

September/October 2020 \$5.00

The Keystone State's  
Official Fishing &  
Boating Magazine

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# Pennsylvania ANGLER & BOATER

**Labor Day  
Fishing Opportunities  
(September 7)  
See page 59.**

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# 2020 FISHING LICENSES

## LICENSE YEAR

Annual licenses are valid from Dec. 1, 2019, through Dec. 31, 2020. Anglers must be prepared to furnish positive proof of identification.



Code	Type of Fishing License or Permit	Age	Cost*
101	Resident (Annual)	16-64	\$22.90
104	Senior Resident (Annual)	65 & up	\$11.90
105	Senior Resident (Lifetime)	65 & up	\$51.90
108	1-Day Resident (not valid March 15-April 30)	16 & up	\$11.90
119	Reduced Disabled Veteran License**	16 & up	\$2.90
123	National Guard/Armed Forces Reserve**(NGAFR) (Resident)	16 & up	\$2.90
124	Prisoner of War **(POW) (Senior Lifetime)	65 & up	\$2.90
125	Prisoner of War **(POW) (Resident)	16 & up	\$2.90
102	Non-Resident (Annual)	16 & up	\$52.90
106	1-Day Tourist *** (not valid March 15-April 30)	16 & up	\$26.90
103	3-Day Tourist	16 & up	\$26.90
107	7-Day Tourist	16 & up	\$34.90
110	Voluntary Youth Fishing License (Annual)	Less than 16	\$2.90
109	Mentored Youth Permit	Less than 16	\$0.00
150	Trout-Salmon Permit	16 & up	\$9.90
140	1-Year Trout/Salmon Permit ****	16 & up	\$9.90
143	3-Year Senior Lifetime Trout-Salmon Permit	65 & up	\$25.90
144	5-Year Senior Lifetime Trout-Salmon Permit	65 & up	\$41.90
145	10-Year Senior Lifetime Trout-Salmon Permit	65 & up	\$81.90
151	Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$9.90
152	Combination Trout-Salmon/Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$15.90
136	Alternate Display Annual Fishing License Button	Any Age	\$10.00

\* Includes issuing agent fee of \$1.00 and \$0.90 PALS transaction fee. Excludes the 109 Mentored Youth Permit.

\*\* Must have been deployed for 60 consecutive days (NGAFR). Sold only at county treasurer and PFBC offices (POW, Reduced Disabled Veteran, and NGAFR).

\*\*\* Includes Trout-Salmon and Lake Erie permits, not valid March 15-April 30. \*\*\*\* Applies to Senior Lifetime purchased on or after 1/1/2015 or may also be purchased as a trout program donation.

# 2020 MULTI-YEAR FISHING LICENSES

Code	Type of Fishing License or Permit	Age	Cost*
140	1-Year Trout/Salmon Permit**	16 & up	\$9.90
141	1-Year Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$9.90
142	1-Year Combo Trout/Salmon Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$15.90
030	3-Year Resident	16-64	\$64.90
031	3-Year Non-Resident	16 & up	\$154.90
032	3-Year Senior Resident	65 & up	\$31.90
033	3-Year Trout-Salmon Permit	16 & up	\$25.90
034	3-Year Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$25.90
035	3-Year Combo Trout-Salmon/Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$43.90
050	5-Year Resident	16-64	\$106.90
051	5-Year Non-Resident	16 & up	\$256.90
052	5-Year Senior Resident	65 & up	\$51.90
053	5-Year Trout-Salmon Permit	16 & up	\$41.90
054	5-Year Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$41.90
055	5-Year Combo Trout-Salmon/Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$71.90
060	10-Year Resident	16 & up	\$211.90
061	10-Year Non-Resident	16 & up	\$511.90
063	10-Year Trout-Salmon Permit	16 & up	\$81.90
064	10-Year Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$81.90
065	10-Year Combo Trout-Salmon/Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$141.90

\* Includes issuing agent fee of \$1.00 and \$0.90 PALS transaction fee. \*\* May also be purchased as a trout program donation.



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The Keystone State's Official Fishing & Boating Magazine

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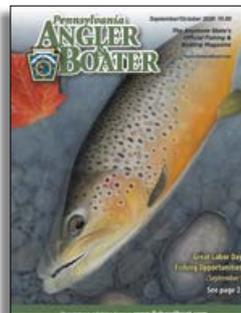
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## On the cover

This oil painting, "Fall Brown", is by an artist and angler from Wexford, Allegheny County. *Painting by Alessio DeIulii.*



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# Wear It!

by Timothy D. Schaeffer

Executive Director

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission

The calendar may read that we are nearing the traditional end of summer; but, as we all know, 2020 has been far from a traditional year.

With warm temperatures likely to continue well into the autumn months, there will be plenty of opportunities left to enjoy the 2020 Pennsylvania boating season after Labor Day. As more and more traditional fall activities are canceled in response to COVID-19, experienced and first-time boaters will likely be spending more time than ever on the water this fall as they turn to our ponds, lakes, and flowing waters for recreation, exercise, and affordable fun.

If there is one silver lining to the past 5 months, it is that countless people of all ages have either discovered or rediscovered the joys of fishing, boating, and other outdoor activities.

That sure happened this summer. It was hard to go anywhere without seeing brightly colored kayaks and canoes on the tops of cars (including my own) or on local waterways. There were reports from across Pennsylvania about retailers who had trouble keeping boats of different shapes, sizes, and styles in stock as unprecedented demand at times outpaced supply.

For everyone connecting with Pennsylvania waters, there is one overwhelmingly important message that applies year-round and to seasoned and novice boaters alike—wear your life jacket.

If you take to the water during the remaining days of summer or this fall when you may have normally been at a high school or college sporting event or a fall festival,

please wear your life jacket. As of this writing, there have been nine recreational boating fatalities in Pennsylvania in 2020, and none of them were wearing a life jacket. That sobering fact is even more stark than the typical year in which 80% of boating fatality victims were not wearing a life jacket.

Law requires that you have a life jacket on



photo-Andy Desko

board for every person on your boat. Children ages 12 and under are required to wear a life jacket at all times when aboard a boat less than 20 feet long including all canoes and kayaks. Life jackets must properly fit the individual.

While it may not feel like it now, cooler weather will be here before too long. From November 1 through April 30, everyone—regardless of age—must wear a life jacket while underway or at anchor on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak.

Fall in Pennsylvania can also bring the threat of thunderstorms and major rain events in the second half of hurricane season, so monitor the local weather forecast. Heavy rains can lead to immediate flash flooding and cause water to rise to unsafe levels for several days following a storm. If there is any question about the safety of your boating trip due to weather, please do not go. There will be plenty of other opportunities, and it is simply not worth taking an unnecessary risk.

As masks became commonplace throughout the past several months, we have all heard the refrain, “My mask protects you, and your mask protects me.” Well, something similar can be said for life jackets.

It is obvious that my life jacket protects me, and your life jacket protects you. What may be less apparent is that someone else’s life jacket protects you from the heartbreak that comes with hearing about a tragedy happening to them, because they were not wearing a life jacket. And, your life jacket protects passing boaters and the first responders who come to render aid by keeping you afloat and giving them time and the opportunity to save you if you run into trouble.

*Pennsylvania Angler & Boater* readers are accustomed to receiving great tips and advice for improving their fishing and boating adventures. As you continue to take to the water throughout the remainder of 2020, consider sharing this most important piece of advice with your loved ones and others with whom you share the water—Wear It!



**WEAR IT**  
National Safe Boating Council  
**Pennsylvania**

# Worlds End State Park

## Pennsylvania's Rugged Beauty Park



by Linda Stager photos by the author

The story goes that voyagers used to travel a treacherous road high above a cliff overlooking the Loyalsock Creek. An 1872 map shows a horse trail near the serpentine bend of the whitewater river in northeast Pennsylvania, where seven mountain ranges converge. On the map, it is called “Worlds End”. Maybe, it felt like it was the end of the world deep in the hardwood and hemlock forest first populated by the Native American Susquehannock tribes or maybe, the view from that point inspired the name.

Worlds End State Park was established in 1932. The Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters, the agency that evolved into our current Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR), bought the property along with others for the purpose of creating a state forest system. John Annabelle, a forest ranger, purchased four picnic tables with a budget of \$50, and Worlds End State Park came into being.

Although Worlds End State Park, Sullivan County, is only 780 acres, it makes up for its small size in adventure opportunities and its historic legacy. The park along Route 154 includes the area nestled in the narrow valley between the “S” curves of the river that runs through it.

The park is on the PA DCNR’s “25 Must-see Pennsylvania State Parks” list. They describe Worlds End State Park as

“virtually in a class by itself; this wild and rugged and rustic area seems almost untamed”.

### Anglers and kayakers

John Young, author of *Hike Pennsylvania*, is credited with saying, “As soon as you enter Worlds End State Park, you hear it: the never-ending rush of the waters of the Loyalsock Creek.”

The Loyalsock Creek, 2018’s Pennsylvania River of the Year, is a 64-mile long tributary of the West Branch Susquehanna River. The upper section of the creek runs through the state park. There are many pools in this section of the creek with large boulders dotting the river.

All of the Loyalsock Creek has been designated as Stocked Trout Waters, but, native Brook Trout and wild Brown Trout also occur here year-round.

The creek is well known for its fly fishing potential. The best time to fish at Worlds End State Park is likely during spring trout season or in the fall. Like many Pennsylvania waters, the water temperature along Loyalsock Creek is warmer in the summer than ideal. But, at the park itself, the water is usually on the cool side, so fishing is good year-round. Cooler temperature feeder streams in the area, like Double Run, also

provide fishing opportunities for those who enjoy solitude and peacefulness.

Anglers everywhere know that the excitement and anticipation of a trout hitting their line is like no other and that feeling can be relived over and over here.

In addition, between March and May every year, the creek transforms itself into a raging whitewater river. The water is too swift for canoes, so it is kayakers only. Class II, III, and sometimes IV rapids develop in the waters that run through the park. For the intrepid, the kayaking is exhilarating. For those who want to watch, the adventure is palpable.

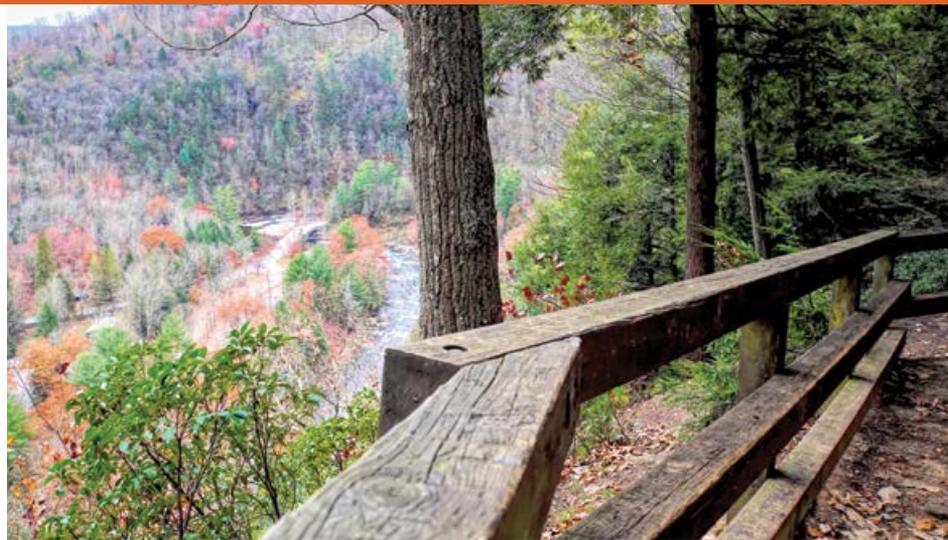
For years, the park was host to the Loyalsock Slalom Races. These days, kayakers and rafters can check out the 13-mile stretch of the river between Route 220 and Forksville for the best whitewater.

## Hiking

There are over 25 miles of hiking trails available in and near the park for those who enjoy the outdoors. The park's brochures rate the trails from "more difficult" to "most difficult". There are no easy trails here. The terrain around the park is steep and rocky. Visitors should be prepared for demanding conditions and use proper footwear and trekking gear.

According to Young in his *Hike Pennsylvania* book, "If you want to do some hiking in the Worlds End region, you should know that hiking means climbing."

The shortest trail, The High Rock Trail is one-mile long and starts in the park near the Cabin Bridge. The trail shares the path with the Loyalsock Trail as it works its way along the ridge and across the High Rock Run bridge. Across the bridge, it quickly climbs several hundred feet to weave its way through a lichen-covered boulder field to the top of



*High Rock Vista, Worlds End State Park*

the cliffs on the north side of the river. The red-blazed trail leaves the Loyalsock Trail near the High Rock Vista that overlooks the park and then descends along the cliffs to Route 154 on the west side of the park.

The Double Run Nature Trail leaves from across the highway near the chapel and follows the woods. If you want to see spring wildflowers, this trail is for you. Double Run Nature Trail is also well-known for its native trout population. Although this trail is rated as slightly less difficult than the High Rock Trail, it includes rocky and steep sections. A brochure and trail map can be picked up at the Visitor Center.

Lastly, of interest to backpackers is the "LT-blazed" 59.2-mile rugged Loyalsock Trail, that passes through the park. This trail has stood the test of time since 1951 when it was laid out by Boy Scouts. In 1953, the Alpine Club of Williamsport took over its maintenance and expanded it to its current length.

The park is the perfect place to stay overnight on your backpacking trip.

For ultra-marathoners, the park lends its name to the annual Worlds End Ultra Marathon, a 50K and 100K course run on the single track trails in the area.

## Camping

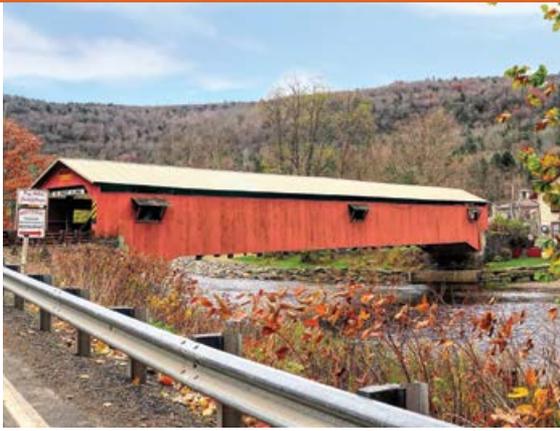
Visitors who want to stay overnight at Worlds End State Park have options.

The historic Worlds End State Park cabins, built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s, have won awards for their architecture. There are 19 rustic cabins available to rent year-round. Cabins do not have running water, but there are shower houses in the area of the cabins. Some cabins have fireplaces. All have a stove/oven, refrigerator, simple beds, a table, chairs, and a wood burning stove for heat. Guests must provide their own linens and camping supplies.

On the south side of the highway is the traditional campground for the park. A 70-site tent and trailer wooded camping area is provided for visitors.



*High Rock Trail, Worlds End State Park*



*Forksville covered bridge*



*High Rock Vista, Worlds End State Park Visitor Center*

Approximately half of the sites have electric hookups. The campground is generally open from April through hunting season in December.

The park's swimming area was created by a dam built by the CCC. There is no lifeguard, and the mountain waters are on the chilly side, but the water is exhilarating, especially in the heat of summer. The swimming area is open from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

## Day visitors

Spending the day at the park can be delightful. Five large picnic pavilions are available and can be reserved. There are also numerous tables in the main picnic area just upstream of the swimming area. A food concession and playground can be found at the picnic grounds.

While picnicking, birdwatchers can potentially spot some of the over 200 species of birds that have been seen in the park. The park has been designated a "globally important habitat for bird conservation" by the Audubon Society.

The modern Visitor Center built in 2002 houses an Environmental Education and Interpretation Center. Staff and volunteers provide guided walks and interpretive programs for visitors.

The scenery in the Loyalsock State Forest is fabulous; it is especially beautiful in the summer and fall. The forest seems to call to visitors to take a drive along its back roads.

The Canyon Vista can be reached by Mineral Spring and Cold Run roads. This may be the vista that inspired the name of the park—Worlds End State Park.

Nearby is the town of Forksville, host to two covered bridges—one in town and the other just down the road.

Further south, off Route 87, is Dry Run Falls, accessible by a short back road drive. This waterfall is practically roadside. When the water flow is good, it is beautiful.

Worlds End State Park is not just for three-season visitors though. Winter activities are always available, though some roads are impassable during the winter months. Snowmobiling is popular, and several miles of park roads are used as joint-use snowmobile trails. A 20-mile cross country ski network is also close to the park. The park's cabins are available to rent during the winter.

Worlds End State Park is located about 2 hours northeast of Harrisburg. It is a 4-hour trip from Pittsburgh and a 3-hour trip from Philadelphia. Plan for a 45 minute drive from Route 80 and Montoursville.

This state park is truly unique for its rugged geology and isolation. It may be named Worlds End State Park, but it has a lot to offer visitors.

For more information on visiting Worlds End State Park, visit [www.visitPAparks.com](http://www.visitPAparks.com). ☐



*Dry Run Falls, Worlds End State Park*

# Blue-Lining Fall Trout



*by Ralph Scherder*

*photos by the author*

Blue lines on a map typically represent streams or some other type of water but to anglers they mean much more. In modern vernacular, these crooked little lines have come to symbolize a whole style of fishing. For some, “blue-lining” refers to a passion that leads anglers into remote places in search of native and wild trout.

## Finding places to fish

Not every blue line on the map holds populations of wild Brook Trout or Brown Trout, but I am always surprised by how many do. Pennsylvania is home to almost 16,000 miles of wild trout streams. Every year, streams that have never been assessed are surveyed by crews of biologists to determine if wild trout are present. And, every year, the list of streams with thriving wild trout populations grows longer.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission website, [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com), is a great place to begin your search for productive blue lines. You will find a county by county list of Class A and other wild trout waters that have been surveyed and are known to harbor trout. You can then cross-reference those streams with a map of the area to find access points.

But, there are thousands of miles of Pennsylvania streams that have never been surveyed. Just because you do not see a stream on a list does not mean there is an absence of wild trout. In fact, some of my favorite blue lines do not appear on any list, and some streams are not even officially named. I found these streams by looking at maps and then taking a drive. If the water looked promising, I fished.

When I am searching for a new stream to explore, the first thing I consider is the larger bodies of water in the region. Almost any small tributary feeding into an already stocked stream offers potential for wild trout. And, if the larger stream has wild trout, then its tributaries will almost certainly have wild trout, too.

Also, consider the length of the tributary you want to explore. Shorter streams provide fewer options and may never get big enough to have the right type of holding water to support trout year-round. Generally speaking, I look for blue lines at least several miles in length that flow through heavily-canopied forests. Even better is a blue line that begins in higher elevation, because the stream will typically have numerous plunge pools and undercuts as it flows down through a hollow.

How a blue-line stream appears in summer does not always mean much come fall. One blue-line stream I enjoy fishing dries up in the middle of summer. Once water tables start coming up again in the fall, trout move up from the lower sections, and I find fish in all the same pools and pockets that I always have in the spring.

Also, it is not uncommon to find substantially larger trout in tiny, blue-line streams in the fall when Brook Trout and Brown Trout spawn. These breeders sometimes travel great distances to complete the cycle of life. The fry hatch and grow in the relatively protected tributaries until fish are large enough to make the journey downstream. In this way, many of these blue-lines are much more than just wild trout streams. These tributaries serve as nursery waters for many of the larger rivers and streams and are indicators of a watershed's overall health.



*The native Brook Trout and wild Brown Trout found in blue-line streams are not measured in inches but by the satisfaction of exploring remote streams where few anglers go.*

## Blue-line tactics

I don't fret over fly choice. The trout that live in blue-line streams are generally opportunistic and seldom pass up a big, gaudy nymph or dry fly as long as the presentation is good.

If you have to enter the water at any point, chances are you are already beat. The smaller the water, the more sensitive trout are to the vibrations on land, and especially to those on the streambed. All the more reason to walk slowly and avoid sudden movements.

It is helpful if you can spot the fish before making your first cast, but that is usually impossible. In larger rivers, where the water depth itself is a form of structure, trout

may feel safe out in the open. Small stream trout do not have that luxury. Typically, the first time you see small stream trout is as the fish bolt out from under a rock, log, or some other structure to either take your presentation or vacate the premises.

Sometimes, you have to cover a lot of water to locate big fish that are accessible. In truth, many of the larger trout living in these diminutive dwellings are simply uncatchable. Your only hope is to catch these trout in another part of the stream or after a rainstorm muddies

the water enough to conceal your approach.

Consistent success in normal conditions usually means walking farther than most anglers are willing to walk. On some streams, pools can be pretty scattered and you have to cover a lot of ground to find holding water. However, it does not take a lot of depth to harbor trout, but it does take structure, and wild and native trout use every bit of available structure to avoid predators.

