 6 feet of water around weeds and lily pads – again using plastic worms and flipping jigs. Next we fished several additional weedbeds and pad beds without a bite. At the end of the day we bulled our way through a thick pad bed to reach a creek, where we were rewarded with one more bass on a jig. The last two trips to

Pymatuning were interesting as I have never fished it in mid-summer for bass – it is a very different animal from early spring!" (See Livewell photos)

## ERIE COUNTY

### Presque Isle Bay

Miko @ *B.A.C. Bait*; filed 8/4: "The Bay is fishing more like early July than early August. Anglers are catching a lot of largemouth bass, panfish and loads of silver bass. Surprisingly, we are getting reports of a lot of decent size northern pike – odd for this time of year. Over the weekend one customer came in with a 38" pike – indeed impressive!"

RJ Graham (Tionesta); filed 7/28: "I had a good day at PIB. I caught all my keeper fish by flipping weeds with a ½ ounce Tungsten jig and **Chigger Craw**. Also caught a bunch of bass by drop-shotting a **Cross-Tail Shad**, but all those bass were small."

Thomas Watral (Erie):

- 7/27 – "I went down to the Border Dock and observed nice crappies being caught on wax worms and small spot tail shiners under a float in 6 feet of water. On the South Pier I saw silver bass and smallmouth bass being caught with Sabiki Rigs tipped with crayfish. I have light bite Sabiki Rigs and hand-made perch rigs for sale at 2407 McKinley Ave on the East Side of Erie."

- 7/31 – “I went down to the lake to check a few hot spots. At the docks, they were catching sunfish and a few perch on worms and lava-tipped jigs. At the Border Dock, a man was catching crappies on a minnow rig. He told me to cast out and reel in slowly. I went to the South Pier where they were still slamming silver bass on Kastmaster Spoons. One angler was catching some nice catfish. Also saw a few smallmouth bass caught on crawfish-tipped Sabiki Rigs.”

### Lake Erie

Tim @ *North East Marina Tackle Shop*; filed 8/4: “This past week the walleye fishing was Good Double Plus but not Excellent like it had been in previous weeks. The NE winds played havoc with the walleye bite, but guys were still getting decent number of good fish at 105 feet with 10 colors of leadcore out. Fish came on a mixed bag of plugs, spoons and worm harnesses. In the short water, the bite was also good for walleyes in 50 feet of water between the Ws and Shorewood with fish tight to the bottom.



Northeast Marina (db photo)

Perch were being taken at 52 to 53 feet west of Freeport. Walleye fishing looks very promising for the next several years as we are working off three good year classes of fish. Last weekend we served as host for the NE High School Hooked on Fishing Perch Tournament. Everyone had a great time.”

Jeff @ *Poor Richards*; filed 8/4: “This has been a fairly good week with good number of walleyes showing up in 60 to 80 feet of water close to the bottom – basically as you approach the 1<sup>st</sup> Trench, into the Trench, and the hump between the First and Second Trench. Plugs, spoons and worm harnesses are all working. Perch are in 55 to 60 feet straight out of Walnut.”

Andy @ *Trout Run Bait*; filed 8/4: “They were catching perch strong in 57 to 60 feet north of Walnut Creek this week. Walleye reports said 30- to 50- feet over 60 to 75 feet of water on **Reef Runners**.”

Dan @ *Elk Creek Sports*; filed 8/4: “Fishing is good. Perch catches not as strong as they had been earlier, but walleye catches are holding up nicely for this time of year. Guys are hitting perch in all depths – it’s wherever you find them. One group got their limit in 30 feet of water off Elk; another group in 20 feet out of Walnut. But the really great news is the walleye hotspot in close – three miles west of Elk from 20 to 40 feet. Customers have been getting their limit of walleye there for several weeks. Troll a willow leaf spinner on bottom from south to north and north/south, not east/west. Fish are consistently 18 to 22 inches. Out deeper they are getting walleyes in 65 to 75 feet – again the willow-leaf with meat is best.”

