



THE GREAT LAKES SPORT FISHING NEWS

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Managing for the Key Value

By Dennis Eade,
GLSFN Executive Director

Recently I was asked by a media person in Toledo, Ohio to provide perspective on Michigan's commercial fishing statute update controversy being waged among the commercial fishing industry, sport fishing enthusiasts and the MDNR. It made me realize that unless you are familiar with how the world class fresh water sport fishery came about in the state of Michigan, you probably don't understand

why there is controversy. Sport fishing in Michigan really began in 1964 when Pacific salmon were successfully introduced into the Great Lakes. Prior to that time, the lakes were inundated with invasive alewives and lamprey eels which had come from ballast water discharge from ocean going freighters and migration up the St. Lawrence River. Commercial Fishers had overharvested the lakes and lake trout were seriously in danger of disappearing all together.

Something had to be done and fortunately Dr. Howard Tanner, who had recently been hired as chief of fisheries saw "the state's Great Lakes waters as the Midwest's last frontier for recreation, one that could generate immense economic activity because of the time, boats and gear it would take for sportsmen to chase fish on such big water." * Tanner called it "Managing for the Key Value". And

"Managing"
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The U.S. government utilizes 10 national hatcheries to supply fish to the Great Lakes, where commercial, Tribal, and recreational fisheries produce USD 7 billion (EUR 6.5 billion) in economic value to the region.

Photo courtesy of BEST-BACKGROUNDS/Shutterstock



(Garret Ellison | MLive)

This file photo from May 2024 shows the Manistee River flowing through Tippy Dam in Manistee County. The renewable energy facility is among those owned by Consumers Energy, which may be selling its fleet of 13 hydroelectric dams.

Consumers Power Hydro Project Sale

The Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition* opposes a plan by Consumers Energy to sell 13 hydropower projects for \$1 each, and then enter into a 30-year power purchase agreement with the buyers.

Here's why:

- Consumers Energy will be able to pass along the cost of the power purchase agreements to its ratepayers. - The new owners will have no incentive to make long-term investments in the dams, as cost-recovery mechanisms will not be available to them as they are to Consumers Energy.

- By selling the dams, Consumers Energy is washing its hands of its corporate responsibility to several

Michigan communities. • 6 of the 13 hydropower projects do not meet water quality standards for temperature during the summer months, casting future relicensing in doubt.

- Tribes are the longest-standing community members associated with the river systems. Any proposed sales needs to respect and honor Tribal concerns.

- There's a danger that profits may get put over regulatory compliance and safety. Even under private ownership, catastrophic dam failures such as those in Edenville and Sanford too often become the taxpayer's burden.

Now is the time to tell Consumers Energy to

honor its responsibility to Michigan communities, and keep ownership of its hydropower projects. Email CEO Garrick Rochow (garrick.rochow@cmsenergy.com) and VP of Community Affairs Angela Thompkins (angela.thompkins@cmsenergy.com) and make your voice heard.

*The Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition members include Michigan United

Conservation Clubs (MUCC), Michigan Council of Trout Unlimited, Great Lakes Council of Fly Fishers International, Anglers of the Au Sable, and Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen's Association.

US House Passes Great Lakes Hatchery Fish-Tracking Bill

Nathan Strout
Environment & Sustainability
Seafoodsource.com

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed a bill to implement a mass marking program for the Great Lakes, improving the federal government's tracking of hatchery-origin fish in the bodies of water.

"Establishing a Great Lakes Mass Marking Program will improve the effectiveness of our fisheries while enhancing the environmental, scientific, and recreational benefits that healthy fish populations provide," U.S. Representative Bill Huizenga (R-Michigan) said in a statement. "This bipartisan initiative is a win for both the economy and the ecology of the Great Lakes."

The U.S. government utilizes 10 national hatcheries to supply fish to the Great Lakes, where commercial, Tribal, and recreational fisheries produce USD 7 billion (EUR 6.5 billion) in economic value to the region. In 2024, national hatchery programs stocked 4.8 million fish in

the lakes.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) marks hatchery fish to better understand how they are interacting with the regional ecosystem, however, the government only has enough resources to mark roughly 41 percent of the fish raised. Since 2010, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has marked many of the fish raised in hatcheries, allowing the government to better understand how they are interacting with the Great Lakes ecosystem.

"Mass marking is the practice of tagging large numbers of hatchery-raised fish so we can easily distinguish them from the wild fish population," U.S. Representative Debbie Dingell (D-Michigan) said in a statement.

The Great Lakes Mass Marking Program Act would bolster those efforts, establishing a federal mass marking program with USD 5 million (EUR 4.6 million) in annual funding.

"The implementation of mass marking will help us better understand the fish

populations of our Great Lakes and the cultural, economic, recreational, and food benefits they provide," Dingell said. "This bill provides the tools needed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to implement a mass marking program for every hatchery fish in the Great Lakes region, which will allow fishery managers to collect valuable, timely information, ultimately improving the effectiveness and efficiency of hatchery operations and fishery management. I'm proud it passed the House, and will continue to work across the aisle with my colleagues to get it signed into law."

The legislation has been sent to the Senate, which will also have to approve of the legislation before it becomes law.



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The Quality of Fishing Reflects the Quality of Living!

Rebuilding Lost Links: Great Lakes Coregonine Restoration

By Andrea Miehls and Margaret Sigmon, Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Coregonines are a diverse group of fishes in the salmon family that are native to the Great Lakes. They can be broadly categorized as ciscoes and whitefishes, but are known by many other names (for example, lake herring and chubs—like the smoked chubs sold in grocery stores). A century ago, eleven coregonine species roamed the Great Lakes, including three whitefishes (lake whitefish, round whitefish, and pygmy whitefish) and eight ciscoes (longjaw cisco, deep-water cisco, blackfin cisco, shortnose cisco, shortjaw cisco, cisco, bloater, and kiyi). These species were abundant in all the Great Lakes, occupying diverse habitats, including rivers, bays, and the deepest parts of the lakes. Many coregonine species were key prey for top predators like lake trout and northern pike, and they supported some of the largest freshwater fisheries ever recorded. At their peak in the early 1900s, 30 to 50 million pounds of cisco were harvested each year from Lake Erie alone! Some of the species were

so abundant that stories circulated of dipping buckets full of fish straight from the water.

Unfortunately, Great Lakes coregonines experienced dramatic declines throughout the 19th and 20th centuries due to overfishing, invasive species, and habitat loss. Three species that were only found in the Great Lakes are now considered extinct (deep-water cisco, blackfin cisco, and longjaw cisco), and multiple species are locally extinct from several Great Lakes. For example, kiyi historically occupied four Great Lakes but are only found in Lake Superior now. Though none of the whitefishes have gone extinct, their populations have also experienced major declines in recent decades.

To support diverse fisheries, reestablish lost links in food webs, and improve the stability and resiliency of the Great Lakes, fishery managers, scientists, and partners have been working together on a Great Lakes basin-wide coregonine restoration initiative since 2018. Project partners include the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, U.S. and Canadian federal agencies, U.S. Tribes, Canadian First Nations, state and provincial agencies, non-profit

organizations, and universities.

The initiative is implementing methods that can include both Western science and Indigenous Knowledge. Potential restoration actions for fishery managers include reintroducing locally extinct species, restoring or connecting habitats, and creating refuges. Another critical step is to monitor the effectiveness of restoration actions and provide managers with the opportunity to modify restoration strategies or priorities.

Through Great Lakes coregonine restoration, fishery managers, scientists, and partners hope to restore and enhance the ecological balance, cultural heritage, and economic sustainability of the Great Lakes region for generations to come. If you want to learn more about the effort to restore and conserve coregonines across the Great Lakes, visit the coregonine restoration website at: <https://www.greatlake-sciscoes.org/>.