In a way, exploring many blue-line streams is trout fishing in its purest form. It is an opportunity to experience the natural beauty and wariness of streambed trout. The quest for these little gems can lead you into remote areas, where few anglers have traveled and provide a sense of adventure and gratification. Blue-line trout fishing is a worthy pursuit. ☐



*A stealthy approach is a must on blue-line trout streams.*

# Soft Baits for Muskellunge and Northern Pike



*by Braden Eisenhower*

*photos by the author*

Times change. New trends emerge. Oversized crankbaits and spoons were once the prototypical lures when seeking toothy fish. Anglers today rely less on hard baits, choosing instead one of the many soft plastic options. Although crankbaits, spoons, and similar options remain effective fish-catchers, there is no denying Muskellunge and Northern Pike sink their teeth into soft baits.

## Soft baits then and now

Soft baits are trendy, but soft baits are not new. In fact, they date back to the 1960s, when a group of midwestern anglers developed specialized jigs and modified existing soft plastic trailers, creating what later became known as “creatures.”

“Creature” jigging is still practiced in small circles, though the fishing style is now loosely presented with skirted swim jigs and shad-bodied trailers. Soft baits have since grown to create an expansive category. Popular choices include curly tail pull baits, paddle tail swimbaits, and tubes.

Rather than adding the plastic body to a single jig hook, most are molded around an internal wire harness. The

harness adds rigidity to the lure and fashions hook hangers for one or two treble hooks. Lure action is dictated by the position of the line tie and internal weights on the harness, as well as the lure’s shape and profile.

Soft baits vary in size to represent forage options from small shad and Bluegills to gamefish like perch and Walleyes. Some weigh less than 1 ounce and fit comfortably in the palm of your hand. Of course, the quintessential Muskellunge and Northern Pike plastics weigh nearly 1 pound, measuring around 20 inches with the tail extended.

## Seasonal strategies

Seasonal conditions provide the baseline for Muskellunge and Northern Pike location and soft plastic presentation styles. Further adjustments can be made to control short-term mood changes, which are largely the consequence of weather patterns.

## Spring/early summer

Post-spawn spring Muskellunge and Northern Pike are often difficult to catch. Traditional lures seem to produce minimal results during this time, but bass anglers report frequent incidental run-ins on smaller baits. Downsizing plastics and presenting soft baits with slow jigging movements or subtle straight retrieve produces best results.



Popular soft baits (from top to bottom) are a paddle tail swimbait, a pull bait, and a skirted swim jig with shad-bodied trailer.

The bite improves in late spring/early summer when waters warm and vegetation is well established. The post-spawn slump has ended, and fish are actively chasing. Some may relate to the first break off a flat while others nestle in the weeds, waiting to ambush unsuspecting prey. Medium- and large-sized plastics are effective in both scenarios, though the presentation style will differ.

In open water areas, try straight retrieves or pull-pause twitches. The latter glides the bait forward several feet with the pull of the rod. Between twitches, the plastic will hover for a moment, then sink on semi-slack line. Watch for bites on the pause.

Extracting fish from vegetation with a soft bait is highly effective. Twitches must be exaggerated and frequent to avoid snagging cover. This erratic “ripping” motion is perhaps the most physically demanding presentation in Muskellunge fishing, but the payoff is often worthwhile.



Extra-extra-heavy power rods (this one rated for 6- to 16-ounce lures) assist in casting heavy soft baits while high-speed reels recover slack line for effective hooksets.

## Summer

Summer Muskellunge and Northern Pike fishing and Pennsylvania do not mix well. There is an increased rate in delayed mortality of fish caught in waters exceeding 80 degrees F. There is also a concern for barometric trauma when taking fish from deep water, as is the case in summer. Conveniently, the casting bite lags, and that is enough reason to target another species entirely.

If conditions permit, take soft baits offshore to basin areas in search of suspended fish. It is best to locate a food source to cast or vertical jig around.

## Fall

Return to early summer tactics when waters cool in early fall. Look for Muskellunge and Northern Pike near shallow vegetation prior to the post-turnover period. After the lake turns over, Muskellunge and Northern Pike will likely migrate to mid-depth areas, returning to the remaining vegetation during warm spells.

Late season Muskellunge and Northern Pike prefer to conserve energy, expending effort to chase prey that is easy to catch. Muskellunge and Northern Pike also want a meal worthy of pursuit. This is the time to throw supersized plastics. Unhurried retrieves with accentuated pauses run deeper and linger in the strike zone. I find slow retrieves come naturally as I tack on bulkier garments and gloves to offset the cold.

## Equipment

Proper equipment lessens the difficulty of casting and retrieving large baits. A 9-foot extra-heavy or extra-extra-heavy power rod will absorb the lure’s weight, simplifying the task.

Its stout nature helps move the gummy plastic through the fish’s mouth, so the hooks penetrate. The length of a long rod helps remove slack line, which also improves hooking likelihood. Plus, it will load better during the fight, keeping more fish pinned that are poorly hooked and brought to the net under pressure.

Strikes typically come away from the boat. High-speed reels help to remove the slack line created with each twitch, which spells more efficient hooksets. I spool with 80- or 100-pound-test braided line and finish with a 150-pound fluorocarbon leader.

Set aside the hard baits and take advantage of other options. You may discover you have a soft side for plastics. ☐



photo-Darl Black

# Justus Lake— An Autumn Surprise

*by Marilyn Black*

Looking for a less hectic place to fish this fall? Check out electric motors only Justus Lake in Venango County, northwest Pennsylvania's only two-story fishery.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's (PFBC's) Area Fisheries Biologist Brian Ensign describes some of the distinctive characteristics of 144-acre Justus Lake in Two Mile Run County Park outside Franklin. "Pennsylvania has 125 one-story lakes (meaning they can support trout only seasonally) and just a dozen two-story lakes. On a two-story lake, there is a deep coldwater layer in the summer with water temperatures and dissolved oxygen levels sufficient to sustain year-round survival and fishing opportunities for trout. The other 11 lakes are in Centre County, and the southwestern and northeastern corners of Pennsylvania."

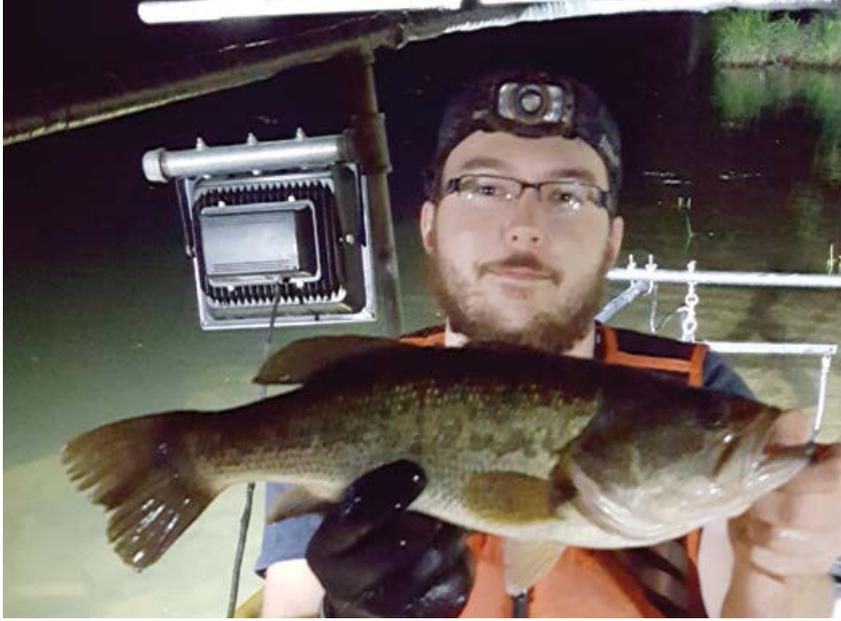
"Usually, in a two-story lake, the warmwater fishery is not as abundant or diverse," said Ensign. "But, Justus Lake has a high-quality warmwater fishery even though the somewhat cooler water temperatures make for slower growth by the warmwater species compared to state averages. There are panfish, stocked tiger muskellunge (12- to 14-inch yearlings stocked on even-numbered years), and good black bass."

In a typical year, Justus Lake receives a preseason trout stocking in April, an in-season stocking in April/ May, and a 'winter planting of trout' in November. "In addition, there are holdovers due to the combination of habitat, available food, and preferred water temperatures," said Ensign.

Mike McFadden, Oil City, has been fishing Justus Lake since the early 1980s. He describes it as a challenging lake to fish, especially in the summer. Yet, each September and October, he enjoys fishing it for the good-sized Bluegills and the abundant trout.

When McFadden focuses on panfish at this time of the year, he seeks isolated clusters of brush where there are beaver houses or fallen trees. "But, if I see a school of fish on my sonar unit, I stop and fish a vertical presentation using little jigs tipped with maggots or soft plastics. The panfish include big individuals; to me, that means Bluegills at least 10 inches long, Yellow Perch up to 16 inches long, and both Black Crappies and White Crappies in the 10- to 13-inch range."

He uses different techniques when targeting trout in September/October. He goes fly fishing, often in the middle of the lake, away from the few other boaters and shoreline anglers. "I also fish from the boat in the deep water by the dam, using blade baits in depths of 45- to 55-feet, which is



Area 2 Fisheries Biologist Aide Nicholas Nelson with a Largemouth Bass captured during night electrofishing.

where the big trout are located. I use a vertical presentation, not trolling. Although, I do see others trolling for trout, especially parallel to the dam,” said McFadden.

The most recent biological survey of Justus Lake was a year and a half ago. In May 2019, the PFBC conducted night electrofishing to evaluate the effect of the Big Bass regulations, which took effect at Justus Lake in 1998. As described in more detail in the fisheries report on PFBC’s website at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com), “In 2019, there were 366 black bass we stunned through electrofishing, gathered, measured, and weighed: 158 Smallmouth Bass up to 20 inches long; and 208 Largemouth Bass up to 21 inches in length. That year was a record for us on this lake, in terms of number of bass gathered, the numbers of each species being greater than 12 inches long, and the number of each species of bass longer than 15 inches.”

But, it is not just the two-story nature of Justus Lake that makes it unusual and inviting. Numerous habitat structures have been installed therein, especially along its east shore. A detailed map of the porcupine cribs, bass nesting

structures, and rock rubble humps is available on the habitat management diagram at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com).

As an electric motors only waterway, it is quiet every day. This scenic lake is surrounded by forest-covered hillsides, with the only developments on its shoreline being the beach at the day-use area and two boat launches (north and south ends of the lake).

Justus Lake is in a county park setting. Call ahead to verify current hours of operation at 814-676-6116 for the office of Two Mile Run County Park. According to Park Manager Luke Kauffman, rentals of canoes and kayaks can be arranged in advance even in September and October. The campground and other rental lodging in the park remain open into November, and docks stay in place at the launches until early December. Park gates remain open year-round. ☐

the launches until early December. Park gates remain open year-round. ☐



A Justus Lake Rainbow Trout



Canoeists explore Justus Lake on a sunny September day.

# Adjusting to Fall Transitions in Rivers



*by Jeff Knapp*

*photos by the author*

Smallmouth Bass may have more in common with Walleyes in terms of habitat usage than Largemouth Bass. In waters where Smallmouth Bass and Walleyes both exist, you will often find these fish in the same basic areas, responding to similar presentations. This is especially true in free-flowing rivers, where fish will be on the move, requiring you to do the same to continue having successful catches.

Throughout the summer and into the early fall, typically early to mid-October, both Smallmouth Bass and Walleyes are located close to current areas including pocket water. Fish are tucked tight to the shore, the heads of pools, the tail-outs of large pools, shallow flats that feature boulders, wood, rock ledges, and submergent vegetation. Smallmouth Bass and Walleyes use such places, because that is where the food is located—shiners, chubs, crayfish, and insects.

In response to a need to not expend more energy than the intake of food, as fall progresses and water temperatures drop into the low 60s and continue downward, the attractiveness of current areas begins to diminish. Both Smallmouth Bass and Walleyes shift locations to those with milder current, ones commonly associated with the deeper pools of the river. The edges of holes are often productive, particularly irregularly shaped ones well-seasoned with boulders. Tailout sections of pools can remain good in the early fall, though the “sweet spot” will often hedge toward the deeper portion, where there is less current. Pools located below current-deflecting rock/gravel bars and islands have the potential to hold bass and Walleyes.

Naturally, the fish-holding potential of any fall spot varies with the physical characteristics found at that location. Some areas look great but do not seem to collect fish. Others, which visually appear less appealing, can be magnets. Only by fishing such spots during the course of the fall can one learn how Smallmouth Bass and Walleyes use these spots. Also, the fall transition is



*Dale Black used a finesse tube jig to catch this fall, river Smallmouth Bass.*

heavily influenced by river levels and weather. Higher water will push fish out of summer spots quicker, as will periods of cold weather that result in dramatic water temperature declines.

As with fish location, a similar transition in presentation takes place during the fall. In the warm water of summer, Walleyes and Smallmouth Bass are quite willing to chase down moving, high-energy baits. Typically, the water is clear resulting in a large visual feeding window. Hard and soft jerkbaits, soft swimbaits, spinnerbaits, and noisy topwaters excel. This changes as the water cools and fish move into quieter, slower current spots. The general shift is from fast-moving horizontal baits to more subtle vertical ones.

Hair jigs, twister-tail grubs, finesse Ned rig jig heads, and various-sized tube jigs begin to take on a prominent role. Moving baits such as jerkbaits, soft swimbaits, and

spinnerbaits may still produce, especially during the early fall, but usage becomes more focused. Since summer fish tend to be spread out, at this time, slow down and pick apart spots with jig-style baits, or use moving baits to target areas tight to shore, quickly retrieving for another cast once the bait is well off the bank. Even in the cooler water of fall, active fish tend to be shallower, especially Smallmouth Bass, meaning these fish are often close to shore though deep water is nearby.

Falling water temperatures and fish migration are just part of the fall river-fishing situation. Other factors come into play, namely weed die-off and leaf fall, both of which can strongly influence your efficiency and effectiveness. Water celery is a common submergent river weed that dies and uproots over the course of the fall. Masses of floating dead grass can be extremely frustrating. Falling leaves also become an issue about the time the weeds have flushed through.

As frustrating as floating debris can be, it is important to realize that the most productive part of a cast is often right after the bait hits the water—the initial fall of a jig after it lands in a slot between two boulders along the bank, the first couple turns of the reel handle after the tight-to-shore splashdown of a spinnerbait, and the first couple twitches of a soft jerkbait as you work it over a tail-out. The initial portion of the retrieve is commonly weed/leaf free since the problem arises from floating debris hitting your line and following it down to the lure as you work it in.

Certain areas, due to river's current, either clog up or stay relatively weed/leaf free. Armed with this knowledge, preplan your spots, so you are not doing unnecessary work.

Smallmouth Bass continue to be consistently caught until water temperatures drop below 40 degrees F. Walleyes can be caught until the river surface freezes. Regardless of annoyances such as floating weeds and leaf litter, fall is a great time to be on the water. ☐



*Tube jigs are an essential fall, river Smallmouth Bass offering.*



*Twister tail bodies coupled with a leadhead jig excel during the fall for Walleyes and Smallmouth Bass.*

# Walleye Wonders



*by Jeff Woleslagle*

*photos by the author*

Early on in my fishing adventures, I considered Walleyes to be somewhat of a mystical fish. Few waters in my neck of the woods had these fish, and it was a long time until I was able to see one up close. After college, I took a seasonal job in a state in the Midwest and was told that the small lake near my apartment held a fair number of Walleyes. I had little to no experience fishing for Walleyes, but I heard that these fish bite well at night. I made catching one my only mission. Each evening after work, I would fish live minnows on a shallow flat with the light from a propane lantern illuminating my fishing line, so I could detect strikes. The lake did have Walleyes, but it was also home to a large, healthy population of bullheads. Night after night, I landed bullheads until my minnows ran out, and I was starting to consider looking for a different spot. Finally, on my seventh evening, I got a bite and as soon as I set the hook, I could tell the fish was not a bullhead. As I worked it close to the bank, I could see the eyes reflected in the lantern light and was ecstatic when I had it in the landing net. I was soon to discover that Walleye fillets were just as delicious as I always heard people say.

Since that time nearly 30 years ago, I have caught a fair number of Walleyes in Pennsylvania and have learned a few things about pursuing these fish. One thing that is consistent is that there is almost no better time to find Walleyes than when the waters start to cool in the fall.

On lakes, look at the first deep drop near shallow flats. The fish will often hold right along these edges and feed on migrating baitfish. As the water continues to cool later in the season, find Walleyes right on the flats, especially ones with rock bottoms. Often, fish will suspend along hard weed edges as well, so do not overlook those areas. Flooded timber can sometimes be a prime location in fall. On rivers, I like areas below fast runs, channels, pools, and places where streams and rivers merge. A good friend and I once caught almost 40 Walleyes in late October near such a merge spot on the Susquehanna River. The fish were stacked at the confluence and for nearly 1 hour we got strikes on almost every cast. Doing some online research and talking with other local anglers can help lead to prime Walleye locations as well. Do not be afraid to strike up a conversation at your local bait shop, as people there will often be aware of where and how Walleyes are being caught.

Seven-foot medium action spinning rods matched with the appropriately sized spinning reels are ideal for chasing Walleyes in the fall. Spool rods with 8- to 10-pound fluorocarbon or monofilament line. Jigs with 3-inch curly tail grubs in natural baitfish colors can be productive. Fish



*Jerkbaits in natural baitfish colors can be deadly on fall Walleyes.*

lures on 1/8- to 1/4-ounce jig heads, keeping the lures near the bottom on the retrieve. Short hop lures over rocky points and along riprap banks and vary the retrieve speed until you figure out what the fish want. If fishing from a boat with electronics, look for schools of baitfish that will often concentrate the Walleyes. Suspending jerkbaits and swimbaits may also be deadly and fish often respond to these lures in white, silver, and other natural minnow colors. On some lakes, Yellow Perch are also a forage favorite, so baits



*On some lakes, juvenile Yellow Perch are a prime forage for Walleyes.*

that imitate young perch can work well. Later in the fall, hair jigs in brown, black, and purple will draw strikes, especially when fished slowly around the edges of rock structure. Live shiners, leeches, and whole nightcrawlers fished on jig heads can also be a highly effective presentation. Live baits can often be the secret to success when the fish are being extremely selective.

It is hard to tell which technique or bait choice will be the most effective on any given day, so experimenting is key. Once you find Walleyes, do not be afraid to try larger baits, as bigger offerings can often lead to bigger fish. Fish that may have been scattered in the summer months tend to group up in the fall, so mark locations where you catch Walleyes and fish these spots thoroughly. On many waters, the fish will stay active right up until ice begins to form.

Walleye fishing in early and late fall is fantastic across much of Pennsylvania, so get out there and give it a try this year. The fish are active, and the scenery can't be beat. ☐



*Walleyes often congregate where streams and rivers merge.*



# Local Cuisine for Bass and Walleyes

*by Chris Gorsuch*

*photos by the author*

When visiting Philadelphia, few pass up the opportunity to grab a cheesesteak and a fresh baked soft pretzel. Likewise, when traveling through western Pennsylvania, stop and treat yourself to a Pittsburgh salad and a side of homemade pierogies. Knowing the local cuisine and where to dine will add to the overall experience.

When it comes to targeting bass and Walleyes in Pennsylvania rivers, knowing the local cuisine and preferred forage will almost always ensure a successful time on the water. Since bass and Walleyes are often found in similar habitat and dining on the same forage, it helps to find lures that best mimic this cuisine.

The following is my short list on what I have found to be the top four local cuisines for river bass and Walleyes across Pennsylvania.

## **Crayfish**

Why Crayfish? Crayfish are perhaps the most common artificial lures on the market. Tubes, crankbaits, chatterbaits, and swimming jigs with crayfish trailers are just a few that mimic the look and action of this dining favorite. Modern molding has produced soft plastics that so closely resemble

crayfish, that it is hard to differentiate a live crayfish from the imitation.

While on the topic of crayfish, matching size is as important as matching color from my experience. This does not mean that bass and Walleyes will pass up a smaller or larger profile, just that when fish are dialed into a specific size, matching that along with color will entice more strikes.

## **Hellgrammites**

Growing up, we called hellgrammites “clippers”. We would lift rocks in swift water to collect this bait and place it in our ball caps until we were ready to fish. While it is an odd place to keep bait, it worked quite well. Hellgrammites are among the ugliest underwater critters, but bass and Walleyes will not pass these critters up. Many say that this is perhaps the favorite cuisine of all, and if you have ever fished for bass and Walleyes, it is hard to argue.