Paul Stewart (Butler); filed 8/4: “I went perch fishing this past Friday evening on the Danny O. It was a slow but steady bite all evening. I was a few perch shy of my limit, but the perch were all jumbos. I also got a bonus walleye and quite a few white bass.” (See Livewell photos)

Scott Kinard (Butler); filed 8/3: “I fished a tournament on Lake Erie with Ken Pate; we took third with 6 bass that went 24 pounds. We might have won the event except one of my bronzes checked out of life before weigh in. Fishing the main lake has been a bit tough lately, but fortunately I had located some good fish in deeper water – over 45 feet. During the past month I’ve made a couple trips to Erie with very limited success, but we pulled out a good day this weekend for the tournament. No big trick to catching them this weekend...**Venom Tubes** on heavy jig heads.”

Ed Phillips (Butler); “My wife and I fished for walleyes out of Northeast Marina on Friday afternoon, July 25<sup>th</sup>. We arrived about noon with high winds and 2 to 3-foot waves. We talked to a couple fishermen that were just coming in and they reported the walleye bite was pretty good in the morning before the wind came up, but when the wind started the bite shut down. We decided to try our luck a little later in the afternoon, fishing until dark. But all we caught were *junk* fish. But the waves calmed down about dark so we decided to stay overnight and try for perch in the morning. We caught a nice mess of medium to large perch the following morning. We were fishing 52 feet of water straight out from Twenty Mile Creek. According to reports coming over the radio, the walleye bite was still not any good after the winds subsided. So for us it was like the old saying “you should have been here yesterday” – but we did get three or four perch dinners out of our trip!

## MERCER COUNTY

### Shenango River Lake

Jon @ *CDS*, Grove City; filed 8/4: “The word from our customers said bass fishing success has been spotty, blamed on the stormy weather and constantly changing lake conditions. One customer was telling Jerry about a good catch of smallmouth from the shallows of Lake Erie. However, the best-selling lure again this week in the store was the **Bomber Long A**, which tells me that anglers are night-fishing for stripers and walleyes.”

(Editor’s note: With ongoing stormy summer, the level of Shenango has been up and down, often high enough to close some ramps. Be sure to check the Shenango Lake Facebook page for ramp closings before heading to the lake.)

Ken Anderson (Tionesta); filed 8/4: “I fished Shenango over the weekend. Fishing was slow but I did catch nine bass but only one was over 15 inches. While fishing, I saved a small largemouth bass that engorged a 4” yellow perch. I had to extract the perch. I did it in hopes that I might catch that largemouth again when it grows up. Judging from what it eats, it should get big fast! I also got a 12-inch crappie on a **Terminator Tandem Spinnerbait** and a small pike on a **Chatterbait**.”



Anderson photo

Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 8/2: “I fished Shenango today. I caught fish everywhere I dropped a line. All were in the 8” to 10” range. I fished shallow brush up to 5 feet and deep brush down to 17 feet. I got everything on jigs tipped with either **Stubby Steve’s pellets** or **Crappie Nibblers**. My two best colors in **Bobby Garland Baby Shads** were Blue and Monkey Milk.”

### Lake Wilhelm



Fishing Dock at Wilhelm (db photo)

Bob @ *Fergie’s Bait*; filed 8/4: “The best news is the continued walleye bite in the lower part of the lake from Launch 4 to the dam. Trolling worm harnesses seems to be the ticket. I have reports of bass being taken on buzz baits and spinnerbaits by vacationing anglers. However, the panfish situation remains dire – no size to the bluegill or crappies.”