Young cisco in a tank at Hammond Bay Biological Station, a research station in northeastern Michigan. Credit: Andrea Miehls, Great Lakes Fishery Commission



A Coregonine Restoration Initiative researcher holds a cisco captured during scientific sampling. Credit: Ralph Tingley, USGS



An angler holds her catch of cisco after a day of fishing in Lake Charlevoix. Credit: Tracy Claramunt

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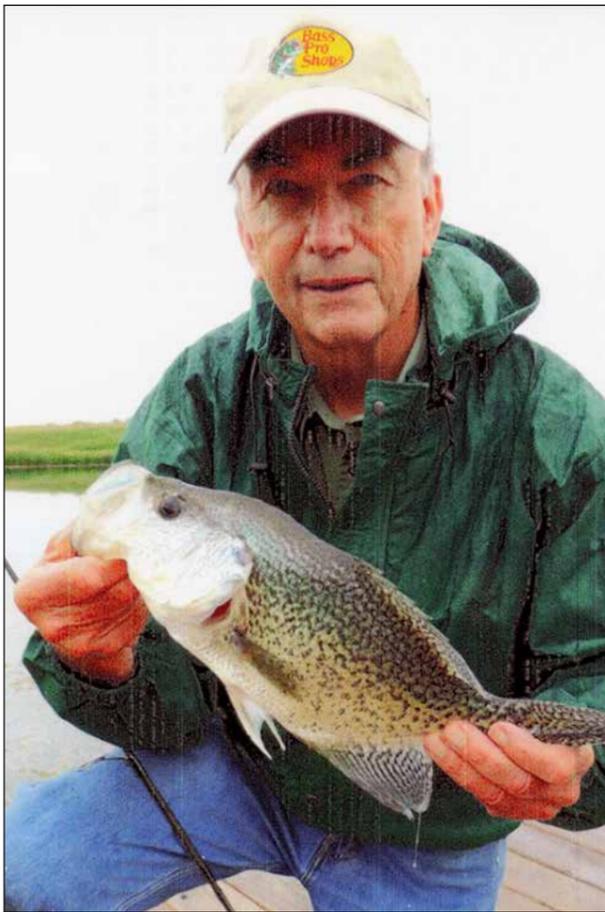
A Tribute to Panfish

By Don Banning
MidWest Outdoors.com

For those not familiar with the term panfish, it pertains to a multitude of the smaller species of fish that fit nicely into a frying pan and provide tasty eating. Despite their relatively small sizes, they give a good account of themselves when hooked with light tackle.

I often write about bass fishing, but some of my fondest memories of great angling outings took place when crappies, bluegills and sunfish were the sought-after species.

On one occasion many years ago, a friend and I fished a large pond several miles from my home. The fish of choice that day were really big hybrid sunfish, many in the 9- to 10-inch class. I remember well the lure I was using that day: a 1/32-ounce, black/green Beetle Spin. I used a 5'6"



ultralight Wright-McGill rod combined with an ultralight reel.

A couple of years ago, another friend and I fished a farm pond with bass being our first option, and then maybe crappies as our second choice. My plans soon changed when bass fishing proved slow, so I decided to change plans and try for crappies. I switched to a lighter rod and reel and tied on a 1/16-ounce jig with the very small Z-Man Micro TRD. I'm telling you, this was a great choice, as I proceeded to catch one crappie one after another, only one under 10 inches with some measuring 11 inches. My total for that day was 22 crappies, all of which I released as I didn't have the time to clean any when getting home.

It's important to match your tackle to the species you're after. Other than an ultralight for panfishing, I sometimes go with a Fenwick light-action, fast-tipped rod. I match it with either an ultralight or light spinning reel spooled with good mono line, usually

from the Gamma Co.

The B'n'M Co. produces another line of rods that are great for panfish. I like their 7-foot, light-action Sam's Super Sensitive or their 6'6" TCB ultralight rod. This model is the Lelands Trout, Crappie and Bluegill model.

Getting back to fishing experiences, two years ago I had the opportunity to take my granddaughter Leslie and her daughter Jouney to a small, local pond with a good population of bluegills. Jouney started out fast, catching one bluegill after another. I forgot about fishing, and so did her mother, as we both enjoyed a youngster having a great time. Jouney ended up the day catching 22 big bluegills, none under 8 inches, and a few that were 9 inches.

The bait of choice that day was Gulp Alive Crickets fished on a 1/32-ounce jig head, suspended 3 feet under a Mr. Crappie Rattlin' Bobber. Her rod was a 5-foot ultralight with an ultralight reel.

There is nothing wrong

with using live bait for panfish. On occasion, I've used wax worms, earthworms and nightcrawlers, but it's easier to use artificials as they are easy to keep and there's no worry about spoilage. Berkley Gulp Baits are a good choice, as well as their Crappie and Panfish Nibbles. I like to fish the Nibbles on either a small Mini Mite Jig or Custom Jigs and Spins Flu Flu Jig. I always fish these under a Mr. Crappie Rattlin' Bobber or a Billy Boy Bobber under the Betts label. Some other artificials by Betts resemble the Beetle Spin and are great choices for all types of panfish.

Regardless of the species you are after, be sure to keep your tackle light to enjoy the sport more. And remember to be reasonable in the numbers of fish you keep, and to leave some for the next guy.

If you want to try a different, exciting fish species or technique, you'll find plenty of suggestions in every issue of MidWest Outdoors.

Partners and Community Celebrate Completion of Plainwell Dam Site, Revitalized Stretch of Kalamazoo River

By Mark Mills, MDNR

Once restricted with deteriorating infrastructure, a stretch of the Kalamazoo River in Plainwell, Michigan, has returned to a thriving, free-flowing ecosystem. Federal, state and local partners, community members and others gathered Thursday morning near the riverbank, just northwest of where M-89 crosses U.S. 131, to mark the moment, see the sights and talk about what they've learned and what's ahead.

The Plainwell Dam Removal and River Restoration Project, a \$7 million multiagency initiative, removed aging infrastructure and revitalized nearly a mile of river and surrounding habitat. It's an effort

that will enhance safety, improve fish and wildlife habitat and provide recreational and economic opportunities for the surrounding community.

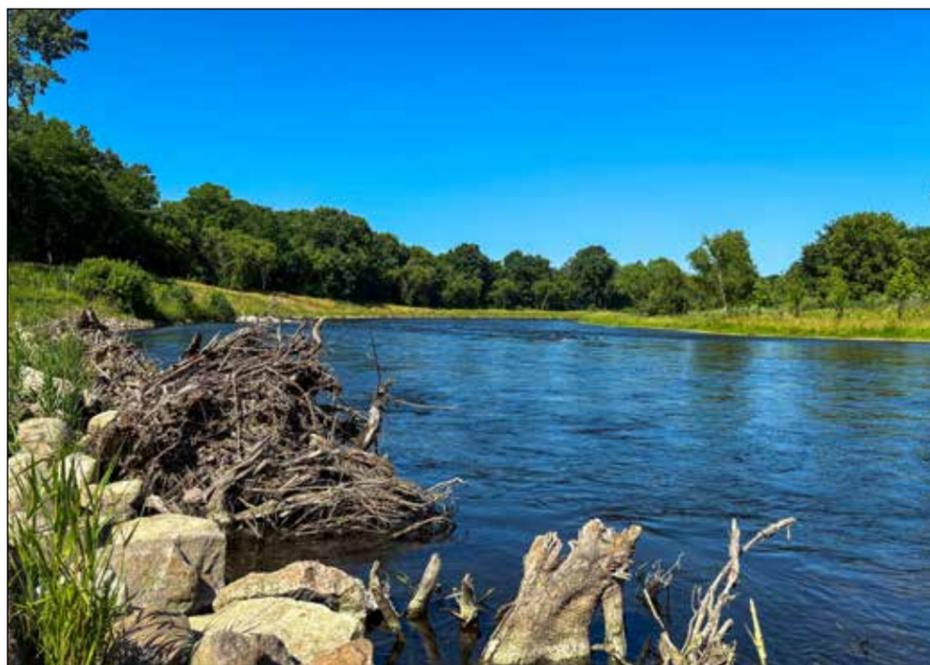
Michigan Department of Natural Resources Director Scott Bowen said the DNR manages more than 200 dams across the state, and outcomes like this are exactly what the agency strives for with removal/replacement projects.