There are a number of lure companies who make hellgrammite imitations. Some are so close to the real thing that it is difficult to differentiate. However, when it comes to river fishing, bass and Walleyes are opportunistic feeders. When fishing a hellgrammite imitation in swift water and tumbling current, bass and Walleyes rarely take the time to count legs or segments before striking a lure, so being spot on with an exact replica is not necessary. Dark colored trick worms on an 8-inch drop shot or a 3- to 4-inch living rubber worm on a Ned rig is all you need.



*When fishing a hellgrammite imitation in swift water and tumbling current, bass and Walleyes rarely take time to count legs or segments before striking a lure, so being spot on with an exact replica is not necessary.*

## Madtoms

Whether you grew up calling them Stonecats, willow cats, madtoms, or blue eyes, these are what I believe to be the number one dining choice for both bass and Walleyes on every river I have fished in Pennsylvania. Anyone who has ever held a bass or a Walleye in their live well for any length of time will see the remnants of madtoms on the bottom.

While nothing seems to mimic or work quite as well as the real thing, there are a number of local tackle companies who have come close to perfection. It may be difficult to tell the live madtom from imitations.



*It is difficult to tell the live stonecat from the imitations.*

Fished on a stand-up football jig or a Ned rig, these soft plastic lures will hit the bottom and tip the tail up and resemble a madtom trying to burrow in under a rock to escape being seen. Shaking the rod tip, without moving the lure too much, drives bass and Walleyes wild. This is one of my personal go-to presentations when the fish seem hunkered down.

## Minnows

Banded Darters, Emerald Shiners, and dace can be found in almost every river in Pennsylvania. My favorite minnows to imitate are Emerald Shiners and dace. Whether it is a hard or soft jerkbait, or throwing a swimbait, matching the color and size seems to be a critical part of my success. While forage and minnow species vary from river to river, it is important to dial into your local cuisine for the time of the year. For example, Delaware River anglers should be matching shad fry late summer into fall.

Presentation of the swimbait will vary day to day. Swimming the lures slow and steady may work one day, erratic twitches another day, and at times, moving it along as fast as possible without breaking the water's surface. Regardless, of the variety of presentation options, minnows make up a huge part of the local cuisine. And, do not be afraid to "oversize" minnow lures at times. Five-inch and larger swim bodies during late summer and fall can produce surprising results.

Whether you find yourself on your home water or trying out a new spot, make sure you are considering what the local cuisine has to offer. ☐



*Whether it is a hard or soft jerkbait, or throwing a swimbait as shown in the photo, matching the color and size seems to be a critical part of my success.*

# Shenango River Lake *in the Fall*



**by Darl Black**    *photos by the author*

Shenango River Lake, Mercer County, can be challenging to fish at times due to its flood control mandate. Runoff from heavy rains in the region push the water level over the banks in short order.

However, one of the best times for anglers to catch an array of popular fish species at this lake is upon us right now. Severe rain storms are less likely in the autumn, thereby reducing the chance of the lake flooding.

“Shenango River Lake is not an easy lake to fish if you are accustomed to finding bass in or near weedbeds, because Shenango River Lake has zero weeds or grass,” said Randy Hedderick, a local bass angler who manages a Facebook page about fishing Shenango River Lake. “Shenango River Lake Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass relate to various bottom structure throughout the year rather than vegetation. Also, Shenango River Lake is only one of two lakes in northwestern Pennsylvania with a hybrid Striped Bass population, a species that behaves differently from black bass.”

During the summer, Hedderick chases hybrid Striped Bass, because the species is taking bait on the surface. But, when the water temperature drops below 77 degrees F, strippers become sluggish and are less likely to boil the surface.

“However, with the start of the cooldown in September the lake’s black bass begin moving shallow to feed heavily in preparation for the approaching winter,” said Hedderick.

“Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass concentrate in the 4- to 6-foot depths around rock and wood. My friend and I make catches of impressive black bass with a square bill crankbait and a spinnerbait.”

There are days when Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass downshift from an aggressive feeding mode.

“On tough days we slow-roll a spinnerbait,” said Hedderick. “The retrieve is close to the bottom, just fast enough to have the blades revolving slowly. This technique catches big bass and is our answer to dragging soft plastic. If the weather remains warm into November, we continue to catch Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass in the shallows.”

With regard to hybrid Striped Bass in the fall, Hedderick explains there is a brief period in early October when hybrids return to chasing shad near the surface. “This is when a soft jerkbait is the number one lure to use, danced just under the surface.”

Rick Como is another member of the hybrid Striped Bass and White Bass fraternity on Shenango River Lake. He views September as a transition month for hybrid Striped Bass and White Bass, as the two related species travel in the same circles through the summer and fall.

“During September, I catch both species on live bait fished below the layer of suspended shad. I use an egg sinker weight to keep my line vertical, a circle hook, and live Gizzard Shad, which I catch with a cast net. Then, I wind drift or slow troll over the shad schools,” said Como.

But, following the final topwater bite in October, Como moves to the ledges and quick-breaking points that



*Hybrid Striped Bass are the stars of Shenango River Lake. These fish have a 20-inch minimum size. A large hybrid Striped Bass at Shenango River Lake may weigh 14- to 15-pounds, although most are in the 8- to 12-pound range.*

drop into the main river channel to fish blade baits and vibrating crankbaits.

“By mid-October the water temperature is usually in the mid-50s. Balls of shad are everywhere and at various depths,” said Como. “I know from years of experience that trying for suspended stripers at this time is not productive.”

“Instead, I have discovered my best chance of catching hybrids is by moving to ledges. I continue fishing vertically, but now, I am jigging vibrating baits near the bottom from 10- to 25-feet or more.

Productive baits are blades and lipless sinking crankbaits. I not only catch hybrids but also White Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Perch, and White Crappies.”

Mention crappies at Shenango River Lake, and the name Ken Smith automatically enters the conversation.

“In September, crappies are spread out in deeper water and suspended in the water column. White Crappies are particularly difficult to find and catch,” said Smith. “On the other hand, Black Crappies are easier to locate, because these fish are more likely relating to deep wood—brush piles, logs, stumps, debris piles, or manmade cribs. I often find Black Crappies suspended 8- to 10-feet down over 16- to 18-feet of water, where there is some sort of structure on the bottom,” said Smith.

Smith uses a slow-trolling tightline technique to present a 2-inch soft plastic baby shad lure. A ½-ounce egg sinker positioned on the line 14 inches from his ¼-ounce jig keeps the soft plastic bait at the proper depth.

When the water temperature cools more in mid-October, crappies move tighter to cover and are easier for the typical angler to locate.

If you have been thinking about a trip to Shenango River Lake, now is a good time to take it. ☐



*Largemouth Bass feed shallow in the early fall on Shenango River Lake.*

# How to Clean a Walleye



will help ensure you are eating fresh Walleye in no time.

## 1. Bleeding

While not a mandatory step, many anglers claim that bleeding the fish out prior to cleaning it makes the fillet taste less fishy. While the taste may be subjective, it makes less mess when cleaning the Walleye. Just cut the area between the gills before putting the fish on the ice in a cooler or before removing it from a livewell.

## 2. First cut

Place the blade of the knife just behind the gill plate and make a cut on a 45-degree angle back towards the head before flipping the knife blade and starting back towards the tail.

## 3. Down the back

Continue the initial cut down the back of the Walleye using the dorsal and lateral line of the fish to help guide the knife. Go slow to avoid cutting into the reverse side. Stop short of the end of the tail, so the fillet barely stays attached to the carcass.

## 4. Skin it

Flip over the fillet, and use the carcass as a way to hold the fillet.

At the same time, place the blade of the knife down until you feel it hit the skin and gently run the knife down, separating the meat from the skin. At this stage, you are more separating than cutting.

## 5. Rib cage removal

The now removed fillet will still have the rib cage attached. Take the knife and softly feel along the lateral line of the fillet with the blade at a 45-degree angle. With the knife down and towards the belly, cut as you feel the

*by Ross Robertson*

*photos by the author*

There is more than one way to clean a Walleye. My preferred method may be the easiest and fastest way. Anglers have a preference for conventional knives or electric knives, but slow and steady is the common theme. These six easy steps

rib cage. Carefully remove all of the bones without wasting meat.

## 6. “Cheek” removal

Use a small knife or a spoon with a sharpened edge to remove the operculum or “cheek,” located just

behind the eye. This half dollar size piece of meat is often referred to as poor man’s lobster and makes a great appetizer.

Flip the fish over and repeat the same process to remove the other side’s fillet. A finished fish’s carcass should look very thin. ☐



*Bleeding*



*First cut*



*Down the back*



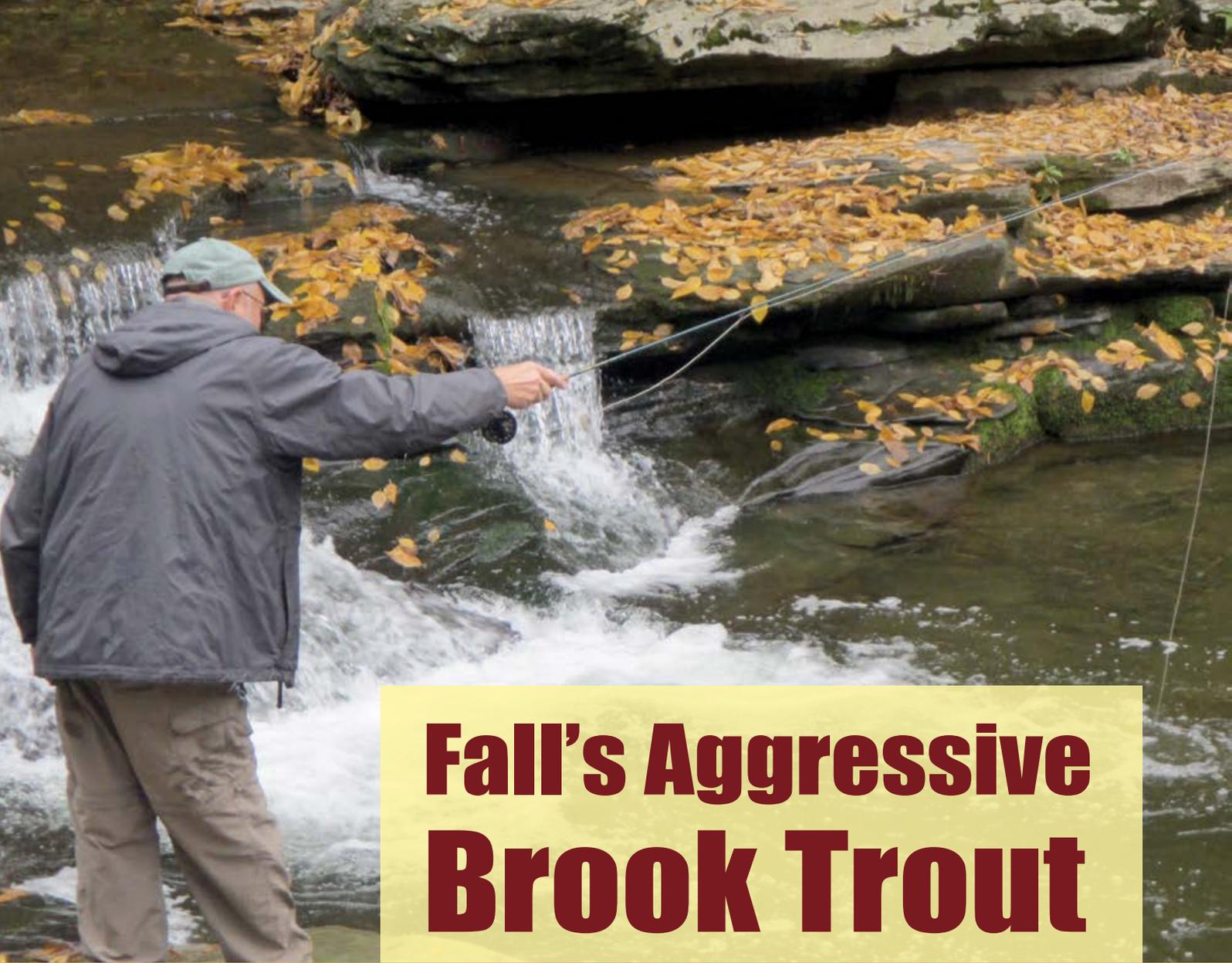
*Skin it*



*Rib cage removal*



*“Cheek” removal*



# Fall's Aggressive Brook Trout

*by Vic Attardo*

*photos by the author*

Brook Trout are old lineage, but each snapping rise is fresh. After the spawn, Brook Trout may surprise like a bolt of lightning in your back pocket. I have heard it said that Brook Trout will rise to just about any fly as long as it has some color. If true, it is no truer than in the fall.

You can land a Brook Trout, but you cannot tame these fish. Brook Trout pull on the leash like a pit bull. For me, one particular fight lasted less than a minute, the feisty fish, as bright as a crisp rainbow, snarled at me the whole time. I grasped only the fly, turned the hook shank like a corkscrew, and let the fish retreat.

There is a tributary of Pine Creek, Tioga County, that no more than five guys fish each year. It is a good example of a high-stepping stream and should be fished.

Fish the corners, fish the side pockets, and fish the edges. In the hardest bedrock, there is a deeper hole where Brook Trout sit. Drop a dry fly of a high-riding or flush-floating construction, and the fish will rush. Slap the fly down on the slack, and you may get a strike or entice stay-at-home fear. It is better to drop the fly on the lip, and let the flow take it over mini-falls. When the fly disappears, raise the rod and set the hook. The biggest Brook Trout will come out first. It may not come again, so have everything ready for the strike.

If using a nymph, again let the fly fall off the lip. This time, aim for the depression. Put it right at the trout's mouth. For this, you need an indicator. I recommend an unobtrusive yarn indicator. In the current, it will float downstream. If it hesitates or is pulled upstream, yank hard.

The trick is to yank in the current's direction. Pull the rod low, parallel to the surface, away from the trout's tail. The fish is already turned upstream with a fly in its mouth, and a downstream pull will secure the hook.

Use a weighted fly, and do not use splitshot unless the hole is over 2 feet deep. Use a simple fly like a chenille body



*A Brook Trout caught in the fall.*

Woolly Worm with various shades of olive and a flash strand under the clipped grizzly hackle.

Another stream example, completely different from the Pine Creek tributary, is found in the Kettle Creek watershed.

Although the stream is surrounded by mountains, this portion is flat.

Wade in flat pools without creating rings or waves. Each ripple is a message that you do not belong. Go

stealthy and wear camo.

More important than the floating fly choice—any Wulff or Irresistible should do—is the trail you take. Stay in the shade when possible. If the target is at the pool's head, keep to one bank. If an undercut bank is on one side, keep to the cutless side. Walk through noisy water—it is a mask—and wear a camo mask if the sun is to your face. Cast so the line and line shadow are away from the target. Remember, a line shadow on the bottom is seen from several feet away.

A Brook Trout, particularly in the fall, is eager but cautious and hungry but careful. ☐



*Wade in flat pools without creating rings or waves.*

# Holman Lake— *A Perfect Fall Destination*



*by John Allen*

*photos by the author*

We all have that one lake where we spent countless hours as a child. Where we cut our teeth as anglers. Where our passion truly blossomed. For me, growing up in Perry County, Holman Lake was that place. From my first fish to my first tiger muskellunge, this lake has provided me with

so many unforgettable memories. My favorite time of year to fish this lake is in the fall. The surrounding mountains are a sea of yellows and reds as the leaves begin to change. The fish are gorging in preparation for the winter months ahead. It really does not get any better.

Holman Lake, which is known to locals as Little Buffalo Lake, is an 88-acre impoundment located just outside of Newport, Perry County, and is the main focal point of Little Buffalo State Park. On many weekends in early fall, this lake can be a popular destination for anglers, boaters, kayakers, and nature lovers. There are two boat



*A boat launch at Holman Lake, Perry County.*



*A rainbow spans across Holman Lake in the fall.*

accesses located at each end of the lake. Shoreline access is incredible the whole way around. The north side of the lake is mostly bordered by Little Buffalo Road and has many places where someone can park and access the lake. The south side of the lake has a park on the west-end and a nature trail on the east-end. In Pennsylvania, there are not many lakes with this much available access for anglers of all ages and abilities. There is a large pier located near the east boat ramp, where the lake branches off towards the dam.

I have fished a lot of lakes in my lifetime and for whatever reason, I compare all of them to Holman Lake. The lake has a diverse range of available species. Every species here has shown the ability to grow to great sizes. There is just about something for everyone as well. Regularly found here are Largemouth Bass, Rock Bass, Black Crappies, White Crappies, multiple varieties of sunfish, Yellow Perch, bullheads, carp, tiger muskellunge, and a year-round trout population. Walleyes were stocked here when I was younger, but I have not seen or heard of a Walleye being caught in Holman Lake for many years. The lake has many manmade and natural structures that make the habitat great. This aids in many fish species' ability to reach peak growth.

During fall, the boat rental is closed, and boat traffic on the lake is reduced from its summertime peak. Some mornings, there is not another person on the lake. The fish also change patterns as the weather cools.

Largemouth Bass are active feeders at various depths. I find fast action baits like spinnerbaits, jerkbaits, and crankbaits to be highly productive. As the water cools, I move to jigs and soft plastic baits and fish a little slower. Panfish will shift to deeper waters. You can usually find

panfish by bouncing live bait just off the bottom. Trout will be in the deepest water in early fall and then move to shallower water as it cools. The longer trout are in the lake, the more concentrated trout become in the water. If you catch a trout in September, drop your bait in the same general area, because chances are there will be another one waiting. I have experienced 20-plus-trout days on this lake long after a spring stocking and prior to an October stocking only after stumbling upon a single fish by a giant stroke of dumb luck. I find live bait and paste bait to be the best offerings for trout. A sonar is helpful for locating trout since trout tend to run in schools. You will see large mass of marks just off the bottom. If you spend enough time on the lake during the fall, you will see large tiger muskellunge. Catching one is another story. I have yet to catch or hook one by sight fishing. Most of the ones I have caught while targeting tiger muskellunge have been by blind casting larger minnow-style baits and spinnerbaits. However, I cannot even keep track of the number of tiger muskellunge I have hooked while fishing for panfish in this lake, especially using small crappie jigs. I do not even need one hand to count how many I have landed though, as they often strike at the most inopportune times.

When fishing Holman Lake in the fall months, it is best to have multiple rods of varying strengths due to the variety of fish that are present. You never know when you may stumble upon a rogue school of crappies or trout, or a giant tiger muskellunge cruising. My favorite activity on this lake is a picnic with my family while casting out a few lines from the shoreline. It is what got me hooked on fishing this lake as a kid, and it is what will keep me coming back with my kids for years to come. ☐



# NOTES *from the Streams*

## Fish identification

While on patrol and checking anglers for licenses and creel limits at a Wyoming County lake on a sunny day in May, I witnessed a violation that could have been avoided.

I was checking two anglers who seemed new to fishing. After verifying their fishing licenses, I observed a stringer in the water and asked them how the fish were biting today. The angler was thrilled to tell me that he caught a nice-sized trout. Knowing this body of water was a shallow, warm, and weedy lake known for its good populations of panfish and Largemouth Bass, I was interested to see a trout that may have found its way into the lake. As Waterways Conservation Officers (WCOs), we often get fish identification photos from anglers that may on a rare occasion be tricky and require a close eye or even a second opinion. However, this case was easy. I was quickly disappointed to see a nice-sized Largemouth Bass

on a stringer that was not within the size regulations. The angler was convinced the fish was a trout. I showed him the information available in the *Pennsylvania Fishing Summary* and online information to correctly identify fish species as well as the seasons for each species before fish are harvested, not after fish are dead on a stringer. A citation was issued, and hopefully, the mistaken fish identification will not happen again for these anglers.—WCO David Raulfs, Jr., *Wyoming and southwestern Susquehanna counties.*

## The perfect shot

As I pulled into an access area along the Beaver River, I noticed three younger anglers along the shoreline. One angler had a fishing rod and looked to be fighting a large fish. As I walked up to the anglers, one person pulled a large Freshwater Drum from the water. We were all admiring the catch when I noticed the angler could not get the hook from its mouth. I volunteered to

help. I got the hook out and handed the fish back to the angler. The others got their phones ready. As the angler began to hold the fish up for the perfect photo, the fish decided to flip and flop out of his hands and back into the river. The perfect shot was missed.—WCO Jeremiah D. Allen, *Beaver County.*

## Accelerated trout stocking schedule

Thank you to all of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) staff who helped accomplish the mission of stocking trout during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under normal circumstances, the trout stocking season is often stressful for many of us as we navigate all of the responsibilities of trout stocking while still performing our daily WCO tasks. This year was profoundly different. Thank you to the volunteers from the public, who we know will always be there to help. Some were able to assist on a few early stocking activities that took place before COVID-19 restrictions set in.