## VENANGO COUNTY

### Allegheny River



Allegheny smallmouth (db photo)

Marilyn Black (Cochrannton); filed 8/3: "Darl and I fished the Allegheny out of Franklin today for about four hours until thunderstorms chased us off the water. Although the water level had come down, the river remained very murky. And the smallmouth bite was tough. We managed only two decent-size bass around 16 to 17 inches, and four bass less than 10 inches. The bigger fish came on a silver-shad soft jerkbait and a crawfish-colored **Chatterbait**. Given the water level, water color (not muddy) and approaching storms, the bite was disappointing." (See Livewell photo)

Chris Wolfgang (Oil City); filed 8/3: "At 8 AM yesterday, I hit the river with Dale Black and my cousin Ed Wolfgang. Ed caught a handful of smallies before he had to leave at 10 AM. Dale and I fished until about 2:30 PM, landing about a dozen or so smallies apiece. Most of the fish were small, but I did mange two that were at least 16 inches. All but one fish were caught on tubes or Yum Dingers. My largest small-mouth came on a **Super Fluke**. I fished the Fluke most of the afternoon and only managed to draw the attention of that one fish. Which leads me to ask...where is the Fluke bite?" (See Livewell photo)

Dale Black (Oil City); filed 8/3: "After fishing bass with Chris on Saturday, I took my son Jake out catfishing Saturday night. The bite was good. We had plenty of runs, but just boated 2 flatheads. Jake lost a monster at the boat but it was fun watching him trying to reel it in." (See Livewell photo)

Bill Logan (Pleasantville); filed 8/2: "I fished the river today, but only caught 4 small bass. I had a much better time recently at Jimmy Buffett Concerts in Boston and Pittsburgh!"

RJ Graham (Tionesta); filed 7/31: "I fished the river out of Tionesta last evening. We managed 2 walleyes and a couple bass. All were taken on **Power Team Food Chain Tubes**."

Pete Cartwright (McKeesport); filed 7/28: "We fished the Allegheny near Tionesta on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of July. The catching was slow. We managed to catch fish, but they were spread out and not very big. However we run into a nice one here and there, including a few 19 inchers. We were using a jig one of our pro-staff came with to catch some these bigger bronzebacks, along with stickbaits and tubes." (See Livewell photos)

Gene Winger (Oil City):

- Week of July 21: "Allegheny River fishing has been a mixed bag this week with the walleye bite good and smallmouth being a little spotty and no real size to them. Bill Lux and I did manage to land a 12 lb. drum on a **3.75" Winco Predator Crow**. But the best catch of the week was when Olivia, my 6-year old granddaughter, caught her first smallie of the season on a **Winco River Darter**. Most of the smallmouths were caught in the shallows around island and faster moving water."



Olivia's smb (Winger)

# The Livewell

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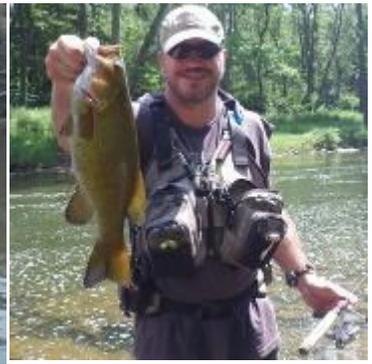
Boat of the Month: PolarKraft Classic - the perfect Pymatuning and Wilhelm 20 hp boat.