"Dams are a big challenge for the state of Michigan and for the DNR, especially when many dams weren't designed for their current uses or to current construction standards," Bowen said. "The thorough partnership approach to the Plainwell Dam Removal and River Restoration Proj-

ect and the commitment from all to protect public safety, conserve natural resources and boost outdoor recreation opportunities is a model I hope we can replicate."

He also noted that the project shows what is possible with proper investment, acknowledging the \$15 million Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has proposed in her budget for the next fiscal year to help address some of the state's high-priority dams.

"We appreciate that support from the governor and from legislators as we continue the urgent work of assessing the condition and sustainability of these dams," Bowen said.



Above: Strategically placed rootwads – large tree trunks with intact root systems – along the Kalamazoo River provide critical shelter and spawning habitat for fish, while also stabilizing the riverbank and reducing erosion.

Restoring A River and A Community

The Plainwell Dam project was not a quick fix, and ventures of this complexity require multiple partnerships.

Jennifer Tewkesbury, Area of Concern Coordinator with the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, said the Kalamazoo River was designated as an Area of Concern in 1987 due to the contamination by PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) as a byproduct of the operation of multiple paper mills and paper recycling industries along the river.

"While these industries provided good jobs and benefits to the local economy, that prosperity came

at a cost to the natural resource," she said. "Further, the multiple dam structures that provided power for these facilities became physical barriers to a naturally functioning river system."

"EGLE would like to recognize our sister agency, the Michigan DNR, for taking the lead role on this project, as well as the EPA's Great Lakes National Program Office for their support of the Kalamazoo River Area of Concern and the funding provided through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative."

An ecological transformation, the project:

- Restored 0.8 miles of river channel.

- Stabilized more than a mile of riverbank.
- Reestablished 15 acres of native riparian habitat.
- Expanded the floodplain by 6 acres and dramatically increased the river's capacity to store floodwaters, reducing downstream flood risk.

- Strategically placed more than 325 "rootwads" – large tree trunks with attached roots – to protect banks and provide vital fish and wildlife habitat.

Already, signs of ecological recovery are emerging, with increased sight-

"Plainwell"
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View of the Commonwealth Power Company Dam (eventually known as Plainwell Dam #1) between Otsego and Plainwell, Michigan. Once a symbol of early industrial development on the Kalamazoo River, this aging structure (shown here in the early 1900s) contributed to decades of river congestion and ecological decline before its eventual removal. (Credit to U. Williams Photoette Bloomington, Illinois).

ST. JOE RIVER: SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN'S FISHING GEM

The St. Joe has a number of dams that can improve the available fishing opportunities. The barriers at Niles and Berrien Springs are both considered some of the best areas in this river to fish.

By Chuck Lichon,
Great Lakes Angler

Having resided in the east central part of Michigan my entire life, my fishing experiences have been focused north of a straight line drawn from Bay City to Muskegon. That's to be expected. However, many times I have heard of fishing south of that demarcation line including the great fishing on the St. Joe River in the SW part of the state.

If you look at the DNR's Michigan Maps (Michigan.gov/fishing; then go down to "fisheries division contact division," then toward the top click on "contact a fishery bio"), you can find rivers all over the state along with some rather significant angling information. If you follow the St. Joe River from its mouth emptying into Lake Michigan at Benton Harbor/St. Joe, you will see how it meanders significantly south into Indiana, then back east and upwards into Michigan again where it ends south of Hillsdale at its headwaters at Baw Beese Lake. The main branch of the St. Joe River is 206 miles long, and it is within five miles of the headwaters of the other St. Joe River of the eastward-flowing Maumee River watershed.

The St. Joseph River is a massive waterway and often has an intense flow that makes it hard to wade, but shore fishing is certainly doable and often with great success. Boat fishing is more common on the river since it tends to be easier (and safer) than wader angling. There are large pools and deep runs across the entire river, no matter where you choose to stop and drop a line.

The St. Joe has a number of dams that can improve the available fishing opportunities. The barriers at Niles and Berrien Springs are both considered some of the best areas in this river to fish. The dams are set up to let salmon and steelhead continue moving upstream toward Indiana.

Coho salmon enter this river in September and tend to grow most commonly up to five to eight pounds. Most of these fish are aggressive and will be found in schools. Kings are also available and tend to show up after the coho have made their presence in the river. The kings can weigh upwards of 12 pounds.

Charter Captain Jerry Link, of St. Joe (originatorcharters.com), states that he charts for steelhead from the first of November to around mid-March, after which he heads to the big waters of Lake Michigan for coho and various other game species. During the month of February Jerry

says he will often hook larger fish, but all winter can be a great time to fish for these delectable fighters. Link states that "the St. Joe actually is the second longest, widest, and deepest river that feeds Lake Michigan." It's no wonder that when you look at a map of the entirety of this river you will notice the enormous watershed through which it travels.

Jerry's prime target on the St. Joe are steelhead, "but you can never rule out an occasional walleye or bonus Skamania," he says. Link's heated and comfortable charter boat works various stretches of the river, which typically varies from 4-7 feet deep, however it's depth changes dramatically near the mouth where it can reach depths as high as 30 feet.

His choice of steelhead offerings includes the dependable Hot-N-Tots, Mag Lips and spawn bags. Bouncing these behind the boat often find success during this time of the year.

Another seasoned veteran of this area is Russ Clark, who says that "We don't get a lot of Chinooks moving into the St. Joe until late in the year (late September onward) because the river is so warm." He added, "The fishing can be tough because the salmon just blast right up to the dam, but, like Captain Link, Clark uses plugs, such as Flatfish, Mag Lips or Hot-N-Tots, producing some pretty good catches at times. If you use spawn you might pick up a bonus Skamania steelhead as well." Many anglers fish this river from the end of September to the end of March. Work the fish from the mouth to Berrien Springs Dam, 25 miles upriver bottom bouncing spawn, or using plugs, and slipping them downriver slowly.

This paragraph may be a bit difficult mentally to visualize without someone actually showing you the technique, but here goes.



Edy and her brother Mike show off a few nice steelhead taken from the St. Joe River.

To let the lure out behind the boat, you strip line off the reel until you feel it hit bottom. Then you let up on your thumb from the line on the reel, point the rod tip upwards with some slack line, then lift up, and let your sinker bounce. You will feel it tap again on the bottom. Then lift off the bottom and drop it down again. Then repeat by letting up your thumb again to allow more line out. Continue doing this as the lure or spawn works its way downstream. When a fish hits, you will feel a good hit like a bass. Drop the rod tip toward the fish, but not directly pointing at it. Close the bail and wait for the fish to pull tight. Set the hook

harder if needed. Practice makes perfect as they say. Or go out with a guide and let them show you how to do this. Taking a guided trip once or twice will help you become independent on the river.

If you wish to work the river from the shoreline, consider using about a 10-foot spinning combo. This makes it easier battling a steelie. For line, a 10-pound Berkely XL clear main line and 6-pound Sunline Assassin (or comparable) leader is sufficient. Place split shot on the line, spreading them out evenly along the line, leaving the last spit shot about 12-15 inches from the egg sack. Use enough shot to get the offering deep in the water, allowing it to bounce off the bottom. For hooking the spawn, just slip the hook through the netting without piercing the eggs. Toss up stream and open bail to allow line to free up. Close the bail and let the eggs work downriver. Not much more complicated than that.

Moving into spring, those same steelhead that were there in the winter months remain in the river until the spawn in March. And steelies can spawn multiple times, weather-dependent. By the time the temperatures start to get warmer in summer, the winter steelhead will drop back down to the lake.

Michigan has bumped up the salmon plantings in all the ports, upwards of

240,000 alone in the St. Joe during 2022. Matt Diana, DNR Biologist, SW MI office, states that this 240K number was an exception, however going forward Chinook stocking in the St. Joe will be 150,000 every two years. We also benefit from our southern neighbor for this exciting angling opportunity. The Indiana DNR stock Skamania and in 2022 records show 156,000 steel-head including the Skamania strain. Ben Dickenson, Indiana DNR, stated that they plant 40,000 winter-run steelhead annually, plus they receive another 40,000 from Michigan for planting. In return, Indiana gives us Skamania for planting not in the St. Joe, but along our Western Michigan rivers. Ben also says they plant 60,000 coho, and total Skamania plantings are equal to 75,000 annually in the St. Joe. So, this symbiotic relationship benefits both of us for increased quality fishing.