Once COVID-19 restrictions were in place, personnel from throughout the PFBC had the opportunity to help with trout stocking, some for the first time. It was a great experience getting to meet and work with the PFBC personnel that we rarely interact with on the job. Connections and friendships were made that would have likely not happened without the efforts to work through this adversity. I heard some say that they had been with the PFBC for years and never stocked trout.

I would also like to thank the public for their understanding and cooperation as we navigated these difficult and unpredictable times. Thank you to the volunteers who



illustration-Andrea Feeney

followed along, stayed at a distance, activated their four-way flashers, and helped watch for traffic in an effort to keep the PFBC staff safe. We stocked all the trout waters, these trout waters received the same allotment of fish, and the stocking took place on an accelerated schedule.—WCO

*Jeremy Yohe, Western Bradford and Sullivan counties.*

## Do the math

While on patrol, it is common to find anglers who fish without first purchasing or obtaining their fishing license. I have been given a wide variety of reasons anglers do not purchase their licences throughout my career, but one in particular stands out. As I approached an angler on the river, I asked to see his fishing license. The angler said he did not get a license yet. I proceeded to obtain his driver's license and information to issue a citation. The angler stated he normally gets checked one time every five or more years by a WCO. He said the cost of a license is roughly \$33.00 with a trout stamp. So, if he goes 5 years without seeing a WCO, the license would cost him around \$165.00. He continued to tell me that the fine for fishing without a license is roughly the same cost if he does not get caught fishing without a license for over 5 years. In this way, he believes he saves money. Although it was an interesting math equation, I issued the citation.

About 1 year later, on the same river at the same location, I see the man fishing again. Again, I asked to see his fishing license. Once again, he said he did not have a fishing license. I issued another citation and asked him how this would affect his math equation. He dropped his head, surprised and embarrassed that I remembered him. He stated it was stupid, and he would purchase a license yearly from now on. I have seen him various times since, and he always proudly holds up his license when he sees me on the boat.—

*WCO Matthew Kauffman, northern Westmoreland, southern Armstrong, and southern Indiana counties.*

## A new excuse

Having been a WCO for over two decades, it is rare that I hear anything new when people are trying to explain why they are committing a violation. But, I recently heard a new excuse.

While on boat patrol with Sergeant Richard Daniels on Blue Marsh Lake, Berks County, we observed a pontoon boat towing a person on a tube who was wearing a life jacket that appeared to be inappropriate for the activity. As we approached and stopped the boat, we additionally observed several other problems with the boat including what appeared to be a juvenile operator. As we came alongside to address the observed problems, the operator stepped away from the helm and took a seat in the rear of the boat. Initially ignoring the adult who stood up as we came alongside, I addressed the operator, asking for the registration and his boating safety education certificate, and received a blank stare. At this point, the adult, who was the boy's father, told me that he was the one operating the boat.

I told him that when we observed the boat, his son was at the operator's station. But, the father quickly tried to set the record straight pointing out to me that he was operating the boat, and his son was only driving it while he was observing the skier. We corrected the observed problems and sent them on their way with a citation for allowing an unqualified individual to operate the boat. I can only assume that the gentleman thought that I would accept his explanation that he was the "captain" and his son was only the "helmsman." I have heard many excuses over the years, but I now have a new one to add to the list—the "helmsman excuse."—WCO Mark T. Pisko, western Schuylkill County.

## What a year

Trout season 2020 was indeed an unusual year. I would like to thank and acknowledge the PFBC

employees who came out to assist with the trout stockings this year. Not only did it give them a small taste of what WCOs do, but it gave us a chance to put a face and personality with, what would commonly be, just a voice on the other end of the phone or an email address. So, thanks for all your efforts. I would be remiss if I did not thank the stocking helpers who come out every year to help. You are appreciated and were missed. And to those who showed up, but unfortunately, were not allowed to assist this year, thanks to you as well.—WCO T. Curt Tereschak, southern Pike and northeast Monroe counties.

## Mistaken identity

Anglers often ask other anglers about fishing gear or unique fishing techniques. However, to non-anglers, discussions about fishing gear and techniques are foreign. The interface between these two groups is common at mixed use sites, such as a state park in my county that sits in Easton at the confluence of the Lehigh and Delaware rivers. One day, an angler asked me, "What is that on the back of that boat?" I used binoculars and said, "Those are fishing rod holders, and that angler is fishing for shad." The hiker looked relieved and said, "Oh ok, I do not have my glasses on, but that boat looks like it has a machine gun on the back." We both laughed and he walked away. I took a photo and was on my way. Later, I reviewed the photo, and even with my glasses on, it kind of looked that way.—WCO Zachary Rudd, Northampton County.



photo: WCO Zachary Rudd

# Tying Barry's Pike Fly



by Carl Haensel

photos by the author

Large Northern Pike and Muskellunge eat big prey. In the fall, when baitfish are at its largest, fly anglers are often successful when they fish large patterns. Some patterns are huge and challenging to cast. Barry's Pike Fly, designed by pike fishing expert Barry Reynolds, is a great fall fishing option. Thin, durable, and easy to tie, it does a great job tempting feeding predators.

Barry's Pike Fly can be tied in a wide variety of colors and sizes to match differing conditions and baitfish. I carry patterns in white and red, olive and gray, and red and yellow, to name a few. Tie up a box of these flies before you hit the water this fall for fast action.

Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass also like to take this fly, though the long tail can make hooking small bass challenging. Smaller versions of this pattern can also be tied to specifically target bass and small pickerel. Be sure to tie on a wire leader before your first cast. Even when casting a long fly, pike and Muskellunge may swallow a fly whole in one gulp. You will lose plenty of flies without a stout leader. I commonly use wire that is 18- or 25-pound-test. Stronger 35-pound-test, or even stouter, can be useful if you are targeting Muskellunge. A short leader of 4- to 6-feet that tapers to 0x or 1x is often all you need when fishing for aggressive fish, and it will help your casting.

When using the fly, I cast it next to logs and other cover and let it sink slowly before stripping it in with a slow retrieve. The undulation of the rabbit fur activates the fly even as it slowly sinks in the water, providing inactive fish the opportunity to swim close enough to take a swipe at it. If you are fishing slow moving streams, shallow water, or lakes, a floating fly line is often enough

for this fly. On faster water or deep reservoirs, a sink-tip or full sinking fly line is often the best way to get this fly into the strike zone for the biggest pike and Muskellunge. ▢

## Tying Barry's Pike Fly Materials

**Hook:** Size 1/0 or 2/0 Tiemco 811S or similar

**Thread:** Kevlar thread for the body, alternate or matching floss for the head of the fly

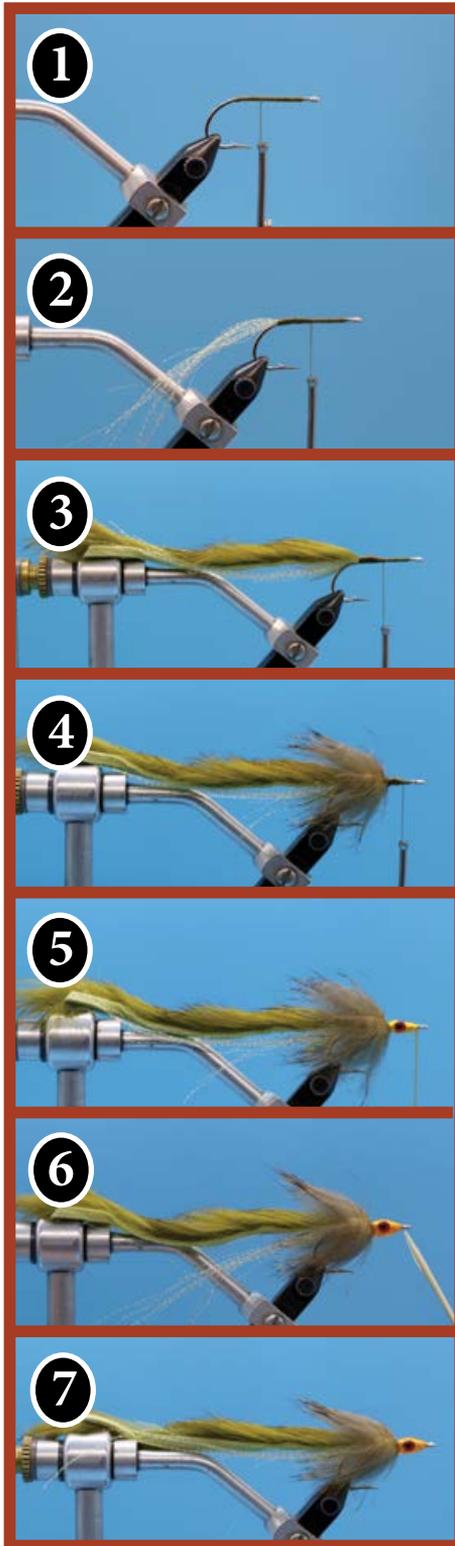
**Tail:** Rabbit or zonker strip about 5 inches in length

**Flash:** Krystal Flash to match fly color

**Body:** Alternate color of rabbit strip or cross cut rabbit

**Eyes:** Stick-on eyes

**Adhesives:** Head cement, 5-minute epoxy, cyanoacrylate "super" glue



- 1 Start by attaching your thread to the hook. Wrap the thread to the rear, forming a thread base over the entire hook shank.
- 2 Tie in the Krystal Flash, extending about 3 inches past the end of the hook. Half hitch the thread over the flash for durability.
- 3 Tie in the rabbit strip with the fibers facing up, extending 4 inches past the bend of the hook. Wrap the thread thoroughly over the rabbit strip and flash. Use cyanoacrylate glue for additional durability.
- 4 Tie in the alternate color of rabbit strip or cross cut rabbit and palmer the strip to within 1/2-inch of the eye of the hook. Tie off and whip finish over the wraps.
- 5 Build a thread base tapering to the eye of the hook in a matching or alternate color of thread. Stick on the eyes on each side of the head.
- 6 Mix up a small batch of 5-minute epoxy and lightly coat the head. Place it on a rotating fly curer or rotate it by hand until the epoxy is set.
- 7 After curing, your fly is ready to fish.



# The Pedaling Angler— *Heritage Rail Trail*

*by Derek Eberly    photos by the author*

Fishing and bicycling in Pennsylvania are a natural fit thanks to hundreds of miles of recycled railroad passages that have been repurposed into multi-use trails often known as Rail Trails. Many anglers are starting to recognize the vast amount of river miles across Pennsylvania that are readily available due to these easily accessible, smooth, low grade trails. I have been fly fishing for 20 years and adding a bicycle to my pack out has opened new waters and saved countless tough days, where pedaling a few extra miles has meant all the difference between a rough day and a great day.

Because of Pennsylvania's geography and history, the choices are seemingly endless for the pedaling angler to explore new trails and waters. We are going to focus on one segment of one such trail that runs south out of a former revolutionary United States Capital and also carried President Abraham Lincoln on his way to deliver the Gettysburg Address. The York Heritage Rail Trail is steeped in ties to early American culture and not only connects the historic towns along its route but also the present to the past while offering some excellent fishing along its way.

Starting at the Mason-Dixon line, the 10-foot wide trail rolls through the lush pastoral valleys of southern York



*This Brown Trout rolled a Woolly Bugger streamer pattern variant on the first cast of the day.*

County and picks up Old Mill Creek in New Freedom. From there, the trail runs north and picks up the South Branch Codorus Creek. Together, the Heritage Rail Trail and South Branch Codorus Creek gently roll for 21 miles along a low grade through meadows and villages on their way to York. Parking access for the trail and creek can be found at stops including Seven Valleys, Hanover Junction, and just outside Glen Rock. The trail and creek are mostly shaded along this section contributing to the quality of this water and the pleasure of riding this trail. Shade is a welcomed relief when temperatures rise in these valleys as summer approaches.

## The creek

The South Branch Codorus Creek is a stocked trout fishery from just outside the town of Shrewsbury to its confluence with Codorus Creek, just south of York. While we visited the creek during trout season, it was towards the end of May, and the creek was starting to warm up. Even though we fished in the morning, we took the water



*There are many fish habitat improvements along the creek. These areas are fish magnets and deserve a few extra casts. Search the areas along the banks near the head of the riffle/plunge pool. Often, you will find fish waiting to smash a well presented pattern.*

temperature each time we visited. The lowest temperature we recorded was 62-degrees F with a high temperature of 68-degrees F during the morning of our last visit on the first week in June. Catch and release anglers should bring a thermometer this time of year.

While the creek is stocked, there is natural reproduction in parts of the creek and in several tributaries. The majority of the fish we caught were recently stocked trout with a mix of some fish that were either colorful holdovers or gorgeous wild trout. The presence of wild trout in the watershed is an encouraging sign that restoration projects and continued conservation efforts on the creek are in fact working. A brief inspection of submersed rocks and logs revealed a healthy population of a variety of mayflies, stoneflies, caddisflies, crustaceans, and baitfish.

Trout anglers should use a variety of tactics including conventional and fly tackle. While I primarily fly fish, I saw several anglers successfully employing the use of spinning tackle. I found success using small nymphs imitating the mayflies, stoneflies, and crustaceans we found. I caught fish on patterns such as the Prince Nymph, Hares Ear



*South Branch Codus Creek is a healthy fishery. Turn over a few rocks, and you will find a wide variety of aquatic life that keep fish fed all year long.*

Nymph, and scuds. Watching the spin gear anglers catch fish encouraged me to use streamer patterns like the Woolly Bugger, zonkers, and sculpin patterns that resulted in some great takes.

The height of trout season can bring plenty of anglers to the banks of the creek. Sharing the creek with other anglers is nothing new for this area. One way to beat the crowds and get to a good fishing hole quickly while getting in some low-impact cardio is to use a bicycle. We visited the creek several times throughout trout season, and our bikes got us away from the crowds and on fish in a hurry.

## Bike fishing

When fishing from a bicycle, consider a few things. First, wear a helmet. Wear a helmet not for the “if” but when you fall off your bike. I have been riding bicycles for over 30 years, and I still fall, usually in spectacular fashion and especially when standing still or rolling slowly. Do not let a little fall turn into a big mess.

When I first started fishing from a bike, I used a mountain bike and a backpack—nothing fancy—just me, my bike, a 2-piece fly rod, a few fly boxes in my backpack with a bottle of water and snacks, and I was ready for fun. Today, my setup is a little different but not much. When riding a rail trail, you probably do not need the typical forward leaning posture/geometry provided by a mountain bike. Likewise, a road bike built for speed with skinny tires may also present different challenges. While you should use whatever bike you feel most comfortable riding, there are some styles that are a natural fit for bike fishing.

Styles to consider include touring, gravel, comfort, and off-road touring bikes such as fat bikes. The most important part of selecting a bike is finding a bike with the correct geometry and fit. This means choosing the right size bike for you and test riding bicycles for comfort before purchasing.

I use a Surly ECR 29+ semi-fat bike with racks on the front and back and two pannier bags for maximum capacity. This bike allows me to comfortably pedal for miles while also safely and securely carrying all my gear and even sometimes my friend's gear. The bike is rated to handle my weight plus any gear I bring and is designed for this exact kind of activity.

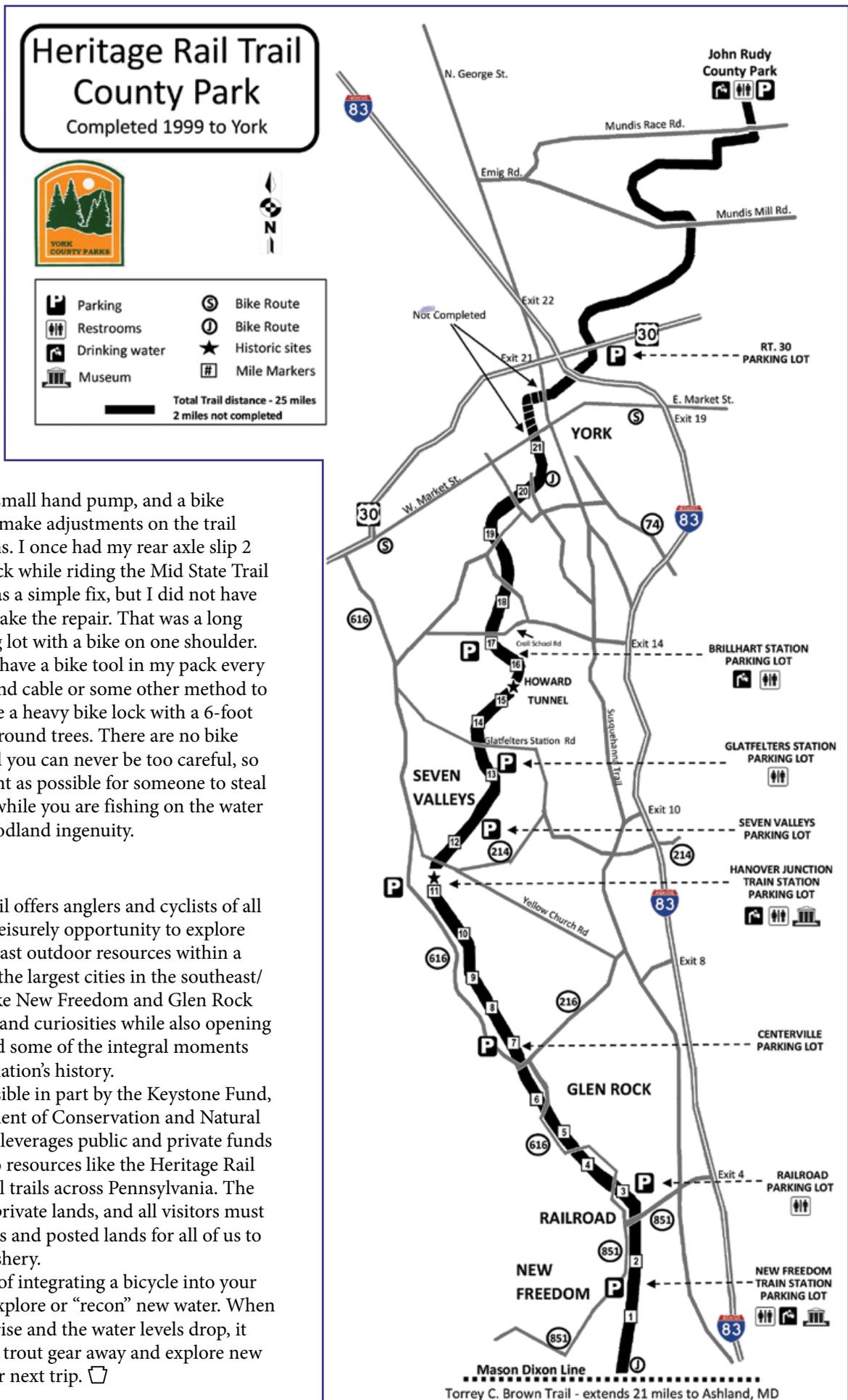
Consider packing a small tire repair kit, a small hand pump, and a bike tool in case you need to make adjustments on the trail or repair any breakdowns. I once had my rear axle slip 2 miles away from my truck while riding the Mid State Trail along Penns Creek. It was a simple fix, but I did not have a bike tool with me to make the repair. That was a long walk back to the parking lot with a bike on one shoulder. I learned my lesson and have a bike tool in my pack every trip. Also, bring a lock and cable or some other method to secure your bicycle. I use a heavy bike lock with a 6-foot cable that I often wrap around trees. There are no bike racks along the trail, and you can never be too careful, so making it as inconvenient as possible for someone to steal your bike in the woods while you are fishing on the water is often a practice in woodland ingenuity.

## The trail

The Heritage Rail Trail offers anglers and cyclists of all skill levels a scenic and leisurely opportunity to explore more of Pennsylvania's vast outdoor resources within a short drive of several of the largest cities in the southeast/central region. Towns like New Freedom and Glen Rock offer great local eateries and curiosities while also opening a window to the past and some of the integral moments and movements of our nation's history.

The trail is made possible in part by the Keystone Fund, a Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources program that leverages public and private funds to create public access to resources like the Heritage Rail Trail and many other rail trails across Pennsylvania. The trail does pass through private lands, and all visitors must respect local land owners and posted lands for all of us to continue to enjoy this fishery.

One of the best parts of integrating a bicycle into your fishing is the ability to explore or "recon" new water. When the water temperatures rise and the water levels drop, it is a great time to put the trout gear away and explore new trails and waters for your next trip. ☐





## Fall Smallmouth Bass—Season of Giants

*by Nathan Woleslagle*

*photos by the author*

When summer transitions into fall and the temperatures begin to drop, Smallmouth Bass fishing also transitions into a new season, one of giants. The months of September through late November are known to many bass anglers as one of the best time periods to catch big Smallmouth Bass and sometimes several in a single outing. Pennsylvania offers a plethora of destinations to fish for fall Smallmouth Bass across both rivers and lakes.