Chris Wolfgong

## Allegheny River



Marilyn Black



Pete Cartwright



Gene Winger & Bill Lux



Jake Black

# Livewell Overflow

## French Creek



Scott Rushe



Angler Al

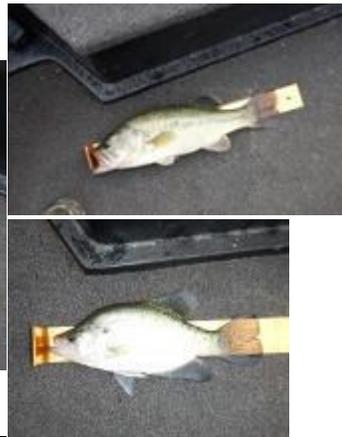


Whitmans

## Shenango River Lake



Ken Anderson



## Justus Lake



Angler Al



## Pymatuning Lake



Jacob Reichel

## Erie



Paul Stewart



RJ Graham on PIB

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## Gamma Fishing Tips

Let's talk about the drop-shot technique, a great late summer technique when bass are deep and not particular aggressive. The drop-shot rig places a hook on the line *above* the weight, allowing the angler to stay in contact with the bottom while the soft plastic bait dances unimpeded several inches above the bottom. Begin by tying a small special drop-shot hook on the line with a Palomar knot while leaving a long (12 to 20 inch) tag end. Attach a special drop-shot weight to the tag end. In this Fishing Report, RJ Graham mentions number of bass he caught drop-shotting at PIB last week. "I use 7-pound Gamma Touch fluorocarbon on my drop-shot rod," says RJ. "The extra strength of this thin diameter line is exactly what I am looking for in a drop-shot line. However, Gamma Torque braided line as backing on my reel." I'm uncertain if RJ means he is using braid as true "backing" or using braid with a Gamma Touch leader. The latter is what I do on my drop-shot rod to achieve the greatest sensitivity possible: run 8-pound no-stretch Torque on reel, tie on a #10 swivel and attached a two-foot leader of low-stretch 8-pound Gamma Edge fluorocarbon. Gamma Line president Dale Black uses a similar rigging – braid with Touch leader. Edge or Touch—both are invisible in water and strong, with Touch being thinner diameter.



Dale Black, President Gamma Line

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

Consumer Direct Sports: [www.cdssports.com](http://www.cdssports.com)

Hill's County Store: [www.facebook.com/hillscs](http://www.facebook.com/hillscs)

Winner of the spool of Gamma Line for this issue of Fishing Report is Scott Rushe. Notify Darl by email that you saw your name and include your shipping address.

## Tackle Box Forecast...

- Current top selling baits for area lakes
- New lures & presentation tips on old favorites
- The anticipated hot bites for the next couple weeks



### What's Hot?

Top selling lure this past week at local tackle shops

- *Richter's Tackle Shop, Jamestown*: **Bomber Long A** for nighttime 'eye
- *Duck & Drake, Andover OH*: **Shad Rap** for walleye
- *Poff's Place, Espyville*: **Crawler Harness** & crawlers for walleyes
- *Espyville Outdoors, Espyville*: **Crooked Mouth Worm Harness** for walleye
- *Poor Richard's, Fairview*: "Anything with purple in it – spoons, plugs or crawler harness"
- *Trout Run, Fairview*: **Reef Runner** in Bare Naked color for walleyes
- *CDS, Grove City*: **Bomber Long A** for nighttime walleye and stripers
- *Fergie's Bait, Lake Wilhelm*: **Sam's & Jigger's Worm Harness** for walleyes

### This Week's Spotlight Lure: Rapala BX Waking Minnow

Late-summer is great time for night fishing for smallmouth bass on area clear water lakes and stripers at Shenango. And reports are still coming in on the shallow walleye bite at Pymatuning. There's a lot of chatter about shallow swimming long minnow plugs. Well, I anticipate the new BX Waking Minnow from Rapala will be the next hot night bait. It has a balsa core with a durable copolymer coating. At just over 5 inches and weighing  $\frac{3}{4}$  ounce, this bait sails a long distance on a cast. With the 90-degree waking lip, it never dives below the surface but features great side to side Rapala roll as it makes a V wake on the water.



### Next Week's NW PA Hotspot Forecast

The approaching full moon (August 10<sup>th</sup>)

**Walleye**: Lake Erie, Pymatuning, Wilhelm, French Creek

**Smallmouth bass**: Allegheny River, French Creek, Woodcock Lake

**Largemouth bass**: Presque Isle Bay

**Bluegills**: Conneaut Lake

**Catfish**: Channel catfish at Pymatuning; flat-heads at Allegheny River

**White bass**: Conneaut Lake

Photo on right: While we may struggle with depthfinders to locate fish, the fellow on the right always gets his fish observing from high above. We hope Ed Atts will grace the Report with more of his wonderful wildlife shots.



Osprey Landing on nest at Wilhelm (Photo by Ed Atts, Utica)