My limited past experience on this river has drawn me to want to visit it again sooner than later. The ruralness of the shoreline that we fished, the quiet flow of the water passing the boat, and seeing considerable wildlife and waterfowl gave me that "up north" feeling that I was so used to experiencing. I can see why a lot of people from destinations like Indiana and Illinois make the drive to this gem of a river.

Access Sites

Riverview and Benton Harbor Park are good launch options when open (seasonal). Also, the Benton Harbor DNR launch, and the river public boat launch. This launch also has a great fish cleaning site and my experience has been it also has clean bathrooms. A big plus for families. Other places include Shamrock Park, (which has a comfortable heated indoor fish cleaning building).

The north parking lot and wheelchair accessible paved walkway at Silver Beach provide quick and easy access to the South Pier at the mouth of the St. Joseph River. This popular fishing location offers anglers access to shore and pier fishing opportunities.

Bait and Tackle

The Fishin Hole, 1127 Main Street, St. Joseph (269) 982-3474; Tackle Haven, 741 Riverview Dr., Benton Harbor, (269) 925-0341, across from the DNR launch; Rusty Hooks Bait and Tackle, 510 N 2nd St., Niles, (269) 683-3474; Clear H2O Tackle, 69037 Christiana Lake Rd, Edwardsburg, MI, ((269) 414-4131.



Captain Link's enclosed pontoon will keep occupants toasty warm and dry during inclement weather.





**Dennis Eade, Executive Director
Michigan Steelhead & Salmon Fishermen's Association**

MSSFA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Dennis Eade



The By-Laws amendment proposal moved through the local chapter decision phase. Voting is complete and the required two thirds of state chapters affirmed the amendment. MSSFA will now seek nominees for the seven director positions and nominations from the chapter voting representatives. Elections will take place yet this year.

The Michigan Senate released 2 bills to the Michigan House of Representatives (SB 276 & 277) for consideration back in May. The bills would increase hunting and fishing licenses and provide additional funding for the MDNR. Both bills have languished in committee for two and a half months with little to no movement. We are hoping that a second set of bills will be introduced in the House by Rep. Vanderwall

which is more favorable to anglers. This effort is being spearheaded by Captain Mark Williams and has the support of many fishing groups including MSSFA. It is currently still in the Legislative Services Bureau being drafted and is expected to be introduced soon. If it is introduced and passes the House, there is a good chance the Senate may reconcile both bill packages eliminating what the sponsors feel have little chance of passing and keeping provisions that both Republicans and Democrats can support. We remain cautiously optimistic.

A petition has been filed by the Sault Tribe to the United States Supreme Court seeking review of the decision by the District Court to enter the 2023 Great Lakes Fishing Decree over their objections.

The Sault Tribe argues the District Court exceeded its equitable authority in entering the decree and binding the Sault Tribe to its terms. It is worth noting that applications in the United States Supreme Court are granted in less than 2% of the cases (perhaps slightly more frequently in cases that involve Treaty rights). From this point, the other parties will file responses urging the United States Supreme Court to not hear the case, and then the United States Supreme Court will decide whether to grant review. If review is granted, there would be another round of briefing and argument next year. It is going to be a long drawn-out process but if the tribe prevails in court, it's going to rewrite history and turn the management of the fishery on its head. Stay tuned.

Recent communications from Consumers Energy suggests it is seriously considering selling the obsolete dams and it has prompted the Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition to begin a public

relations campaign to respond to this news and begin alerting the public to the devastating results this could have. We need to reach out to our legislators, local government officials and community leaders warning them that this decision is foisting off liability for dam failure and/or decommissioning costs onto the public, as well as the state of Michigan, will result in millions of dollars of exposure and allow Consumers to walk away from its fiduciary responsibility to decommission its obsolete dams.

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed a bill to implement a mass marking program for the Great Lakes, improving the federal government's tracking of hatchery-origin fish in the bodies of water. It has bipartisan support with sponsors like Congressman Bill Huizenga (R) and Con-

gresswoman Debbie Dingell (D) and now goes to the Senate for a vote. This could not have come at a better time since the NRC Steelhead Task Group presented its findings and recommendations to the Natural Resources Commission regarding studying the potential causes of a drop in steelhead returning to the rivers last fall and winter and recommend more research into the factors impacting steelhead return to the rivers. The Great Lakes Mass Marking Program Act would bolster those efforts, establishing a federal mass marking program with USD 5 million (EUR 4.6 million) in annual funding. "The implementation of mass marking will help us better understand the fish populations of our Great Lakes and the cultural, economic, recreational, and food benefits they provide," Dingell said. "This bill pro-

vides the tools needed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to implement a mass marking program for every hatchery fish in the Great Lakes region, which will allow fishery managers to collect valuable, timely information, ultimately improving the effectiveness and efficiency of hatchery operations and fishery management.

I hope you are getting on the water to take advantage of the fishing on big lakes. It's a challenge given the wind conditions and changing water temperatures but it usually results in trips that see an average of six fish boated per trip. Not bad for a day on the water. Tight lines!!!



"Managing" Continued from page 1

that value has turned into a \$7.1 billion dollar sport fishing industry, 1.1 million licensed fishers and thousands of out of state anglers traveling to Michigan and boosting Michigan's tourism economy.

The opposition to the expansion of commercial fishing lies in the fact that the allocation of Great Lakes fish to commercial harvest does not provide the greatest good for the greatest number of people for the longest time. Sport fishing produces more personal, individual angling benefits and more economic and other benefits than any allocation to commercial harvest can produce. In Tanner's words, "The proper management of a public resource---the fishery---the manager should strive to

achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of people for the longest time."

Sport fishers have co-existed with commercial fishers for the last sixty years because commercial fishers were allowed to harvest fourteen species of fish which did not conflict with game fish reserved for sport fishing anglers. Now the commercial fishing industry is insisting on adding game fish like walleye and perch to its allowable catch which puts it at odds with sport fishing anglers. Michigan-ers are not being deprived of fresh fish for the table. Canadian commercial fishers provide plenty of fresh fish for Michigan markets, so the public is being adequately served.

What incenses sport fishermen is that commercial fishers do not pay their fair share for the cost of managing the fishery and its resources. Sixty percent

of fisheries division funding comes from recreational license fees or \$20.7 million and commercial licenses contribute \$7,500. Commercial gear kills fish indiscriminately and leads to over harvest. History has taught us that when not vigorously restricted, commercial fishing will lead to overharvest of valuable game fish.

It is important to remember how sport fishermen fought to achieve this sport fishery and what it will take to vigilantly preserve it.

* "The Death and Life of the Great Lakes", by Dan Egan



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- Livonia

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Michigan DNR Wildlife Division regional manager Mark Mills looks over the restoration site along the Kalamazoo River.

**“Plainwell”
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ings of smallmouth bass, turtles, osprey and other native species.

Mark Mills, regional supervisor in the DNR’s

Wildlife Division, said the project was driven by agencies coming together with a shared purpose: “We weren’t just removing a dam, we were reimagining how this stretch of river could function ecologically and socially. The result is

a safer, healthier and more accessible river for the people and wildlife of southwest Michigan.”

**A Collaborative
Success Story**

This intricate restoration

is the result of a unique collaboration among local, state and federal agencies, but united by a single goal of restoring the Kalamazoo River. In addition to the DNR and EGLE, project partners include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Great Lakes National Program Office; the U.S. EPA Superfund program and potentially responsible parties; the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget, and the Kalamazoo River Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program.

Funding was provided through a combination of sources:

\$1.9 million – Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, administered by the USEPA.

\$2 million – Kalamazoo River Natural Resource Damage Trustees.

\$2.6 million (including a \$600,000 Dam Management Grant) – Michigan DNR.

\$600,000 – USEPA Superfund Site Responsible Parties.