Pennsylvania is home to many productive Smallmouth Bass rivers. The Susquehanna and Juniata rivers are two of the most established and well-known fisheries, but many others hold giant Smallmouth Bass in the fall. Stretches of the Delaware River, Pine Creek, and even the lower stretch of Penns Creek offers anglers opportunity. The rivers and large creeks around Pittsburgh in western Pennsylvania are also notable Smallmouth Bass fisheries.

As far as lakes and reservoirs, you are not short of options. Lake Erie, Erie County, is renowned as a world-class fall Smallmouth destination. Lake Wallenpaupack, Pike and

Wayne counties, and Raystown Lake, Huntingdon County, are both great large lakes with established Smallmouth Bass populations. For further potential fishing locations, a great resource to utilize can be found on the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's website at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com) under the "Best Fishing Waters" section for Largemouth and Smallmouth bass.

Once you have a location narrowed down, it is time to rig a rod and start casting. Techniques for fall Smallmouth Bass vary, but there are some key techniques that prove productive for myself every fall. In September and into early October, a small popper or walking bait can prove deadly on aggressive large Smallmouth Bass. In the mornings and evenings, Smallmouth Bass can be seen actively chasing baitfish. A topwater lure in this situation can prove the best bait of choice.

When November and colder temperatures stay consistent, the topwater bite begins to slow down. Two additional techniques that excel in colder water temperatures are jigs and jerkbaits. Curly tail grubs, especially larger 3-inch grubs, fished on ¼- to ⅛-ounce jig heads imitate numerous types of prey for Smallmouth Bass and draw bites from big bass. Jerkbait is a great lure choice to cover water to initially locate fish, as Smallmouth Bass in the fall can often be found schooled up. Jerkbait



*A Smallmouth Bass caught while fishing from a canoe in the fall.*

presentations have caught me more Smallmouth Bass over 3 pounds than any other lure I use. Jerkbait is loved by bigger Smallmouth Bass.

A personal favorite way to target large Smallmouth Bass is to float a slow stretch of the Juniata River in a canoe during mid-October. A canoe offers a low presence in the water and does not disturb as many fish as a boat when the water is low. During this time of year, weed beds from the summer months begin to die off and clump in slack water areas. Large Smallmouth Bass utilize the dead grass to hide under and wait to ambush potential prey. Casting curly tail grubs parallel to the grass clumps proves deadly time and time again. The big Smallmouth Bass just cannot resist an easy meal.

Another unique fall Smallmouth Bass fishing opportunity is to jig live minnows. While live minnows work year-round, Smallmouth Bass seem to especially love minnows in the fall. Jigging live minnows in deep water over rocky structure in lakes can draw bites from big bass. Bouncing minnows below fast water in rivers is also a great technique. Large Smallmouth Bass in the fall will use the current often to ambush baitfish.

Bank or shore fishing in the fall should not be overlooked as well. A popular spot where the Susquehanna and Juniata rivers meet, known as "The Point", has produced many large Smallmouth Bass for shore anglers during the fall. Fishing lakes from shore is also a viable option. Using live shiners

underneath a float can be extremely effective at catching big Smallmouth Bass in lakes from the shoreline.

Fall is an excellent time of year to hit the water in search of big Smallmouth Bass. The scenery of fall foliage and aggressive bites from hungry Smallmouth Bass can make for memorable outings on the water. The normally wary Smallmouth Bass tend to more willingly take lures, which keeps the excitement constant as any cast can produce something special. Plan a day and head out to your favorite Smallmouth Bass fishery this fall. A day catching Smallmouth Bass is always a day well spent. ☐



*Poppers and topwater lures are effective at catching Smallmouth Bass in the fall.*



# The Monster's Appetite for **HAGGERTY LURES**

by Alex Zidock Jr.

A construction accident and a need for occupational therapy created a monster with a voracious appetite that this Reading Pennsylvania family feeds daily.

Bill Haggerty was a general handyman and construction worker when he suffered an on-the-job carpentry accident. Seeking occupational therapy and an at-home hobby in 2004, he spent \$100 and purchased a box of fly tying materials.

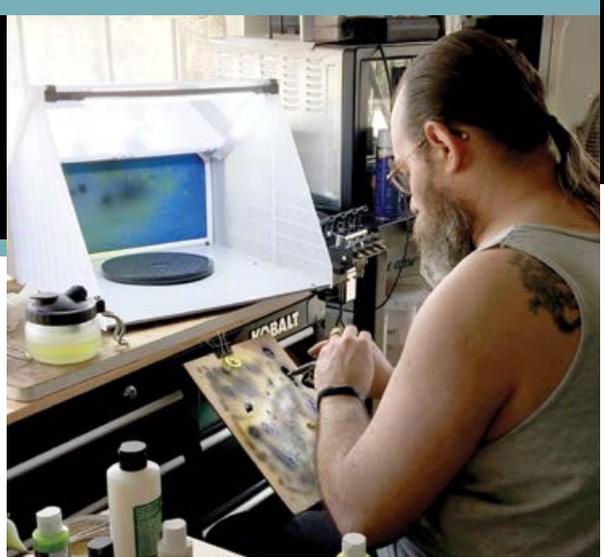
"Bill began playing around with the materials. After a little while, he had hundreds of these jigs sitting around," said Lori Haggerty, Bill's wife. "He put them on eBay to see what would happen, and the response was overwhelming."

Bill's first patterns were simple, basic, black marabou jigs geared for crappie and panfish anglers. By the time he got well enough to return to carpentry, his pastime of tying and selling fishing jigs online transitioned into his full-time occupation.

"I was working as a real estate agent from 2000 to 2010, and I was juggling jobs. I would come home at night and glue for him, put in eyes, and tie some of the simple flies and jigs. Finally, Bill said, 'you know what, I am overwhelmed,' so I quit my real estate job, and we have been doing this together ever since," said Lori.

The Haggertys' have a 32-year-old son who is autistic—another reason they find this home-based business fits their lifestyle. "Steven lives with us, and he helps out where he can," said Lori. "He likes to count, so he counts hooks or helps with the packaging, and he goes with me to the post office, where everyone knows him."

"Bill's mom helps a little, and his dad pours lead for us during the football season while he is watching television. But we lose him in the summer, because he fishes a lot. We do everything start to finish. We pour, paint, bake, tie, glue, pack everything



photos-courtesy of Haggerty Lures

*The Haggertys' do it all from pour, paint, bake, tie, glue, and pack. Bill Haggerty is airbrushing curly tails for lures. Every lure is handmade.*

ourselves, sometimes with a little help from family and friends," said Lori.

"We created a monster, but it is a big job satisfying anglers' appetites for Haggerty Lures," said Lori. All requests for lures are from phone calls, e-mails, and online sales. They estimate they produce and ship about 35,000 fishing lures a year.

"We have a lot of guides and boat captains that order direct, and we have some mom-and-pop stores that will sell our trout, crappie, or bass lures. In Tennessee, Georgia, Louisiana, and the Carolinas, shops carry our bass jigs for the tournament anglers. Some small stores in Maryland, New Jersey, and Long Island sell just saltwater lures, but you will not find our lures in big box stores," said Lori.

They still do custom orders. "Adding your color or a selected flash is easy to do, and we can customize existing jigs pretty easily. There is no minimum order, and even if you buy one jig and pay the shipping, that is fine with us," said Lori.



*This Glow Bug set is sure to put fish on the ice. Chenille crappie jigs in the Bugz style glow in the dark. Great for panfish, crappies, and even Walleyes, these lures can be given a fast recharge with a small LED flashlight.*

“Our lead time right now for custom orders is upwards of 8 to 12 weeks. Clients with big orders will contact us in the winter for what they need in spring. We have items available on our website that we put up individually. Customers can buy 1, 100, or 1,000 if they want,” said Lori.

Tournament anglers usually order in February. Their orders are shipped before the tournament season, but they do get some phone calls from anglers on the water who are down to their last jigs and need more for the next weekend.

When the business was growing and sales were slow, they would do research, adding a different seasonal jig or fly. A lot of freshwater lures go to Washington, Alaska, and Canada. Many peacock bass lures go to Brazil. “And then, we started doing saltwater lures as well,” said Lori. “And now saltwater is almost half of our business. We sell saltwater flies and jigs all along the East Coast, the Gulf of Mexico, and we even have a big following in California. We added jigs and flies for Bonefish, fluke, flounder, stripers, and we have a beautiful Cobia jig, and also a lure for halibut,” said Lori.

On average, jigs start at 1/64-ounce in the freshwater line and go up to 3/8-ounce. The ordinary saltwater lures start at 1-ounce and go up to 16-ounces. Custom orders may be any combination.

“Bill fishes both flies and jigs. So, if someone has a favorite jig pattern, he can make it into a fly for a fly angler.

We only do wet flies, no ‘match the hatch’ dry flies. We do lots of streamers,” said Lori.

Bill starts his day at 5:00 a.m. when it is quiet, checking emails. Then, he gets to tying. Lori does the second shift. “I get up a little later and glue everything he tied and even tie some of my specialties like the Chicken Butt Jig. They are short and fat with a little feather out the back, and the panfish just love them,” said Lori. “I also work with the National Wild Turkey Federation on Women in the Outdoors events. I like to pheasant hunt, and Bill does deer hunting, but along with Steven, we all fish together,” said Lori. ☐



*Several jointed musky flies, like this one, always accompany Bill Haggerty on treks to his favorite musky waters.*



*Very popular are Haggerty’s peacock bass lures. Haggerty Lures ships large quantities in a variety of styles and colors to Brazil.*



*Hagg’s “Olive Zombie” Shorty Joes are great for spring and fall bass fishing.*

**Haggerty Lures**  
[www.haggertylures.com](http://www.haggertylures.com)



# Union City State Fish Hatchery Building Up **Mussels**

*by Scott Ray*  
*Union City State Fish Hatchery*

*and Nevin Welte*  
*Natural Diversity Section*

Over 100 years after the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) first dipped its toes into freshwater mussel conservation, it is now diving into efforts to culture and restore North America's most imperiled group of animals. Nearly 75% of Pennsylvania's mussels are considered Species of Greatest Conservation Need, threatened, or endangered. Conservation actions are urgently needed to prevent species extinctions, further declines, and recover historically impaired streams and rivers. A dedicated staff and facility, combined with determination, a little ingenuity, and new technology are what is required to culture this at-risk group of animals. The PFBC's mussel culture program at the Union City State Fish Hatchery (UCSFH), Erie County, is the agency's response to this challenge.

## **A brief history**

Despite UCSFH's unique location in the French Creek watershed—one of just a few remaining hotspots of freshwater mussel diversity in North America—the UCSFH was not PFBC's first foray into mussel culture. That distinction belongs to the agency's obscure Spruce Creek Hatchery, established in Huntingdon County in 1905. The agency and this particular



Photos: PFBC archives

*Newly imported Round Hickorynut mussels*

hatchery had ambitious commercial mussel production aspirations that aligned with the times—noted conservationists such as Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot were promoting conservation, or the “wise use” of natural resources, for the “lasting good” of humankind. Starting in 1908 and 1909, the agency had sought to restore the collapsed—but lucrative—freshwater pearl fishery and to develop a market for Pennsylvania mussels for use in the commercial button industry. These early ambitions died quickly with the closure of the Spruce Creek Hatchery in 1913, following devastating floods and the advent of cultured pearl technology and plastics.

The UCSFH—also constructed in 1905—was originally built as a warmwater/coolwater hatchery with a focus on black bass. Fish culture has endured at the UCSFH, and until recently, the hatchery was focused primarily on the



Pictured is an adult Pistolgrip Mussel from the Shenango River.

cost savings permitted the purchase of high-tech equipment such as a medical-grade cell counter (used for counting algal cells for feeding mussels) and a stereo microscope (used for counting baby mussels). This technology will save staff hundreds of hours of labor and allow them to focus their efforts on improving culture systems and take advantage of training opportunities in order to keep up with the latest developments in culture techniques. Mussel culture technology and complex hatchery systems are constantly being modified as the science of mussel propagation for restoration improves. The UCSFH is actively engaged in learning more

production of Northern Pike, *Esox lucius*; Muskellunge, *Esox masquinongy*; and tiger muskellunge, *Esox masquinongy x Esox lucius*. Even though the UCSFH is now embracing a decidedly new mission of mussel culture for the purpose of species conservation and stream restoration, Northern Pike and tiger muskellunge spawning will continue in the spring with eggs being shipped to other PFBC hatcheries. The hatchery will also raise various pond-cultured fishes for stocking and assisting in mussel culture operations.

about these mussel culture innovations and has received advice and training from its federal partners at the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and fellow state agencies such as North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission.

## Changing the culture

Culturing mussels is not for the faint of heart and not too many people do it. The UCSFH will be one of just over 20 North American resource agencies, universities, or zoos dedicating resources to culture mussels. Mussels have a complex life cycle in which mussel larvae (called glochidia) must first attach to a specific host fish before starting life as a baby mussel. The catch is that there is still a lot that scientists don't know about mussels, and culturists may not always know what host fish to use. The challenge is not limited to identifying the correct host fish, which may be rare minnows or darters, but culturists must also carefully raise or care for the fishes until baby mussels drop off the fish. Thankfully, the PFBC culturists are, by nature, a nimble bunch of conservationists who face daily challenges that demand creative and quick thinking. The UCSFH staff have unique backgrounds that range from tropical fish culture, recirculating aquaculture, and medical microscopy lab experience, which makes them well-suited for mussel culture. Collectively, these skills benefit the PFBC as the facility transitions from traditional fish culture systems to more complex mussel culture systems.

## Jump start

In August 2019, the UCSFH received nearly 2,500 juvenile mussels from the USFWS White Sulphur Springs National Fish Hatchery. These mussels were being propagated by the USFWS in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to support Dunkard Creek restoration efforts and endangered species recovery. The UCSFH received Plain Pocketbooks, *Lampsilis cardium*; Black Sandshells, *Ligumia recta*; and state endangered Round Hickorynuts, *Obovaria subrotunda*. These mussels will allow the UCSFH to test grow-out systems and act as a training aid on culture techniques, basic biology, and life history of mussels. Mussels will be stocked during the summer of 2020 when the mussels are large enough to be tagged.

## The evolution of the UCSFH

Physically, the UCSFH has undergone significant changes in the last 12 months as it evolved into a mussel hatchery. Thousands of dollars were saved due to staff ingenuity in constructing mussel hatchery and rearing systems. These

## A sense of purpose

The UCSFH's initial focus will be to raise mussels to restore the formerly diverse Dunkard Creek mussel population. The Dunkard Creek mussel population was destroyed by a toxic event in 2009. Additionally, the UCSFH will work to culture mussels to help restore the Clarion River mussel fauna, a stream that once ran "black like ink" and was declared "the worst in the state" due to historical pollution. Dunkard Creek restoration and settlement monies along with State Wildlife Grants and other funding sources and opportunities will sustain the hatchery.

This latest endeavor by the PFBC has echoes of the agency's earliest mussel culture ambitions but with a decidedly more optimistic outlook. Working and collaborating within (Hatcheries and Environmental Services) and with our state and federal partners, the PFBC is once again putting muscle behind its "Resource First" mission as the agency races the clock to prevent further extinction of North America's most endangered faunal group. □



# Keystone **Cast and Blast**

*by Marshall Nych*

*photo by the author*

Peanut butter and jelly. Salt and pepper. Once in a great while, two words work so well in concert, it becomes difficult to even imagine them apart. The union of two of the most popular outdoor pursuits not only perfectly pairs, they rhyme—cast and blast.

The only way to improve upon fishing is to add a hunting component. Likewise, the only enhancement on hunting would be to squeeze in a little fishing. The following is a compilation of hunting and fishing options tailored specifically with Pennsylvania in mind.

## **Steelhead and steel shot**

As leaves begin to fall, steelhead fishing and waterfowl hunting is on the rise. Come fall, no such

magnet has the strength or pull on sportsmen and women as Lake Erie. Nowhere else in Pennsylvania, arguably the nation, boasts a world-class steelhead fishery coexisting with renowned waterfowl hunting. Come October, first time steelhead anglers must experience the access areas nestled near the mouths of Walnut Creek, Erie County, or Elk Creek, Erie County. Fishing adventures can stem from these locations to lesser known spots and smaller streams. Presque Isle, Erie County, offers one of the most unique controlled hunts for waterfowl, employing a lottery system to draw a coveted seat within one of more than 70 blinds. Blinds are free to use by the public for hunting when the owner is not using it. Review park hunting rules and regulations.

## Spring trout and gobbler

Wake well before light, trusting Grandpa's heirloom slate call to coax one of Pennsylvania's more than 200,000 wild turkey. As spring gobbler season's midday quitting time comes far too soon (noon for most of the season and state), grab a well-deserved, hearty lunch. Afterwards, swap a camouflage vest for a fishing vest, hunting boots for wading boots. Cast into miles of cool trout water. Pennsylvania is home to 16,000 miles of wild trout water and 5,000 miles of stocked trout waters. This versatile cast and blast can occur practically anywhere in Pennsylvania, across nearly each of the state's 67 counties.

## State animal cast and blast

If timed right, the angler and hunter can theoretically pursue three state animals within the same day. Be it Brook Trout, ruffed grouse, or white-tailed deer, the trio of state symbols can be found in northcentral Pennsylvania. Finning Brook Trout, flushing grouse, and finicky whitetails can be brought to hand using a lightweight rod, shotgun, and archery equipment. The timeline for this trio would be peak in October and into November.

## Plucking and plinking

Typically, cast and blast focus on large, charismatic species during the fall or winter. This option is a refreshing alternative. Most kids' first hunt occurs beneath the bright orange of a hunting hat and a summer sun, scanning vast fields for groundhogs. Somewhere cooling that farm, a humble, often overlooked, pond teems with sunfish. Sunfish are likely the starting point of most fishing careers. Be it introducing a youth to the outdoor sport or reliving our own beginnings, plinking away at groundhogs and plucking a few sunfish. Personally, I find panfish more plentiful and curious earlier in the summer. Success for

groundhogs skyrockets if timed with hay harvests and the increased visibility of cut fields.

## Ice fishing and flintlock

The depths of winter summon a special subpopulation of sportsmen. For those hearty anglers and hunters undeterred doing things the hard way, there is ice fishing and flintlock muzzleloader hunting. Late December and into January, on most years, safe levels of ice cover most waters. Ice anglers pull augers, tip-ups, and other specialized equipment. Flintlock hunters are familiar with the frizzen, pan, and ramrod. Both should don their heaviest, most insulated clothing. I have heard with ears and tasted with mouth the argument fish is better when pulled from the ice and venison more satisfying when fallen to flintlock. Considering fish and deer peak activity, I suggest to hunt at first and last light, fishing in between.

## Small game and Smallmouth Bass

Pound for pound, no other fish fights like a Smallmouth Bass. Likewise, the squirrel is tough, quick, and aggressive. A fall hike through stands of hickory and other fall food sources ensures encounters with gray squirrels or fox squirrels. The same bushy tail betraying the prolific small game's presence can double as a key ingredient for Smallmouth Bass lures. Take pleasure tying on inline spinners, jigs, or fly patterns tipped with squirrel tail or hair. Rules and regulations limit both squirrel and Smallmouth Bass to six. A half dozen of these feisty species will not be had by the half-hearted.

## Beast of woods and water

The window of opportunity for a decent crack at the burliest, strongest of big game and fish species, the black bear and the Muskellunge, is but a sliver. For the majority of Pennsylvania, four days with firearms and some additional time with archery equipment comprise to make bear season. Mirroring our Thanksgiving feast, November finds bears and Muskellunge scrambling to increase their daily caloric intake. Such a saturated fattening up makes for a rare calmer demeanor. Pennsylvania hosts many places still wild enough to satisfy the space required by bear and Muskellunge. Forest County comes to mind. Muskellunge haunt the Allegheny River and Tionesta Lake, while bears lumber the hardwoods of Allegheny National Forest in and around Tionesta.

True cast and blasts necessitate a bit more preparedness with respect to equipment, timing, and seasons. However, the experience and payoff can be well worth the energy and effort. Fishing's casts and hunting's blasts are far more memorable and harmonious than peanut butter and jelly. ☐

# MAKING THE MOST *of* MUSKIES



photo-Michael DiGiuseppe

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*by Deborah Weisberg*

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Matt Dixon had only ever fly fished for trout when he discovered Muskellunge during a spur of the moment trip to Canada in 2004.