“The completion of

the Plainwell Dam restoration marks a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to the Great Lakes,” said EPA Region 5 Administrator Anne Vogel. “Supported by a \$1.9 million grant from the EPA, this success underscores the power of partnership and collaboration in preserving these vital environmental, recreational and economic resources.”

The DNR’s Mills agreed.

“The river is already telling us this was the right move,” said Mills. “We’re seeing several fish species returning to the water, osprey overhead and natural river processes reestablishing themselves. It’s incredibly rewarding to see how science, smart investment and cross-agency collaboration are bringing Michigan’s rivers back to life.”

Looking ahead

The restoration of this stretch of the Kalamazoo River brings the state and partners closer to the long-term goal of returning 47 miles of river – from Morrow Dam to Lake Allegan – to a more natural, health-

ier condition. In addition to ecological benefits, this work supports vibrant outdoor recreation opportunities such as paddling, fishing and wildlife viewing, all of which contribute to local tourism and the regional economy.

Plainwell Kayak Company owner Lois Heuchert, a member of the project’s community advisory group, said she’s been impressed by how effectively local, state and federal government and the trustees have worked together.

“With every stretch of river restoration that gets completed, those areas become another part of a gorgeous trip through there. The work hasn’t been just about the pollutants being taken out, it’s about making sure the entire area is enhanced. Every time they’ve taken on a project, they leave it so much better than you could have imagined.”

With this stage of river restoration complete, Heuchert looks forward to sharing the experience with more paddlers on the Kalamazoo.

“To be able to run a business like this, that brings families together, that has kids putting away their phones for a few hours – people are almost transformed by the end of their floats,” she said. “They enjoy nature, they enjoy relaxing. Providing that kind of service, getting people out into all that beauty, that’s what makes our job fun!”



With the dam and spillway removed and the area restored, this stretch of the Kalamazoo River in Plainwell now supports native vegetation, restored wetlands and improved floodplain function.



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THE QUALITY OF FISHING REFLECTS THE QUALITY OF LIVING!

MSSFA was incorporated in 1971 by a handful of individuals who knew that Michigan's newly formed trout and salmon fishery was something worth working to protect. They were a small group who wanted to not only protect their fishery, but learn how to catch their elusive prey and tell fishing stories.

MSSFA chapters have membership meetings with guest speakers to learn about all the aspects of sport fishing. MSSFA chapters also sponsor fishing clinics, seminars, sport-fishing shows, derbies and tournaments. And are active sponsors for fishing outings for kids, seniors, veterans and our handicapped.

For those who love to fish but have no means, MSSFA chapters sponsor a "Crews" program that allows a sign up as a crew member for a day of fishing.

With a common goal, and a close working partner with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, MSSFA helps to enhance the resource and sport fishing in our rivers, streams, inland lakes, and of course the mighty Great Lakes. MSSFA is a front-runner at all levels of the legislature and in courtrooms, and has spent countless hours working behind the scenes and attending hearings.

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The Great Lakes Sport Fishing News is owned and operated by The Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen's Association.

Better than fifty years ago, The Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen's Association began to publish a magazine called the "Guide to Great Lakes Sport Fishing". Five years later the magazine became a monthly format called "The Great Lakes Steelheader". Today the newspaper is called "**The Great Lakes Sport Fishing News**".

This paper has no paid writers and has a grass roots style. Its writers are the every day fishermen who share their techniques and fishing adventures; and the paper has become well known for its **January Special Edition** or "**Show Edition**" that is seen at all the spring expos and sport, boat and fishing shows throughout the Great Lakes.

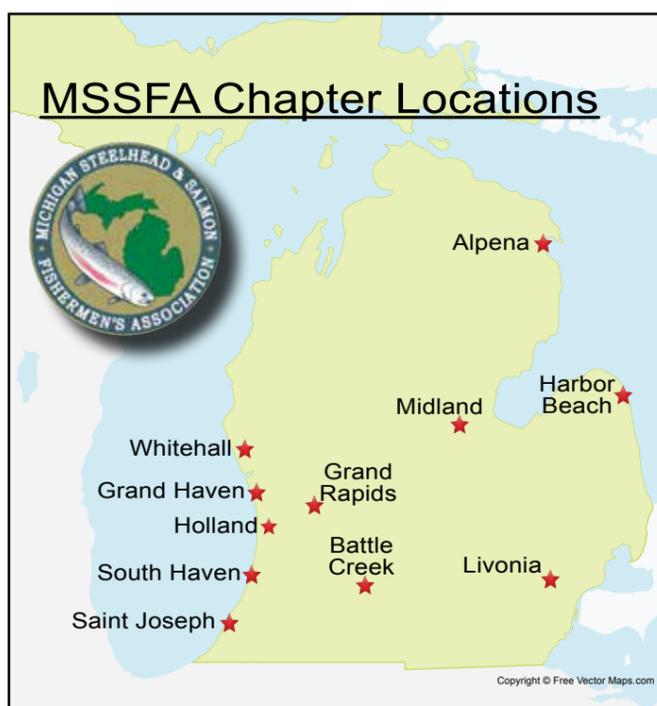
Information in the paper covers the entire Great Lakes Basin region from Minnesota to New York including all five of the Great Lakes and their tributary streams.

Chapter members receive the paper as part of their membership. And because of the diversity of fishing in the Great Lakes, the information covers everything from river fishing, big lake fishing to inland lake fishing. The paper also offers a direct route for all new products and techniques on the market offered by our advertisers.

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Inland Lake, Stream Surveys Provide DNR With Crucial Data

LANSING – If you were out on the water last year, you may have seen some of your fishing license dollars hard at work — in the form of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fisheries management units busily completing more than 280 fisheries surveys across the state. Crews completed 179 surveys of inland lakes and 110 surveys of streams in 2024.

Collecting key data on Michigan’s fisheries is critical for successful management of the state’s diverse fisheries, according to the DNR. These surveys help track inland fisheries populations, evaluate stocking efforts to increase angler opportunities or address concerns from the public, the DNR said in a press release.

“The fisheries management units performed inland fisheries surveys to evaluate if management actions, like fish stocking or habitat improvement projects, had the desired effect,” said Jim Francis, DNR Fisheries Division Lake Erie basin coordinator. “Survey data helps us understand whether our management actions resulted in better recreational fishing in certain areas or improved the overall health of a lake or stream.”

DNR inland fisheries surveys fall into three categories: evaluating management actions, understanding status and trends and finding answers to new questions or concerns.

Fish population abundance is estimated and in-stream habitat data is collected annually at fixed status and trends sites — usually trout in coldwater streams and smallmouth bass in warmer waters — on a three-year rotation. The DNR also performs random site surveys, which are intended to give a species snapshot and show relative abundance.

Discretionary surveys are used to answer questions or address current concerns that may have been raised by a local biologist, angling group or lake association. Such surveys, which usually account for 50% of the department’s annual survey effort, might be conducted to assess habitat suitability for threatened and endangered fish species.

Critical fisheries management activities such as surveys are at risk of reduction due to funding shortfalls, according to the DNR. The DNR’s ability to regularly complete the surveys is dependent on sufficient, sustainable, long-term funding.

“Under our current funding level, an inland lake in Michigan is likely to be surveyed only once every 90 years. This affects our ability to deliver on our public trust responsibilities to Michiganders and needs to be addressed,” said DNR Fisheries Division Chief

Randy Claramunt.

Increasing the survey frequency on lakes and streams is a goal of the division, but it depends on increased funding.

“DNR fisheries managers use the information resulting from all types of surveys to strategize actions, detect early indicators of invasive species, recognize developing threats to fish and habitat health, and much more,” Francis said. “Anglers rely on information from these surveys when planning fishing trips, and a number of partners depend on survey findings to inform strategic efforts such as habitat protections. Healthy, high-quality aquatic ecosystems and waters benefit

everyone.”

If you’d like to learn about the DNR’s lake and stream surveys, especially in your part of the state, contact the fisheries management unit in your area. For more on how the department takes care of fisheries, visit the DNR’s fisheries management webpage.

STREAM SURVEY – Michigan Department of Natural Resources crews completed 179 surveys of inland lakes and 110 surveys of streams in 2024.

Courtesy photo DNR



Only YOU Can Save The Buoys!

The Port Sheldon buoy and the South Haven buoy play a key role in boater safety and successful angler outings on Lake Michigan. The buoys provide real-time data on wave height and frequency, wind speed and direction, and water temperatures from the surface to 70 feet below. Originally deployed in 2014 through a grant from NOAA, these buoys have provided critical life-safety and fishery environment information, enabling us to be better at our sport and to be safer while fishing.

Anyone can access the information generated by the buoys at any time through a text or on the internet. The valuable data created is all free of charge to the public, but each one of these buoys cost nearly \$15,000 per year to operate. There is no longer any government funding for these buoys; all funds to continue their operation come from individuals, organizations, and local businesses passionate about Lake Michigan.

On one hand, the cost to maintain these buoys is significant. But on the other hand we have hundreds of teams and thousands of anglers on the Trail. That means the math is on our side! By working together we can cover at least a big chunk of that cost if not the whole thing! So I'm challenging you to step up and help! Just before we went to print I made a \$50 donation to each Buoy and I hope you'll follow suit.

There is an individual fundraiser for each buoy. They are being run by the South Haven and the Holland Steelheaders - people we know, people who fish the Trail, people we can trust! Donating is simple! In fact you can do it right now! Just use your phone and scan one or both of the codes below.

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Find Fall Fish

By Bob Jensen

When you go fishing, if you want to catch a fish, it's really important that you put your bait where a fish lives. That might sound very basic, but the most basic concept of fishing is to fish where the fish are. You can have the nicest boat around, lots of expensive rods and reels and tackleboxes full of lures, but if you don't put your lure near a fish, all that other stuff is going to do you no good. Here are some ideas for finding different species of fish in the next few weeks.

Let's start with crappies. Crappies are abundant and popular almost everywhere. In the spring we catch them near cover like rushbeds and docks and timber in shallow water. In the fall, if you fish those areas you probably won't be eating crappies for supper. They're not in the shallows in large numbers now in most places.

In some lakes the crappies will be on or near the deep weedline. The clearer the water, the deeper they'll be. Sometimes they'll be twenty five yards off the edge of the deep weedline. On a calm evening you can see them creating dimples as they suck bugs off the surface of the water. Try a Mr. Crappie Grub or an XL Shadpole on a sixteenth ounce jig and you'll probably catch crappies. If they're being finicky, tie on a Shoo Shiner jig, tip it with a minnow, and work it under a slip-bobber rig. Even when the crappies are being fussy, the Shoo Shiner/minnow combination will get at least a few to bite.

Crappies will also be found on the bottom in the basin of some lakes. Cruise the basin in twenty to thirty feet of water with a close eye on our sonar. When you see a concentration of

fish, work them with eighth or sixteenth ounce jigs and plastic. Try a variety of shapes and colors until the fish show you what they want.

Walleyes can be in a lot of places depending on the lake. Different lakes provide different hang-outs. In shallow lakes with stained water, you can find walleyes on windblown points in water two feet deep sometimes.

In deep, clear lakes they'll be in twenty feet of water or more on deep structure. Or they might suspend away from structure near baitfish in some bodies of water. They'll go on a night-bite in other lakes. Research the body of water that you'll be fishing to determine where you should focus your efforts.

Largemouth bass will also be in a variety of areas, but as the weather gets colder, you'll find fewer of them in the sloppy shallows that many inhabited during the summer. On a warm, overcast day in the fall you can find them cruising reed-beds near deeper water. Reeds in six to eight feet of water that are close to cabbage beds in deeper water can be very good. The bass hold in the deeper water during cold conditions, then move shallower when there's a day or two of warmer weather. A Tour Grade Swim Jig tipped with a bulky piece of plastic, something like a Rage Craw, will get most largemouth bass to bite. Big bass like bulky baits in the fall.

Some lakes have a lot more options than others for fall fish. In some lakes there will be just a couple of types of areas that will hold fish. On other lakes you need to try different things to get bit. Keep that in mind and you'll find yourself getting lots of bites.



Fishing friend Tom Ferdinandt with an autumn walleye.

Farming, Fertilizer and the Future

By Dan Cummins,
www.wtol.com

FULTON COUNTY, OHIO — As long as humans have grown crops, they've used manure to help them flourish.

Rich in phosphorus, it's a natural fertilizer that's been a staple on farms for generations. But as agriculture faces increasing scrutiny over its environmental impact, the way manure is managed is undergoing a high-tech transformation.

At this year's Manure Expo, held at the Fulton County Fairgrounds, that transformation was on full display. It's the first time the national event has returned to Ohio since 2016, and organizers expect more than 1,500 people to attend over its two-day run.

"Farming has become high-tech," said Nate Andre, a Fulton County farm-

er. "We test the soil in every acre to see exactly what nutrients it needs, and computers calculate how much manure, if any, is needed to help crops grow. With GPS technology, we're covering every inch efficiently and accurately."

But technology isn't just about boosting yields.

It's also about protecting the environment, especially in this region, which sits in the heart of the Lake Erie watershed. For years, nutrient runoff, primarily phosphorus, has been blamed for toxic algal blooms in the lake's western basin.

This summer, Lake Erie is once again battling an

algal bloom, part of a problem that's persisted for over two decades.

New tools on display at the expo aim to solve this issue. Farmers are using equipment that places manure directly into the soil, not just on top of it, to minimize the amount that can wash away in heavy rains.

The idea is simple: feed the crops, not the algae.

Still, some say the problem goes beyond traditional farms.

Sandy Bihn, the Lake Erie Waterkeeper, says the real threat to clean water comes from large-scale animal operations.

"It's not the small farmers who are the issue," she said. "It's the massive facilities raising thousands of chickens, hogs and cattle. The sheer volume of ma-

nure they generate is overwhelming and it often isn't managed well."

That concentrated waste, Bihn says, seeps into the watershed, fueling the very blooms farmers are trying to prevent.

The Manure Expo serves as a reminder: agriculture is evolving, but so are its challenges. And in northwest Ohio, the stakes are high for farmers, for Lake Erie and for the future of clean water in the region.



Lake Erie algae bloom.
Photo credit: www.noaa.gov

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Fishing & Birding at Lock Island Lodge

By Henry Nabor

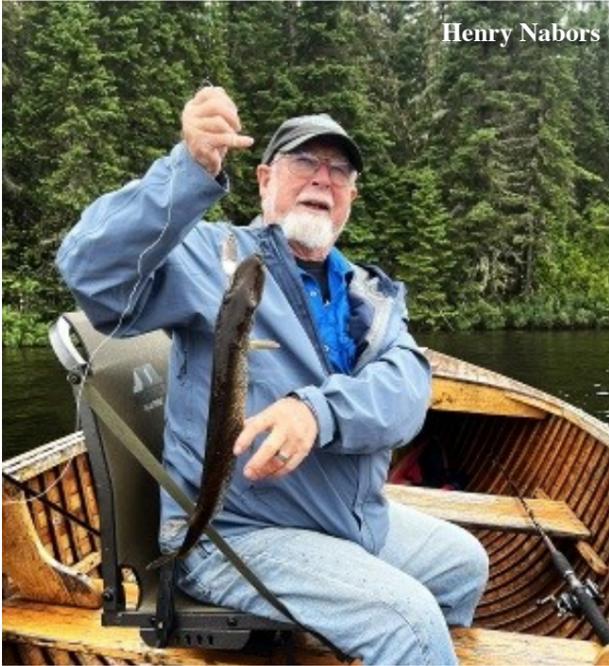
Loch Island Lodge (Ontario, Canada) Friends (staff), the Nabors party of four (Henry (dad), Christopher (son), Jeremy (son) and John (friend)) had a great five day visit this summer. As part of the fishing adventure Henry and Jeremy had fun

identifying birds and taking pictures!

Jeremy is new to the sport in the last several years; I have been at it for over 30 years. I have 471 Life birds and 145 birds this year. I added two Life Birds on this trip and Jeremy added eight life birds. Here are a few pictures for your enjoyment.