“I’d only gone on the trip to fill a boat for some relatives,” said Dixon, Centre County. “But one day I grabbed an uncle’s rod and caught a 3-foot long musky. From that moment on I was addicted.”

When he returned home, Dixon upsized his fly fishing gear, learned to tie 12-inch streamers, and began to pursue the state’s fiercest aquatic predator on central Pennsylvania waters, the Muskellunge.

Now president of the Nittany Valley Musky Alliance, Dixon also was instrumental in organizing a musky fly fishing tournament held each fall on the Allegheny River to fund stockings at Curwensville and Yellow Creek lakes.

Like many musky enthusiasts across Pennsylvania, he is eager to help the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) enhance fisheries by performing

supplemental stockings, purchasing live minnows for hatchery feed, and providing field reports.

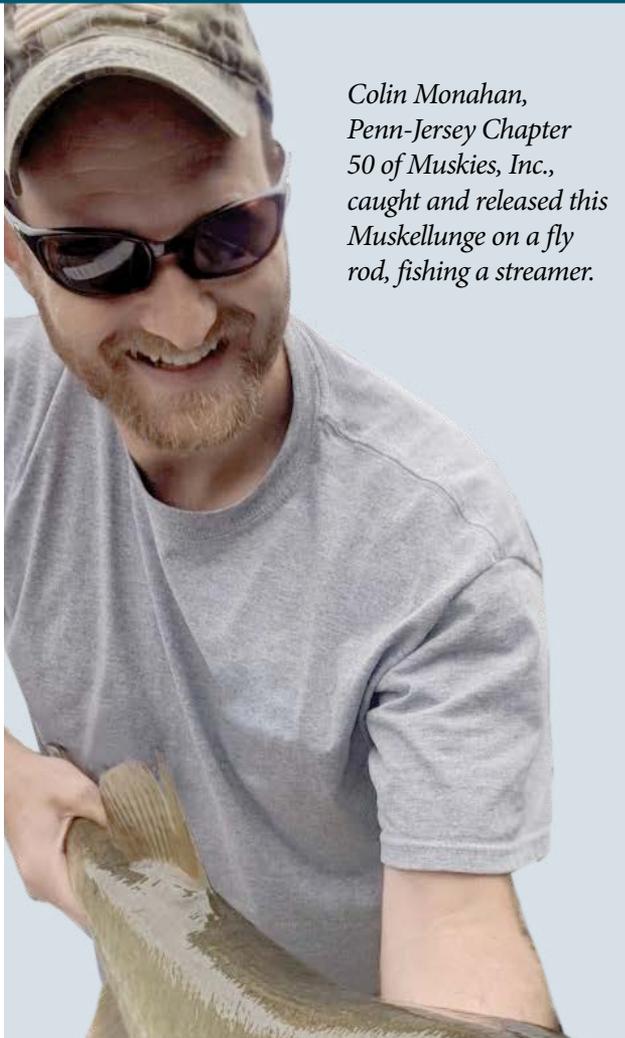
“Musky anglers are an invaluable resource,” said PFBC fisheries biologist Brian Ensign. “They are on the water a lot, and they are passionate about what they do.”

“The Commission overhauled its musky management plan in 2012 by revising seasons and creel limits, and reducing the number of waters it stocks to focus on fisheries with the greatest potential. In 2017, the plan was further refined to switch from fingerling stockings in fall to yearling stockings in spring. State hatcheries went from producing 100,000 10-inch fish to 33,000 12- to 14-inch purebred muskies, and 6,000 tiger muskies,” said Ensign.

“Yearlings have a much better chance of survival, especially when stocked in spring. Bass predation is not as much of a problem for muskies when fish are larger, and there is more available forage.”

“During final weeks in the hatchery, live minnows are added to the yearlings’ pelleted food to bolster growth and encourage predatory behavior,” said Ensign.

This year, an inline water-heating system will be installed at Linesville State Fish Hatchery to help maximize growth and survival. Proceeds from the Voluntary Musky Permit, introduced in 2019, are paying for the minnows and the heating system.



*Colin Monahan, Penn-Jersey Chapter 50 of Muskies, Inc., caught and released this Muskellunge on a fly rod, fishing a streamer.*

photo-Cory Campbell

The yearling program includes 37 lakes and 23 flowing waters, ranging from the Allegheny Reservoir, Warren County, to Raystown Lake, Huntingdon County, to the Lehigh River, Northampton County, with stockings of waters split between even- and odd-numbered years. Additionally, Presque Isle Bay, Erie County, occasionally receives native, Great Lake-strains of Muskellunge when available.

“Since yearling stockings began in 2017, this is the first year to collect baseline survey data,” said Ensign, noting that several years of sampling will be needed to evaluate the success of the program.

Early indications are encouraging, ventured Joel Morrow, president of western Pennsylvania-based Three Rivers Muskies, Inc., which purchased state-of-the-art feeders for Linesville State Fish Hatchery and also contributes to the hatchery minnow fund. “We are seeing the 2017 yearlings in abundance in a number of lakes, like Pymatuning Reservoir, Lake Arthur, and Canadohta Lake. What the hatchery is putting out is unbelievable. These are impressive, healthy-looking fish,” said Morrow.

Colin Monahan, stocking director of Penn-Jersey Chapter 50 of Muskies, Inc., is equally optimistic. “I think the spring yearlings are going to be fantastic,” said Monahan, who also serves on a regional board of Muskies, Inc. “Our members are over the moon about it. Guys fishing for other species are seeing young muskies, and telling us good things about the quality of the fish.”

According to Monahan, his chapter separately stocks yearlings in fall, alternating among 10 lakes and rivers, and has invested about \$150,000 in fisheries enhancements over the past 11 years. His club and others also make an effort to educate the angling public about proper handling of muskies in an effort to promote species conservation. “What we do is a labor of love,” said Monahan, a fly angler who, like Dixon, traded trout for the freshwater king.

One change to musky management that Monahan would like to see is tighter creel limits for wild muskies in the Allegheny River and the North Branch and West Branch Susquehanna River—the only place with documented natural reproduction. “A body of water that is self-sustaining should be ‘no-kill’ or have 50-inch limit to protect younger, developing females,” said Monahan.

Monahan likes to believe a 45-inch musky he released on his 12-weight fly rod on the Susquehanna River was a wild fish. Regardless, muskies are an irresistible challenge. “Muskies are smart and not easy to find. You can go 3 or 4 months of not catching one, and then

catch four a day. And, you have to be in good shape, because it can be grueling.”

Because it takes a considerable investment of time and money, musky fishing may not be for the casual angler, but more anglers are choosing to specialize.

“On social media, we are seeing 50-inch fish from a lot of places—just not in big numbers,” said Morrow, whose personal best in Pennsylvania is a 49-inch musky with a 27½-inch girth released on Pymatuning Reservoir in 2010. “It all leads back to better fisheries.” □

# Three Hotspots for Toothy Predators

really allows anglers to explore Presque Isle Bay. There may not be Muskellunge in great numbers, but muskies are sometimes caught by those trolling the deeper water.

## Allegheny River

Few waters can match the diversity of the Allegheny River. From the outflow of the Kinzua Dam, Warren County, downstream, trophy Muskellunge and pike can be found lurking in the deep holes and woody structures that line the banks. There is also superb Muskellunge fishing downstream closer to Pittsburgh. Thousands of juvenile Muskellunge are stocked in the lower sections of the river, and anglers have great success targeting mouths of tributaries and other pockets where baitfish gather. Muskellunge in this stretch are known to devour suckers, shiners, and even stocked trout that find their way into the river from smaller stocked streams.

photo-Darl Black

## by Nick DelVecchio

While anglers spend a good deal of time in pursuit of bass and trout, toothy predators offer a change of pace that many anglers find both exciting and addicting. The thrill of an apex predator tracking down and devouring a fly or lure is not easily forgotten, and the experience may leave many anglers daydreaming about their next encounter with a Muskellunge, pickerel, or pike. Knowing where to go for these fish is more than half the battle, and here are a few hotspots to consider when fishing for these finned carnivores.

### Presque Isle Bay

While Presque Isle Bay, Erie County, pike populations have fluctuated in recent years, it is still a great location for some steady action. Spring is the favorite time to fish for pike, but the area's many weed beds give up fish all year long. A strong panfish population likely plays a role in providing consistent pike action, but the amount of habitat and fishable water

### Allegheny Reservoir (Kinzua Lake)

There is no shortage of water on this sprawling reservoir that is over 12,000 acres. The many bays and coves highlight fishing opportunities for Muskellunge and Northern Pike. While Muskellunge may not be overly abundant in the lake itself, there are some true giants lurking in the deep water. Some years ago, a fish upwards of 54 inches was caught in a gill net during a biological survey. Northern Pike are present in great numbers, and there is plenty of opportunity to catch a good fish. Trolling is a favorite method on the Allegheny Reservoir, but flies and lures may also be effective around structure and weed beds.

Going after members of the *Esox* genus is sometimes frustrating, but the action is exhilarating. One of the great benefits of pursuing these fish is the diversity in which fish can be targeted. Those choosing to use flies, terminal tackle, and even ice fishing gear can find great success throughout the year. By checking out these three hotspots, anglers can eliminate some of the learning curve and put themselves into a great position to catch Muskellunge, pickerel, and pike. ☐

# PLAY

Fall  
2020

Pennsylvania • League • of • Angling • Youth

## ANGLER3 EDUCATION

### What Do You Know About the 3Rs of Fishing?

If you ask an older person about the 3Rs that they may have learned in school, they would probably say “Reading, ‘Riting, and ‘Rithmetic.” That is just a funny way of saying, “reading, writing, and arithmetic” (or math). These three subjects are considered to be the basics of education.

In this issue of *PLAY*, you will learn about the 3Rs of fishing. So, grab your rod, turn the page, and let’s go!



### Vocabulary (Watch for these words!)

- **Acronym** - a word formed from the initial letters of other words and pronounced as a word
- **Aquatic resources** - any body of water and anything that lives in or around it, such as fish, plants, bugs, turtles, and more
- **Ethical angler** - an angler who respects the rights of others who are using the water and who values aquatic resources
- **Recruitment** - the action of finding new people to join an activity, like fishing
- **Retention** - the ability to keep someone in an activity, like fishing
- **Reactivation** - the process of bringing people back to an activity, like fishing, after they have been away from it for a while

# The 3Rs of Being a SMART Angler

Have you ever gone to a fishing program taught by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC)? If so, you probably learned how to be a SMART Angler.

SMART stands for: Safety First; Mind your Manners; Appreciate your **Aquatic Resources**; and Teach Others. Did you notice a missing letter from this **acronym**? That's right. It is R.

The R in SMART stands for three values that are important to an **ethical angler**—Respect, Responsibility, and Release. A SMART Angler knows to be respectful of other anglers and to be quiet when near the water, so fish do not scare away.

SMART Anglers are also responsible for keeping waterways clean and safe for other anglers.

SMART Anglers release the fish they catch back into the water unless they plan to eat the fish.

What other ways can you be an **ethical angler** when fishing? List them on the space provided on the last page of this *PLAY*.

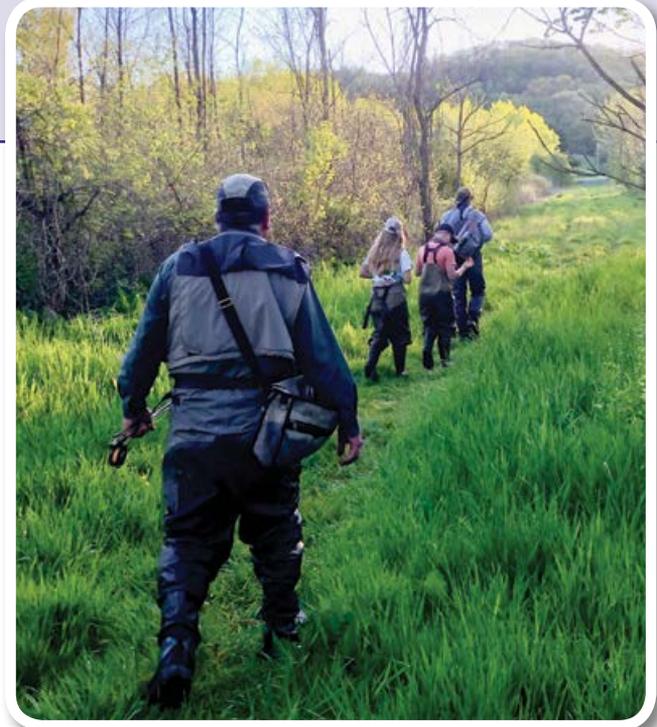


# From 3Rs to R3 - What's New?

About 20 years ago, the agencies that oversee the nation's **aquatic resources**, like the PFBC, began to talk about three different Rs.

These new Rs stand for: **Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation.**

These words are important to the future of fishing. You will learn more about recruitment, retention, and reactivation on pages later in this *PLAY*.



Think about your favorite sports team. Well, fishing is a recreational activity that some people consider a sport.

From the first time that people tied hooks and strings to poles and caught their first fish, it has become not only a means to catch food but also a means of having fun outdoors.

Whether exercising your muscles or soothing your spirit by disconnecting from technology and relaxing in nature, fishing is something that everyone of all ages and abilities can enjoy!

# Let's Talk Recruitment

Scouts for sports teams are always on the lookout for new talent to join their team. When a scout finds a new player, that is called **recruitment**. You can be a scout too!

Even though fishing is fun to do on your own, it is always more fun to bring along a friend. If you ask your friends to join you on a fishing trip, you are recruiting them.

But what would happen to your favorite team if no one was ever recruited? If there were never new players to join the team? Would it be successful? Probably not, after a while.

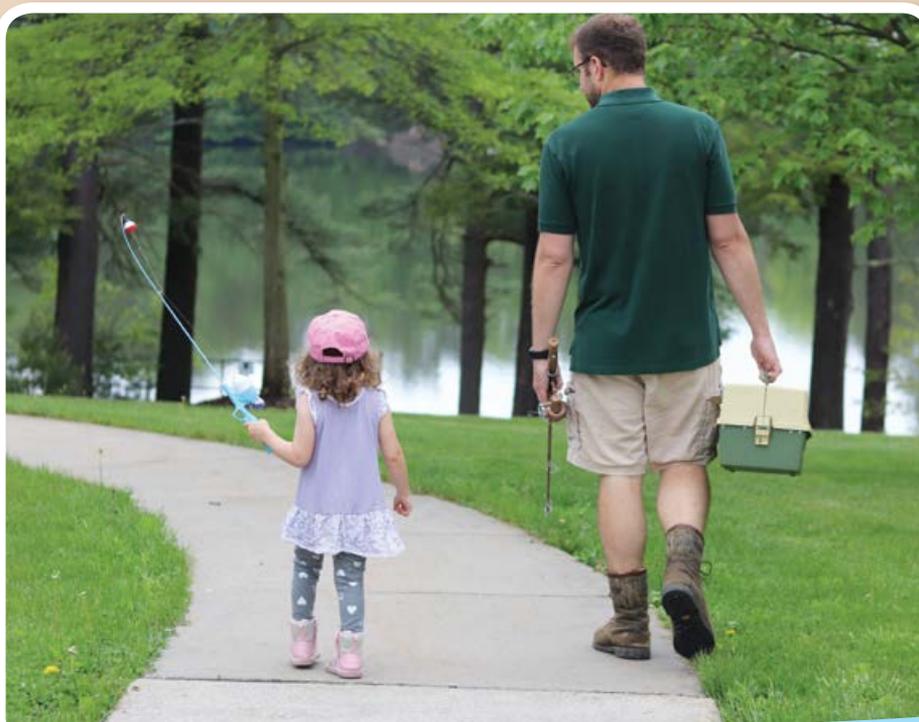
The same thing is true for fishing. If there are no new anglers to join the sport, it could lose support. The best thing that you can do for sport fishing is to share your love of fishing with someone else. This is called being a mentor.



A mentor goes beyond merely introducing someone to the sport of fishing. A mentor takes the time and effort to teach new anglers the basic skills needed to enjoy the activity.

After you get new anglers hooked on fishing, then it is time to find new and interesting ways to keep them on the team.

And that leads us to **retention**.



# Retention

In order to keep good players on a team, a coach needs to keep them interested and excited about playing. They create fun practice drills. They suggest new equipment to use. They find new places to play.

As a mentor, you can coach your fishing friend the same way. You can practice fly tying. You can go to sports shows and see what is new. You can visit new streams or lakes. You can even help your friend become a mentor to someone else.



When you take your sport to the next level, you stay involved in the sport. Keeping others involved in the sport is called **retention**.

It is always more fun to keep your team together than to have to scout for a new fishing teammate, right? Right!

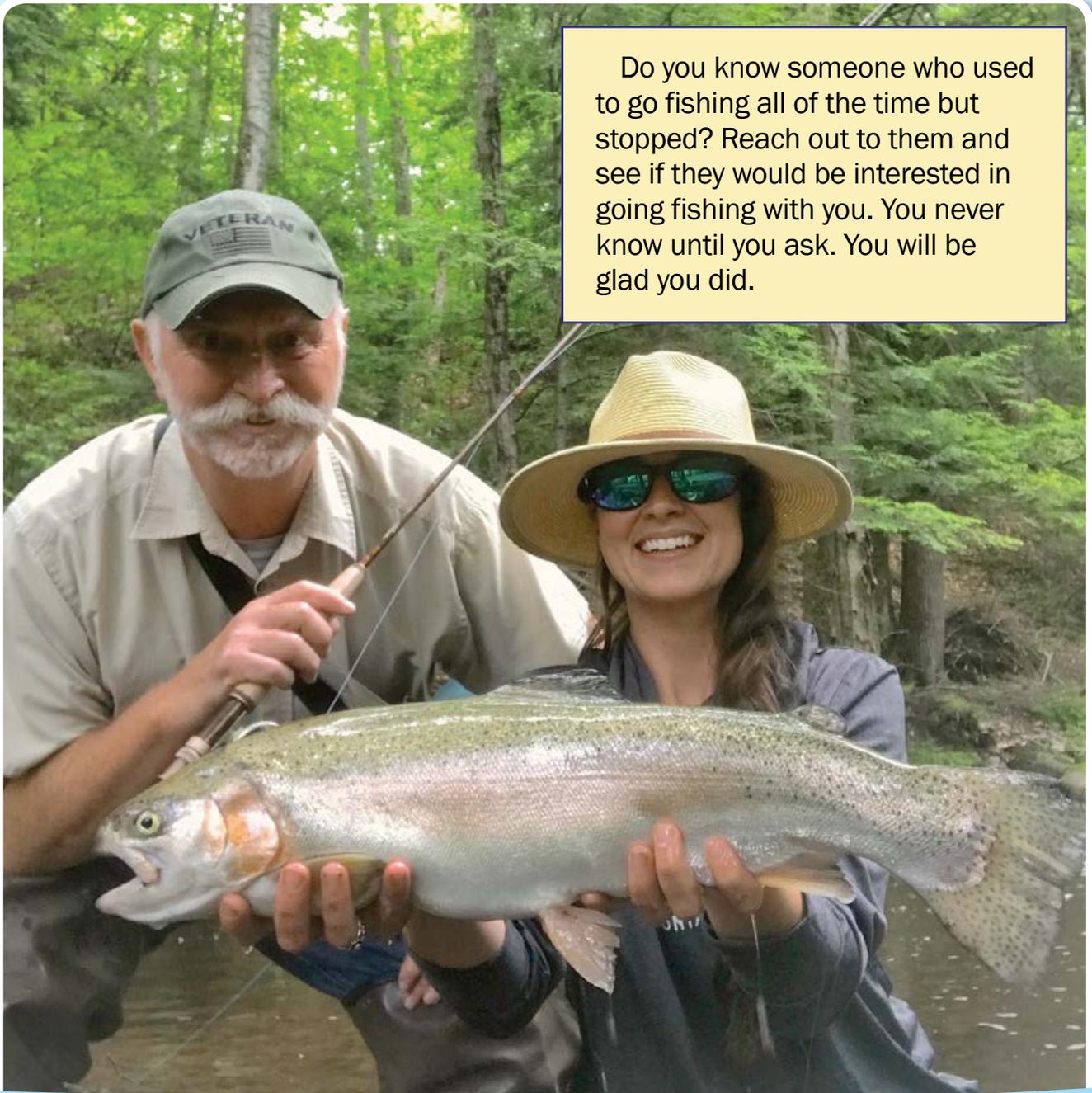


# Reactivation

What happens when your friend finds something new to do? Maybe they got involved in another sport and don't have time to go fishing with you anymore. Well, you can always recruit a new fishing teammate and start all over again. Or, you can scout around to see if you can

find someone who used to go fishing but stopped. Someone who would love to start up again if only they had someone to go fishing with.