Lots of Bald Eagles all around us on the lake! Merlin, ruby-throated hummingbird, and Ring-necked duck. The black-backed woodpecker (life bird) (no picture) was seen on the deck at the lodge along with lots of other birds.



**Birds spotted while fishing:
Cedar Waxwing, Chipping Sparrow,
Bonaparte's Gull (life), Common Merganser,
Eight Common Merganser Ducklings, Common
Sandpiper, Common Loon**



“Incredibly Rare” Freshwater Jellyfish

By Madeline Bartos
www.cbsnews.com

A rare freshwater jellyfish was captured on camera at Lake Erie.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection shared a video of freshwater jellyfish at Presque Isle Bay. The DEP said an intern recorded the freshwater jellyfish right off

the dock at Marina Lake. The tiny jellyfish is “super hard” to find, and the DEP called it “incredibly rare.”

“Most of the time, it’s stuck to the bottom as a little polyp. But once in a while, it grows into the jellyfish shape we all recognize and Ray was in the right place at the right time to see it,” the Pennsylvania

DEP wrote on Facebook.

What Are Freshwater Jellyfish?

According to the National Park Service, freshwater jellyfish are a non-native species found across North America in slow-moving streams, larger river systems, lakes, ponds and artificial bodies of water. They’ve been

observed in North America since the early 1900s.

The NPS says the Craspedacusta sowerbii, also known as the peach blossom jellyfish, is the only known species of freshwater jellyfish.

Native to the Yangtze River in China, the NPS says some people think they may have made it to North America along with imported aquatic ornamental plants.

They’re about the size of a penny, no bigger than a quarter, and they’re harmless to humans. Though they hunt by using the stingers on their long tentacles, they’re too small to sting larger organisms, the NPS says. Like marine jellyfish, they’re opportunistic predators, eating small organisms like zooplankton and insects.



2025 Tentative Print Schedule		
Issue	Deadline	Print/Online Date
1	12/11/24	01/03/25
2	02/14/25	03/03/25
3	04/11/25	05/02/25
4	06/13/25	07/01/25
5	08/15/25	08/29/25
6	10/11/25	11/04/25

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The Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen’s Association (MSSFA) is a multi-state, non-profit organization dedicated to educating the general public on improving, preserving and promoting sport fishing, the Great Lakes and their tributary streams and rivers. Commonly referred to as *The Michigan Steelheaders*, or simply *Steelheaders*. MSSFA represents sport fishing families in the Great Lakes region. MSSFA encourages the strictest observances of sport fishing laws and ethical fishing practices. www.MSSFA.org

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30	Kamp Oil Inc	6467 Manistee St	Fredric	MI	49733	Citgo Sea & Snow 4-1 gal case 13.50/gal = 54/case, other disc avail.
31	Kamp Oil Inc	3650 Eastern Ave SE	Grand Rapids	MI	49508	Citgo Sea & Snow 4-1 gal case 13.50/gal = 54/case, other disc avail.
32	Beebe Oil Co (aka Kamp Oil)	4999 22 Mile Rd	Utica	MI	48317	Citgo Sea & Snow 4-1 gal case 13.50/gal = 54/case, other disc avail.
33	Lapeer Boat Service	3556 Fort Knox Dr	Lapeer	MI	48446	10% off parts and labor (810-245-6038)
34	Liberty Tax Service	544 E. 8th St.	Holland	MI	49423	\$20.00 Discount on tax service
35	Logan’s Run Muskegon River Cottage Rental	1648 Gardner St.	Newaygo	MI	49337	10% Discount www.logansrun.us 616-485-4501
36	Mark’s Sport Shop	11530 Mason Dr	Grant	MI	49327	Member Discount
37	MUCC	2101 Wood Street	Lansing	MI	48912	\$18.00 Membership Dues
38	Patriot Custom Fishing Rods	35919 6th Ave.	Gobles	MI	49055	10% Discount 269-628-5227
39	Richfield RV	Statewide				10% Discount
40	River Raisin Marina & Campground	2502 E. Elm Avenue	Monroe	MI	48161	Buy 1 get 1 free - call 313-575-4367 (www.riverraisinmarina.com)
41	RX Optical	Statewide				Plan 308
42	Salmon Trout Steelheader		www.salmontroutsteelheader.com			Discount 50% OFF 1 year subscription, members only! Use code MSSFA
43	Sun Coast Marine	1172 68th Street	South Haven	MI		Member discount
44	The Angling Outpost	2480 Duck Lane Rd	Whitehall	MI	49461	www.anglingoutpost.com 5% use coupon "steelheader" for online purchases
45	Traxstech Corp	14754 N Oakley	Chesaping	MI		989-845-5969 10%
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49	West Michigan Propeller	847 Ionia Ave. NW	Grand Rapids	MI	49503	10% Discount
50	* Your Business Here!					

2025 Battle Creek Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event	Location
October	25	KALAMAZOO RIVER SALMON SLAM	ALLEGAN DAM
November	8	KALAMAZOO RIVER TROUT QUEST	ALLEGAN DAM
November	15	KALAMAZOO RIVER MEMORIAL	ALLEGAN DAM
November	29	ST.JOE RIVER TUNE-UP STEELHEAD	I-94 BOAT RAMP
December	6	ST.JOE WINTER CHALLENGE	BENTON HARBOR
December	13	CHRISTMAS PARTY	KALAMAZOO EAGLES

Meetings are held every 3rd Tuesday of the month. 6:00 pm Social, 7:00 pm Meeting
Meeting Location: (In process of finding a new location)
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Joe Foy at 269-303-1894 / Dan Foster at 269-370-3693
battlecreeksteelheaders.com

2025 Grand Haven Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event	Contact Info
TBD	2025	Net Pens	
September	6	Sportsman For Youth	
December	10	Chapter Christmas Party	

Other Events TBD
 For information on these events and other information on the Grand Haven Steelheaders contact GHS President and State Director Paul Zelenka at pbzfarm@gmail.com
 www.ghsteelheaders.com

2025 Grand Rapids Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event	Information
September	6	Sportsman For Youth	Muskegon
September	29	Members Meeting	
October	1	Chapter Archery Buck Contest** pre-entry required	
October	TBD	Fall River Contest	
October	27	Chapter Meeting	
November	8	Fishing Partners Manistee Contest	
November	15	Chapter Firearm Buck Contest** pre-entry required	
November	24	Chapter Meeting	
**December	TBD	Christmas Party, watch for details	

** Fishing Outings are subject to change based on weather conditions**

Events open to the public
 Meeting Location - Elks #48, 917 Bridge St NW, Grand Rapids
 Time: 6:00pm-7pm Social Hour with food and beverage followed by Speaker
 Board Meetings will take place after the regular Member Meeting
 Email Grand Rapids Steelheaders: fishgrsteelhead@gmail.com
 Dates with "*" are for members and family only

New address:
 P.O. Box 140198
 Grand Rapids, MI 49514

2025 Great Lakes Bay Region Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event	Location / Information
September	6	Linwood	
December	13	Banquet at VFW	5pm

Membership meetings are the first Tuesday every month (no meeting in August)
 Meetings held at: 3013 Bay City Road, Midland, MI 48642 Phone: 989-496-3410

Board meetings begin at 7:00pm. **Please call the Port Chairman no later than Monday prior to the outing whether you plan on attending or not attending.** On the day of the outing, call in on Marine Radio, Channel 72.

Weigh-in follows each outing. Picnics follows weigh-in on Saturdays only.
 Outings: All Steelheader members pay \$5.00. All non-Steelheaders pay \$10.00 to participate.
 Children 16 and Under are free. Picnic is \$5.00 for everyone.