If you help someone return to an activity that they once enjoyed, it is known as **reactivation**.



Do you know someone who used to go fishing all of the time but stopped? Reach out to them and see if they would be interested in going fishing with you. You never know until you ask. You will be glad you did.

# Practice Your R3s

**List the ways that you can be an ethical angler.**

*(Look back at "The 3Rs of Being a SMART Angler".)*

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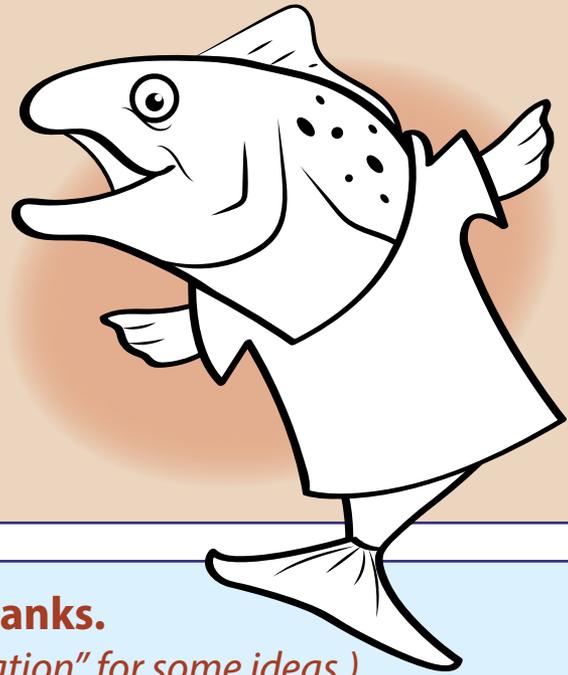
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**Draw your favorite team logo on the fish's shirt and color the fish.**



**Fill in the blanks.**

*(Look back at "AngleR3 Education" for some ideas.)*

\_\_\_\_\_ is when a mentor gets someone new to join an activity, like fishing.

\_\_\_\_\_ is when a mentor keeps people interested in an activity, like fishing, by spending time with them and teaching them new ways to enjoy the sport.

\_\_\_\_\_ is when a mentor brings people back to an activity, like fishing, after they have been away from it for a while.

**On a piece of paper, draw a picture of yourself with someone you recruited, retained, and/or reactivated to fishing.**

**"Fill in the blanks" Answer Key:**  
*Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation*

*Produced by:* the Bureau of Outreach,

*Education, & Marketing*

*Written by:* Dee Fisher

*Editor:* Spring Gearhart

*Design and illustrations:* Andrea Feeney

*Photos:* Amidea Daniel, Angela Tuttle, Dee Fisher, and PFBC archives

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# 2020 State-Fish Art Contest

The Pennsylvania winners  
of the 2020 State-Fish  
Art Contest are:

Specialty Award Winner –  
Invader Crusader

**Tilden Abercrombie**

*“Brook Trout with Sea Lamprey”*  
Grades 7-9

**Rocco Zaremba**

*“Brook Trout”*  
Kindergarten-Grade 3

**Peyton Perry**

*“Brook Trout”*  
Grades 4-6

**Jessie Xin**

*“Steelhead”*  
Grades 7-9

**Sean Koch**

*“Brook Trout”*  
Grades 10-12



Tilden Abercrombie, Grades 7-9



Rocco Zaremba, Kindergarten-Grade 3

Wildlife Forever announced the winners of the 2020 State-Fish Art Contest in May. Included were the works of five Pennsylvania winners.

Wildlife Forever is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to preserving America’s wildlife heritage. Pennsylvania is a partner in the contest. The contest requires students in grades kindergarten through 12 to depict any officially designated state fish and provide an essay related specifically to the fish’s characteristics, habitat, behavior, or conservation needs.

Art contest rules and regulations appear on page 53.

For the entry form, winning artwork from all states, and additional information, visit [www.wildlifeforever.org](http://www.wildlifeforever.org). 📄

## HOW TO ENTER CONTEST

Completed entries must be postmarked no later than March 31 of each year.

### Entries must include:

- A completed and signed entry form.
- Artwork of any state fish.
- An essay about any state fish, its habitat, behavior, or conservation needs. The essay must include the student's name, grade, and state on the back. Do not attach your essay to your art. Entry forms will not be accepted by e-mail. Please download and print the entry form and send by regular mail.

- Entry forms must be completed, signed by a parent, guardian, or educator, and affixed with a clear glue stick to the back of the original artwork.

- **Completed entries should be mailed to:**

**Wildlife Forever**

**5350 Highway 61 North, Suite 7**

**White Bear Lake, MN 55110**

For more information, e-mail [info@wildlifeforever.org](mailto:info@wildlifeforever.org) or call 763-253-0222.

## RULES & GUIDELINES

- The State-Fish Art Contest is open to all children in grades K-12 in any public, private, or home-school, any youth group, after-school program, youth camp, scout troop, art class, or any individual who wants to enter. Only one entry per student will be accepted.

- The artwork must depict any officially designated state fish. Pennsylvania's state fish is the Brook Trout. The fish must be depicted in its natural habitat.

- All artwork must be the contestant's original, hand-done creation and must not infringe upon any copyright laws. Photographs and computer-generated artwork will not be accepted.

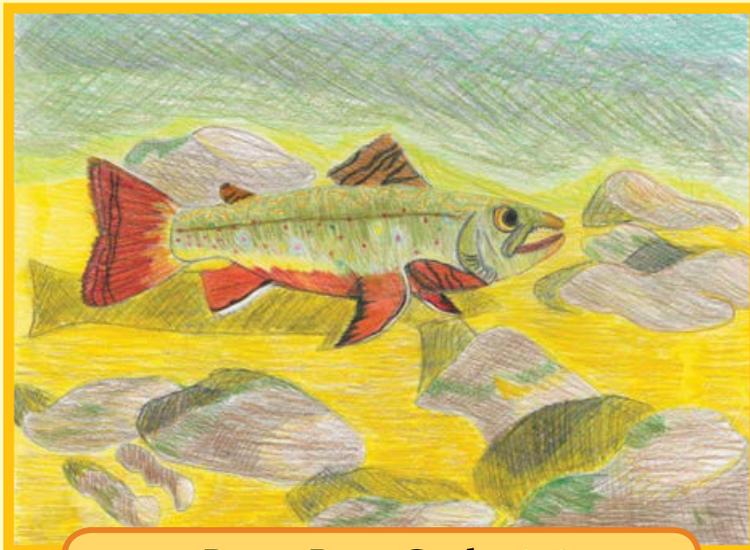
- All artwork must be 9"x12" and horizontal, without a mat, frame, or border. Art techniques may include oils, scratchboard, pointillism, chalk, pastels, charcoal, colored pencil, acrylics, dry brush, watercolor, crosshatch, lead, collage, linoleum printing, tempera, or crayon. If contestants use chalk or pastel, they should seal the artwork with a fixative.

- All artwork must not exceed ¼ inch in total thickness.

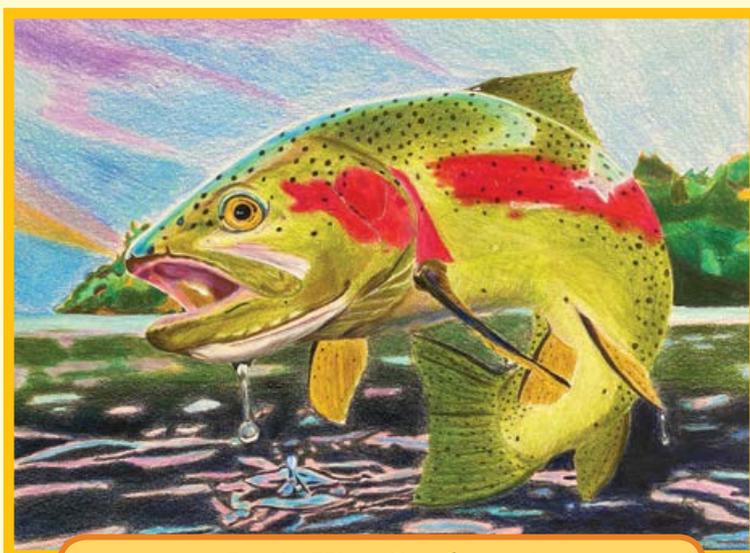
- The design should NOT have the artist's signature, initials, or name on the front. Other writing is allowed as long as it is part of the art's design (for example - name of a boat or pier). Any artwork not following this guideline will be disqualified and eliminated from the competition.

- Completed entries must include an essay not to exceed one side of one page in length. The composition must include the student's name, grade, and state on the back.

- For updates on rules and guidelines, visit [www.wildlifeforever.org](http://www.wildlifeforever.org).



**Peyton Perry, Grades 4-6**



**Jessie Xin, Grades 7-9**



**Sean Koch, Grades 10-12**

# Fish Like a Great Blue Heron: Lessons from an Avian Angler



photo-John D. Bauman

by Christian A. Shane

*“Stalking along from log to log, or plunging their long legs in the oozy swamp, two large herons paid no attention to my presence, but occupied themselves with their own fishing arrangements, as if their wilderness was their own.” William Cowper Prime, I Go A-Fishing (1873).*

One early summer evening on Cold Springs Creek, Mercer County, the fishing came to a standstill as the full moon glared into the creek. The lack of strikes gave me ample time to pull my eyesight away from the strike indicator and look up at the beauty around me.

Out of my peripheral vision, I noticed something strange and stealthy moving across the creek. A great blue heron waded in about 12 inches of water off the shoreline, stalking its prey. Without making ripples or waves, it lifted its long legs in the water with ease. I decided to watch this angler in action and see if it had better luck than me. Within minutes, the bird struck its beak into the water’s surface with force and hauled up a 12-inch trout, the first fish I watched being caught that evening. Shockingly, it flipped the trout up over its outstretched neck, opened its beak, and swallowed it whole.

If you have fished on Pennsylvania waters, you may have encountered the prehistoric-looking great blue heron, *Ardea*

*herodias*. As a friend or foe to anglers, the grayish-blue, tall, and long-necked fowl is common in Pennsylvania and throughout the country. The Audubon Society describes the great blue heron’s range from coastal Alaska and southcentral Canada down to Mexico.

In the Pennsylvania Game Commission’s *Wildlife Notes*, Chuck Fergus writes, “In Pennsylvania, they’re found on lakes, reservoirs, ponds, rivers, woods streams, bogs, marshes, and swamps, where they typically stand at the water’s edge or walk slowly through the shallows.” Most herons prey on fish, amphibians, reptiles, insects, other birds, and small mammals. Herons have developed refined skills to target prey. Though we compete to catch fish, anglers can seize some lessons from this stealthy bird.

## Camouflage yourself

When observing a heron walking along the shoreline or flying in the air, it is amazing how its slate gray body, long legs, and s-curved neck blend in with its surroundings. Fish scurry easily in clear water, and camouflaging just as herons do is an advantage. When it comes to shirts, hats, waders, and jackets, productive anglers choose earthy colors to wear such as greens, browns, grays, and blacks to give them an extra edge on shore or when wading. Also, stash the tools you may have such as clippers, hemostats, stringers, and pliers as these tools may catch the sunlight and reflect into the water.



*Crouching, kneeling, or hunching over like a great blue heron provides a lower profile over the fishing pool and alerts less fish.*

## Get close

The great blue heron is notorious for standing among and over its quarry. When wading or fishing from the shoreline, it is advantageous for the angler to get as close to the fish as possible without disturbing the water. This allows for a good cast, presentation, and hookset throughout the entire fishing process. More problems occur when the angler is further from the fish such as false presentations, unruly line, missed hooksets, and more debris obstructions and tangles. Crouching down or kneeling is also a necessary skill for the angler to utilize when fish are in shallow water situations.

## Wade carefully

The approach to the water is crucial to either having a great day or a mediocre day of fishing. Many anglers rush to their spots before planning out their path. The great blue heron moves with precision-footing, calculation, and focus. Before even stepping near the water, ask yourself, "What is my best route to the best fishing?" Then, take short, careful, and calculated steps like the heron to get to that location. Make some casts, and fish your way out as you head to the final destination. You may be surprised to find fish shallower or in a different spot than you thought fish would be holding. In deeper water, sometimes having a wading staff also assists the angler to measure the depth and move carefully as they step.

## Take breaks

Once in a while, take a break from fishing, and let the pool cool down. A heron's patience and stillness sometimes pays off as another feeding opportunity. As anglers, it is good to set the rod down, enjoy the sights, and let the fish acclimate and feel comfortable to feed again. Use this time to recheck knots, retie a lure or fly, eat lunch, or watch and listen to nature. You may be surprised by something you have never noticed before such as wildlife, flora, or bug life.

## Know when to strike

A great blue heron takes the perfect opportunity to strike at prey using lightning speed and its dagger-like bills. Yes, sometimes herons miss, but sometimes great blue herons are accurate. Making that hookset at the right time comes with understanding where you think the best chance at a strike is during your drift or retrieval. Many times, the strike zone will be where your fly, bait, or lure is the deepest and most vulnerable. Sometimes, this also comes at the end of your drift or a cast when it lifts from the stream bottom.

Incorporate these great blue heron tips into your fall fishing arsenal, and keep an eye out for these feathered anglers on the water. ☑



*Great blue herons are patient and still when wading and fishing.*

## More Great Blue Heron Information

Pennsylvania Game Commission – Field Notes

[www.pgc.pa.gov/Education/WildlifeNotesIndex/Documents/herons.pdf](http://www.pgc.pa.gov/Education/WildlifeNotesIndex/Documents/herons.pdf)

Audubon Society

[www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/great-blue-heron](http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/great-blue-heron)

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

[www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Great\\_Blue\\_Heron/lifehistory](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Great_Blue_Heron/lifehistory)

## Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission Meeting Held

During the Commission meeting held virtually on Monday, July 20, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) Board of Commissioners voted to adopt a new strategic plan to guide the agency over the next 3 years. Since the spring of 2019, the PFBC executive staff, members of the Board of Commissioners, and members of the Boating Advisory Board have been collaborating on a new strategic plan through multiple facilitated work sessions. The process resulted in a strategic plan consisting of a new vision statement, guiding principles, values, and six high-level priorities with corresponding goals to help the Commission better fulfill its mission.

“The Strategic Plan is very ambitious, because it fully recognizes the broad diversity of the Commonwealth’s citizens, natural resources, and recreational fishing and boating opportunities,” said Tim Schaeffer, PFBC Executive Director. “This plan, which includes a high level of details and deadlines associated with each goal, ensures that we are continuously held accountable as we serve millions of anglers and boaters and aquatic resources across Pennsylvania.”

This plan is designed to be specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-bound with goals that can be translated into work plans to guide major efforts through July 30, 2023. The Strategic Plan can be reviewed at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com).

The Board elected new officers. Richard Lewis, Adams County, was appointed as president. Commissioner Lewis, who serves as a Boating-at-Large Commissioner, replaces Eric Hussar, Union County, as president. Commissioner Hussar will remain on the Board as District 5 commissioner, representing Bradford, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga, and Union counties.

Richard Kauffman, Berks County, was elected as vice president. Commissioner Kauffman, who serves as District 8 commissioner, representing Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, and Schuylkill

counties, replaces Commissioner Lewis as vice president. Both Commissioner Lewis and Commissioner Kauffman will serve 1-year terms through July 2021.

photos - PFBC archives



Richard Lewis



Richard Kauffman

purchase the property and transfer ownership to the Commission. The total cost of the acquisition is \$441,156. The conservancy has also applied to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) for half of the appraised value of the property and half of the acquisition costs (\$220,578). The conservancy will provide \$120,578 towards the acquisition. The Adams County Trout Unlimited chapter will provide \$16,000.

- In Centre County, the Board approved the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking to amend fishing regulations along Bald Eagle Creek. Under the proposal, Section 03 of Bald Eagle Creek would be managed under an experimental Miscellaneous Special Regulation designed to enhance stocked trout management. This regulation will be identical to the current Delayed Harvest Artificial Lures Only (58 Pa. Code §65.6) regulation; however, all tackle types will be permitted. As such, the regulation allows for year-round fishing with all tackle types and harvest of up to three trout per day at least 9 inches in length from June 15 through Labor Day, with no harvest permitted the remainder of the year. The regulation is designed to provide for an extended period of catch-and-release fishing with all tackle types for stocked trout; then, as stream conditions become less favorable for trout survival due to decreased flow and elevated water temperatures, harvest is permitted under a reduced creel limit. The objectives are to reduce fishing mortality during the catch-and-release period, maintain high trout population densities to provide for high angler catch rates, recycle stocked trout to optimize their recreational benefit, provide high-quality fishing opportunities for stocked trout in the absence of tackle restrictions, and evaluate the use of bait in a delayed harvest regulatory setting. If approved on final rulemaking at a future meeting, the amendment will go into effect on January 1, 2021.
- Commissioners also approved the designation of five stream sections to the list of Class A wild trout streams. The board approved the addition of 73 new waters to the Commission’s list of wild trout streams. These additions will go into effect upon the publication of a second notice in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. A list of waters proposed for wild trout stream and Class A Wild Trout Stream designation can be found at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com).
- Related to trout fishing, the Commission reminds anglers to take summer weather conditions into consideration when enjoying local waterways. In many cases, during hot and dry conditions, trout will seek out the closest source of cold water to provide thermal relief. This often results in many trout congregating at the mouths of cool-water tributaries or spring seeps. The Commission asks anglers to consider that while crowded and thermally stressed trout in a pool of water may look like an easy target, these fish are typically in poor condition and difficult to catch. Anglers should avoid fishing for trout during these conditions, as it can have lasting impacts on the population.

### In other action:

- Commissioners voted to authorize grant funds that will help preserve public fishing opportunities along a portion of Conewago Creek, Adams County. The property is located along Conewago Creek near Russel Tavern Road and Zeigler Mill Road and will provide public fishing access to 5,340 linear feet of stream frontage. Commissioners authorized a grant not to exceed \$84,000 to the Land Conservancy of Adams County for the acquisition of 58 acres along Conewago Creek in Butler Township, Adams County. The conservancy plans to

- In Huntingdon County, Commissioners approved the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking to amend fishing regulations at Whipple Lake. Under the proposal, the 22-acre impoundment owned by the PA DCNR, located within Whipple Dam State Park, would be regulated under Miscellaneous Special Regulations, allowing for harvest of trout but catch and release for all other species. Whipple Lake was drawn down in 2019 for dam structure improvements and sediment removal. With construction nearing completion, the Commission plans to initiate stocking the lake in spring 2021, or as soon as refilling conditions allow, with adult trout and fingerling stockings of select fish species to establish a high-quality warm-water and cool-water fishery. This regulation would allow for the Commission to open the lake to fishing immediately upon refill under a special regulation that will allow for the harvest of trout under Commonwealth Inland Waters fishing regulations but allow only catch-and-release fishing for all other fish species. Once the warm-water fishery is re-established, the lake will be recommended for removal from the Miscellaneous Special Regulation and inclusion in one of the Commission's existing warm-water regulation programs. If approved on final rulemaking at a future meeting, the amendment will go into effect upon publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.
- Also, in Huntingdon County, Commissioners approved the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking to amend fishing regulations at Lake Perez. Under the proposal, Lake Perez, a 72-acre impoundment owned by the Pennsylvania State University, would be removed from the list of waters managed under Miscellaneous Special Regulations, allowing for the harvest of trout but catch and release for all other species. These special regulations have been in place since 2015, when a dam reconstruction project was completed at Lake Perez, and the lake was refilled and restocked following a complete drawdown. The PFBC surveys of the lake during 2019 and 2020 have revealed that warmwater species, including bass and panfish, have become abundant enough to sustain limited harvest. If the Miscellaneous Special Regulation is removed on final rulemaking, Lake Perez will be recommended for addition to the Panfish Enhancement Special Regulations program. All other species will be managed with Commonwealth Inland Waters fishing regulations. If approved on final rulemaking at a future meeting, the amendment will go into effect upon publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.
- In Cumberland County, the Board approved the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking to amend fishing regulations at Opossum Lake. Under the proposal, Opossum Lake, a 47-acre impoundment owned by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and managed by the PFBC, would be removed from the list of waters managed under Miscellaneous Special Regulations, allowing for the harvest of trout but catch and release for all other species. These special regulations have been in place since 2012, when a dam reconstruction project was completed at Opossum Lake, and the lake was refilled and restocked following a complete drawdown. The PFBC surveys of the lake from 2015-2020 have revealed that warmwater species, including bass and panfish, have become abundant enough to sustain limited harvest. If the Miscellaneous Special Regulation is removed on final rulemaking, Opossum Lake will be recommended for addition to the Big Bass and Panfish Enhancement Special Regulations programs. All other species will be managed with Commonwealth Inland Waters fishing regulations. If approved on final rulemaking at a future meeting, the amendment will go into effect upon publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.
- The Board approved the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking pertaining to boating and water-skiing regulations at Blue Marsh Lake, Berks County. This 1,148-acre flood control project managed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is a busy boating destination regulated by Title 58 of the Pennsylvania Code, specifically Section 111.6, Berks County. Blue Marsh Lake has three specific regulations that deviate from the statewide recreational boating regulations regarding exhausts, no-wake zones, and water-skiers. Specifically, subsection (3) states that "a boat may not tow more than one water-skier." This limitation deviates from the standard utilized throughout the Commonwealth, where the number of skiers is determined by the boat's people capacity. Recently, the USACE leadership has changed their local policy/regulation adopting the standard skiing regulation. They have petitioned the Commission to make the same change in Title 58, so Waterways Conservation Officers can continue to assist in enforcement. If adopted on final rulemaking at a future meeting, this amendment would go into effect upon publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.
- In similar action, Commissioners approved the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking pertaining to boating regulations at Shenango River Lake, Mercer County. This 3,560-acre flood control project managed by the USACE has several boating regulations in place that vary from regulations enforced within Title 58 of the Pennsylvania Code. Specifically, subsection (1) states that "the use of motors in excess of 10 horsepower are prohibited in the area west of the Penn Central Railroad (Leavittsburg) causeway to the Ohio line." Recently, the USACE leadership has changed their local policy/regulation adopting a 20-horsepower restriction west of the causeway. They have petitioned the Commission to make the same change to Title 58, so Waterways Conservation Officers can continue to assist in enforcement. The proposed amendment was approved by the Boating Advisory Board at their June 23, 2020, meeting. If adopted on final rulemaking at a future Commission meeting, this amendment would go into effect upon publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.
- The Board adopted a resolution commending the efforts of the PFBC staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. The resolution recognized the perseverance and teamwork of agency employees amid the challenges presented by the pandemic including continuing to provide Pennsylvanians with safe, enjoyable outdoor recreation opportunities that

greatly benefit mental and physical health during a time of considerable stress and uncertainty. The resolution also commended the PFBC staff for completing annual spring stocking operations within hundreds of Pennsylvania waterways without the assistance of community volunteers due to ongoing public health concerns.

- The PFBC Bureau of Law Enforcement Director Colonel Corey Britcher provided the Board with a report related to enhanced Boating Under the Influence (BUI) enforcement surrounding the Independence Day holiday weekend. Colonel Britcher reported that from July 3 through July 5, Waterways Conservation Officers participated in Operation Dry Water, a nationally coordinated effort between law enforcement agencies to prevent boating incidents related to impairment. Throughout the operations in Pennsylvania, officers encountered 2,490 boats, resulting in 298 boating infractions, 1,224 warnings, and 14 BUI arrests. One of the arrests was due to drug-related impairment.

The highest recorded blood-alcohol concentration was .237. Colonel Britcher noted that prior to the enhanced BUI enforcement period, the PFBC led a statewide media campaign to alert the public and stress the importance of staying sober while operating watercraft.

- In his report to the Board, Executive Director Timothy Schaeffer also stressed the importance of boating safety education. Executive Director Schaeffer indicated that seven boating related fatalities have already occurred during 2020, and none of the victims were wearing life jackets. He mentioned that launch permit sales for unpowered boats, such as kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards, have increased by approximately 50% amid the COVID-19 pandemic. With more new boaters on the water this season, Schaeffer urged the public to become familiar with basic boating safety steps including wearing a life jacket, having a float plan, never boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and monitoring weather conditions to avoid storms and high-water conditions.

## A Message from Commission President Richard Lewis



Photo-courtesy of Commissioner Richard Lewis

To my fellow Commissioners, I offer thanks for the trust you have placed in me. As we move through the next year, I am looking forward to seeing the Bureau of Boating established and staffed, to implementing our new strategic plan goals and projects, to sustaining the increased interest and participation in fishing and

boating across Pennsylvania, and to resurveying our diverse angler population to determine their needs and wants. Thank you for the honor of electing me Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) president.

To the PFBC staff, I am extremely grateful for the diligent work and personal commitment you put forth to continue all the Commission's programs and activities through the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. My hat is off to each of you.

To my fellow anglers and boaters, I do not come into this office with a "wish list" of personal agenda items to achieve. Rather, I come in with a strong desire to use science-based decisions to manage our Commonwealth's bountiful water and aquatic and fishery resources to serve the needs of all anglers and boaters while protecting the health and safety of the Commission's employees, partners, volunteers, and customers

during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pennsylvania has "something for everyone," from water-skiing to wild and scenic river floats, from cold water to warm water fishing, from kayaks to paddle boards to personal watercraft.

I caught my first fish, a small Brook Trout, when I was 4-years-old in a 3-foot wide brook in a meadow on a Catskill Mountain farm. I am a non-selective angler. By this statement, I mean that I enjoy catching fish with flies, lures, or bait. I enjoy releasing fish for another angler to catch, and I enjoy keeping fish for frying, grilling, or smoking. I enjoy catching Striped Bass, wild trout, stocked trout, Smallmouth Bass, Largemouth Bass, and panfish. I am happy to live in a state with 86,000 miles of rivers and streams, and I remain just as excited about fishing now as I was 72 years ago when I caught that first small Brook Trout.

My 50-plus-year career in forestry and natural resources management has been good to me, as have been my hundreds of fishing, boating, camping, hiking, and hunting experiences. As long as my age and health hold out, it is time for me to "give back" for all those great years.

I intend to be an accessible president. If you want to communicate directly to me clearly and constructively about the areas where you feel the Commission can do a better job for all Pennsylvania anglers or boaters or about the things we are doing well (and should keep doing), you can reach me at [rlewisfandbcom@aol.com](mailto:rlewisfandbcom@aol.com).

## Errata

On page 5 of the July/August 2020 *Pennsylvania Angler & Boater* magazine, "What Does It Take?", an incorrect spelling of a name was used in the table. The correct spelling is Shaina Painter.

On page 11 of the July/August 2020 *Pennsylvania Angler & Boater* magazine, "Summer Bass Fishing in Mini Lakes",

a regulation was incorrect. The last sentence under Colyer Lake should have read: "The lake is managed under Catch and Release Regulations to allow populations to become self-supporting."

# LABOR DAY FISHING OPPORTUNITIES



Celebrate Labor Day (Monday, September 7) with the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC)! Enjoy these end-of-summer fishing opportunities, including a Mentored Youth

Fishing Day (select panfish waters), and don't forget to buy a Labor Day 1-day adult resident or 1-day adult non-resident license for just \$1.

## \$1.00 Labor Day Fishing License Monday, September 7



PFBC has reduced the price of a 1-day adult resident and 1-day adult non-resident license to just \$1 for Labor Day. With issuing agent and transaction fees, the total price for the 1-day adult license is only \$2.90.

## Mentored Youth Fishing Day: Panfish Waters Monday, September 7



Select panfish waters will be open all day for Mentored Youth Fishing Day participants. Adult anglers (16 years of age or older) must possess a valid Pennsylvania fishing license and be accompanied by a youth angler (less than 16 years of age) who has a Mentored Youth Fishing Permit or Voluntary Youth Fishing License. For a listing of the waters: [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com).

For more details and  
to buy fishing licenses:

[www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com)



# Angler's Notebook

by Jerry Bush



photo-Jerry Bush

As leaves change to vibrant colors, many anglers turn their attention to trout. But, a few cold days may trick anglers into believing the water is cool. A water thermometer allows anglers to monitor water temperatures to make sure water is adequately below 70 degrees F. Trout caught in water 70 degrees F or warmer will be stressed due to low oxygen levels and unlikely to survive after release. Trout in warm water conserve energy and are less likely to move more than a few inches to take a fly or lure. Fish for bass or other warmwater species until the stream is below 68 degrees F.

Pennsylvania anglers targeting Northern Pike usually fish natural baits or cast crankbaits near shallow water weeds. However, do not ignore soft plastic lures often considered only as bass lures. The action of soft plastic lures may entice Northern Pike. Pike may be accidentally caught by anglers targeting bass with small lures. Rigging a soft plastic lure to a weedless hook is helpful if a weed area is being targeted. As water temperatures cool, locate deeper drop-offs just outside the weed line, especially if the weather has been unseasonably cold several days in a row, which causes shallow water to cool before slightly deeper water cools. A few degrees may make a big difference to any fish.

A tactic for catching Northern Pike or smaller Muskellunge is to hook a Creek Chub or large minnow through the body and dangle it below a bobber, which is buoyant enough to support the bait and any added weight. Adjust the live bait to various depths by moving the float's position on the line. Pike and Muskellunge do not always "chomp" the bait, and it is common to observe the

float moving along the water's surface several yards before the fish dives with it. Wait 10- to 15-seconds or for the bobber to be pulled swiftly under before setting the hook.

When fishing from shore for Northern Pike or Muskellunge, use a long, flexible rod to cast baits or lures a longer distance. A flexible rod is more forgiving when battling these fish. Make sure the reel's drag is set to allow the arbor to slip to prevent line breakage. The stronger the line, the tighter the drag should be set without compromising the line. A wire leader tied between the fishing line and the lure prevents break offs. Wire leaders may be purchased in various diameters and strengths.

After Labor Day, a reduction in boats opens up many inland lakes to a trolling tactic for catching Walleyes. Walleyes often move to the side as vessels pass overhead. Target Walleyes while trolling inline planer boards, which attach directly to fishing line. Inline planer boards carry lures 15- to 30-feet to each side of the boat, putting the lure in the strike zone. These boards, usually made of plastic, attach at the rear with a clip that allows line to pass through unencumbered. The rod end of the line is pinched between pressure adjustable, rubber grommets toward the forend of the board. If adjusted properly, the pinched line pulls free of the grommet when a fish strikes the lure, allowing the board to turn backwards, so it can slide freely back to the fish. It offers minimal resistance as the Walleye is retrieved. If a planer board is moving erratically, the grommet may be adjusted too tight for a large fish to pull the line free, or a small fish may have taken the bait.

## Fishin' from the Kitchen

### Teriyaki Catfish

by Wayne Phillips

On a blustery, fall evening, what could be better than a bowl of udon noodles, vegetables, and tasty teriyaki catfish?

#### Ingredients for four servings:

- 4 6- to 8-ounces boneless, skinless catfish fillets
- 2 green onions, cut into ¼-inch slices
- 1 cup teriyaki marinade or sauce, divided
- Salt and black pepper to taste

#### Procedure

Place the catfish fillets in a large freezer bag. Add ¾ cup teriyaki marinade. Massage the marinade into the catfish. Let the marinade stand for 30 minutes, allowing the flavors to penetrate the catfish.

Pat the catfish dry with paper towels. Pan fry the catfish in a non-stick pan over medium heat until cooked through. Season

to taste with salt and black pepper. Drizzle the remaining teriyaki sauce over the fish before serving. Garnish the fish with green onions.

#### Serve

Serve the catfish on a bed of udon noodles and stir fried vegetables, like sugar snap peas, mushrooms, onions, bok choy, and bean sprouts.

#### Tips

If the marinade is left on the catfish before frying, it may easily burn. Remember, the marinade has already flavored the catfish.

Several forms of teriyaki marinade or sauce are available in Asian markets. The marinades are typically thinner and designed for marinating fish or meat. The sauces tend to be thicker for putting on top of the finished dish. Some stores have flavored teriyaki sauces.

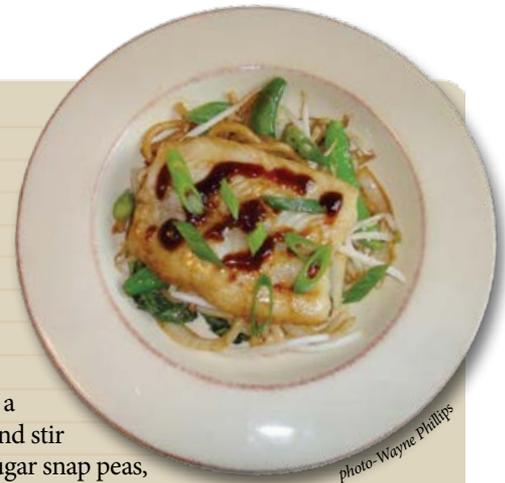
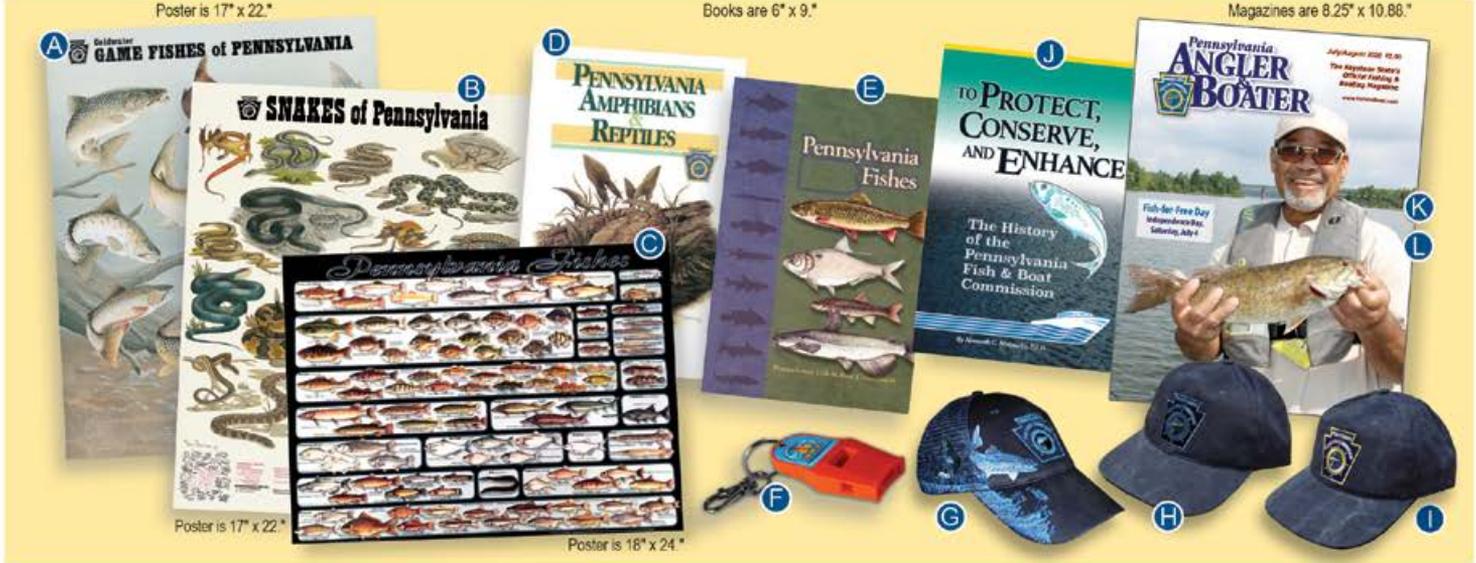


photo-Wayne Phillips

Poster is 17" x 22."

Books are 6" x 9."

Magazines are 8.25" x 10.86."



Price Quantity Subtotal

<b>A</b>	Set of: Coldwater Fishes, Coolwater/Warmwater Fishes, Migratory Fishes, Miscellaneous Fishes, Panfishes, Forage Fishes (6 posters)	\$ 9.43	_____
<b>B</b>	Set of: Frogs, Salamanders, Snakes, Turtles (4 posters)	\$ 7.55	_____
<b>C</b>	Set of: Pennsylvania Fishes Wall Charts (2 posters)	\$ 4.60	_____
<b>D</b>	PA Amphibians & Reptiles Book (172 pages)	\$ 9.43	_____
<b>E</b>	PA Fishes Book (172 pages)	\$ 9.43	_____
<b>F</b>	"Wear It!" Safety Whistle	\$ 5.66	_____
<b>G</b>	Navy Embroidered Hat - <i>non-taxable</i>	\$14.00	_____
<b>H</b>	Denim Blue Hat with Blue Logo - <i>non-taxable</i>	\$14.00	_____
<b>I</b>	Denim Blue Hat with Color Logo - <i>non-taxable</i>	\$14.00	_____
<b>J</b>	To Protect, Conserve, and Enhance Book (400 pages)	\$19.95	_____

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<b>K</b>	Pennsylvania Angler & Boater Magazine One-Year Subscription (6 issues) (64 pages)	\$20.00	_____
<b>L</b>	Pennsylvania Angler & Boater Magazine Three-Year Subscription (18 issues) (64 pages)	\$48.00	_____

NEW  RENEWAL

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<b>SHIPPING &amp; HANDLING</b>	\$ 0.00 – \$ 6.00	\$ 1.25
	\$ 6.01 – \$ 20.00	\$ 2.95
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	\$ 60.01 – \$100.00	\$ 8.95
	\$100.01 – \$150.00	\$10.95
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PA residents must pay 6% sales tax on merchandise AND shipping/handling charges if the order includes any taxable items.

## TO ORDER THESE ITEMS:

Click on "The Outdoor Shop" at [www.fishandboat.com/Transact/Pages/PublicationsProducts.aspx](http://www.fishandboat.com/Transact/Pages/PublicationsProducts.aspx).

To order fishing licenses and boat registration renewals, visit [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com).

Upon purchase of a fishing license, a .pdf file containing an image of your license is provided, which can be saved to your mobile device or computer. Similarly, with each boating related transaction, customers will receive a digital receipt that serves as a temporary permit or registration valid for immediate use.



Looking for some fun activities to entertain kids indoors: [www.fishandboat.com/LearningCenter/ActivitiesAndEducationPortal/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.fishandboat.com/LearningCenter/ActivitiesAndEducationPortal/Pages/default.aspx)

**TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT \$** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS DO NOT INCUR SHIPPING FEES OR SALES TAX AND SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED WHEN CALCULATING THESE CHARGES.**

# Dunham's

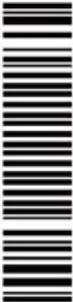
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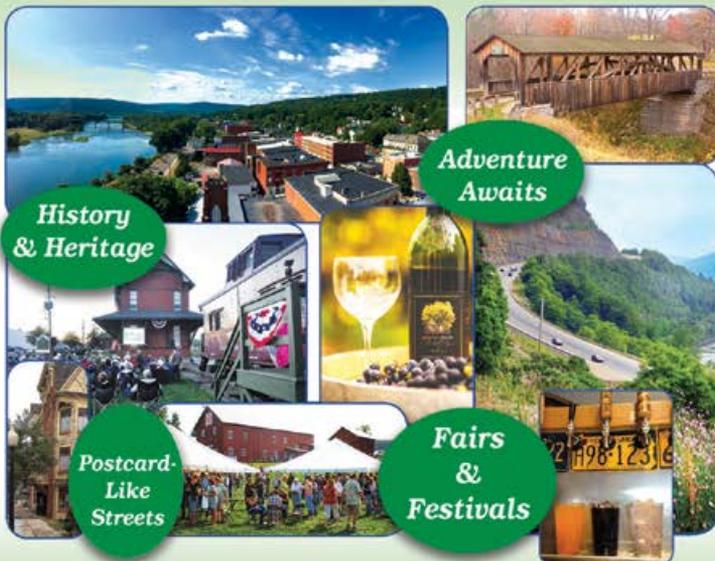
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Advertising in the *Pennsylvania Fishing Summary* and *Pennsylvania Angler & Boater* provides opportunities to reel in customers. Web advertising is also available on [www.fishinpa.com](http://www.fishinpa.com) with the purchase of an ad in both publications.

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## CAST & CAUGHT



**Ashley Vitaioli**, Scranton, caught this 5-pound, 8-ounce, 21-inch Brown Trout while fishing the Lackawanna River.

For the "Cast & Caught" column, send only prints (no larger than 8"x10") and a completed "Model Release form" available at [www.fishandboat.com/Transact/AnglerBoater](http://www.fishandboat.com/Transact/AnglerBoater). Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want your photograph returned. Persons aboard boats must be wearing properly fitted and buckled life jackets. Mail to: Editor, **Pennsylvania Angler & Boater**, P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000



**TAKE ME FISHING**



**Coletta Janicki**, age 12, caught and released her first golden Rainbow Trout, measuring 20-inches long, on her first cast, while fishing North Fork Little Beaver Creek, Beaver County.



**Larry Barnett**, Coatesville, caught and released this 5½-pound, 22-inch Brook Trout, while fishing Hibernia Dam, Chester County.



**Justin Hartzel**, Enola, caught this nice Smallmouth Bass while fishing Shermans Creek, Perry County.



**David Kindelberger**, age 10, caught this 17-inch tiger trout while fishing Mosquito Creek Sportsmen's Association pond, Clearfield County.