If interested in fishing with us please contact: Mark Trudell (989) 839-4920
 Visit our web page www.steel-headers.com

2025 Holland Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event
September	8	Board Meeting
September	9	Tuesday Night League Banquet
October	6	Board Meeting
November	3	Board Meeting
December	1	Board Meeting
December	4	Membership Meeting

Board meetings held at: TBD Locations
 General Membership: Bayshore Yacht Club at the Yacht Basin Marina
 Doors open at 6 pm., Dinner at 7 pm, speaker to follow

For event information, go to hollandsteelheaders.org, or call Jimmy Van Brocklin 616-240-7017 or email Brad Stephenson at brad.stephenson32@gmail.com

2025 Metro West - Livonia Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event	Contact
September	2	General Membership Meeting	
September	6	Manistee Kayak/SB & Pier Tournaments	Eric Braden
September	27	Manistee River Tournaments	Fabian Sepulveda
September	28	Muskegon Lake Salmon Camp out Kayak/SB	Keith Childs
October	7	General Membership Meeting	
October	11	Lake Erie Perch Outing	Dave Zawacki
October	15	Captain/Crew/River Angler 2023 Calendar Mtg	Kelley/Trenz/Nabors/Henderson
October	18	Ludington Pier/Beach Event	Eric Braden
November	1	Manistee River/Pier/Shore Tournaments w DS	Zawacki/Trenz
November	11	General Membership Meeting 2nd Tue.	Election Day Room at Senior Center Nov 4
November	29	Ohio Walleye Tournament	Dave Zawacki
December	2	CHRISTMAS PARTY - HAPPY HOLIDAYS	
December	6	PM & other NW Mi Rivers Tournament	Marc Traver/Adam Trenz
December	13	Huron River Tournament	Roger Hinchcliff

2025 South Haven Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event
Note: SH Steelheaders (SHS) Chapter Events in BOLD * = Not Confirmed		
November	29	South Haven Steelheaders River Tournament

2024 South Haven Steelheaders Membership & Board Meeting Dates
Note: All Board and membership meetings are generally held the third Thursday of each month except for special circumstances such as Pro Am Captain's Meeting set up in May, Fish Boil organizational meeting in August and prior to Deer Season in November.
Meeting Location: South Haven American Legion Post 49, 129 Michigan Avenue, South Haven, MI 49090
 Board Meetings start at 5:45pm and membership meetings at 7:00pm.
 For more information email: president@southhavensteelheaders.com

SEP 18th - 3rd Thursday - Regular & Board meeting to prioritize & set next year's events. ID event chairs.
 OCT 16th - 3rd Thursday - Regular and Board meeting to finalize next year's events and set calendar
 NOV 6th - 1st Thursday - Regular and Board Meeting to finalize budget and calendar
 December 18th - 3rd Thursday - Regular Meeting, Election of Directors
 The 2025 Pro Am Tournament Committee Kick-off meeting is the 2nd Monday of November (11/10/25)

2025 Southwest MI Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event	Information
Membership meetings and board meeting are held the second Thursday of each month but please confirm online for the most updated information. www.swmsteelheaders.com www.facebook.com/southwestmichigansteelheaders			
September	11	Club Meeting - Fall Run Salmon and Steelhead	
December	6	Winter Challenge River Fishing Tournament	

Meeting Location: Elks Lodge, 601 Riverview Drive, Benton Harbor MI 49022
Southwest Michigan Steelheaders
swmsteelheaders.com

2025 Thumb Chapter Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Event	Location / Information
October	16	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting Election of Board/Officers	Harbor Beach American Legion

Contact Paul Nienaltowski at 810-300-1561 for inquiries.

2025 Thunderbay Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Information
September	1	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
October	6	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
December	1	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting

2025 White River Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Event information
Note: All meetings will be held at 6:30 pm at the VFW, any changes in location will be decided a couple of days before the meeting. - Any questions or to verify dates/times please call Clint Pollock at (231) 893-0210 or Terry Clark at (231) 893-6805.			
September	4	6:30pm	Meeting at the VFW
October	2	6:30pm	Meeting at the VFW
November	6	6:30pm	Meeting at the VFW
December	4	6:30pm	Meeting at the VFW

Join a Chapter, Join the Fun!

**For more information,
 contact your Chapter Membership Director
 or mssfamembership@charter.net**



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MSSFA Board of Directors Meetings 2025

**Wednesday,
 October 15**
 Via TEAMS - 6:00pm

**Wednesday,
 December 17**
 Via TEAMS - 6:00pm



Illustration from pngtree.com

Michigan DNR has stocked 18.9 million fish so far in 2025

Successful spring and summer fish stocking bodes well for fall fishing opportunities

Michigan DNR, Jeremiah Blaauw, Aaron Switzer

Steelhead were stocked in the Red Cedar River in East Lansing this spring. April showers bring May flowers, and spring and summer fish stocking bring fall fishing! This spring and summer, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources stocked a total of 18,958,970 fish that weighed more than 331.5 tons and consisted of 10 different species and one hybrid.

Fish stocking is an important activity to provide both Michigan residents and visitors with quality fishing opportunities. These efforts help bring an estimated \$3.9 billion into the state's economy through the sportfishing industry, tourism and related businesses.

To complete the task of stocking, it took 417 stocking trips and 2,345 hours. Crews traveled just over 91,000 miles in 17 specialized stocking trucks

hit the targets for most areas."

The number and type of fish produced varies by hatchery, as each location's ability to rear fish depends on the source and temperature of the rearing water. Fish are reared in Michigan's state fish hatcheries anywhere from one to 18 months before they are stocked.

In Michigan, there are six state hatcheries and two cooperative hatcheries that work together to produce the species, strain and size of fish needed for fisheries managers. These fish must then be delivered and stocked at a specific time and location to ensure their success.

Each hatchery stocked the following fish this spring:

Marquette State Fish Hatchery (near Marquette) stocked 368,452 yearling lake trout, brook trout and splake (a hybrid of lake trout and brook trout) that in total weighed 49,355 pounds. In addition to year-



Steelhead were stocked in the Red Cedar River in East Lansing this spring. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has stocked a total of 18,958,970 fish so far in 2025.



Michigan Department of Natural Resources staff talked with students while stocking the Red Cedar River in East Lansing, near Michigan State University's campus.

to get to the 716 stocking sites. Despite the severe ice storm that affected northern Michigan, which caused a loss of power and transition to backup power for several days at Oden State Fish Hatchery, no fish were lost due to the storm, allowing the DNR to meet its stocking goals.

"We had another excellent spring and summer stocking season that will bring ecological benefits and fishing opportunities to Michigan anglers," said Aaron Switzer, DNR fish production manager. "Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our staff, healthy, high-quality fish were reared and delivered to stocking sites in excellent condition. The numbers produced and stocked

ling trout, Marquette also stocked 457 adult lake and brook trout. This hatchery stocked a total of 94 inland and Great Lakes sites.

Thompson State Fish Hatchery (near Manistique) stocked 2,397,307 fish, which included yearling steelhead, spring fingerling Chinook salmon, yearling muskellunge and spring fingerling walleye. These fish weighed 69,598 pounds in total. This hatchery stocked 51 sites, the majority located on the Great Lakes.

Oden State Fish Hatchery (near Petoskey) stocked 737,604 yearling brown trout and rainbow trout that in total weighed 129,072 pounds. Oden also stocked 6,270 adult brown and rainbow trout that in total weighed 12,330 pounds.

This hatchery stocked 98 inland and Great Lakes sites.

Harrietta State Fish Hatchery (in Harrietta) stocked 825,388 yearling brown trout and rainbow trout that in total weighed 117,875 pounds. This hatchery stocked 171 sites, the majority located inland.

Platte River State Fish Hatchery (near Honor) stocked 4,892,188 fish, which included yearling Atlantic salmon and coho salmon and spring fingerling Chinook salmon that in total weighed 157,584 pounds. Platte River also stocked 31,722 Skamania steelhead obtained from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources that in total weighed 4,209 pounds. This hatchery stocked 30 sites, the majority located

on the Great Lakes.

Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery (near Kalamazoo) stocked 7,198,561 fish that included yearling steelhead and spring fingerling Chinook salmon, which in total weighed 122,878 pounds. Wolf Lake also stocked 29,759 channel catfish obtained from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources that in total weighed 758 pounds. This hatchery stocked 49 sites, the majority located on the Great Lakes.

A cooperative teaching hatchery at Lake Superior State University (in Sault Saint Marie) stocked 23,378 Atlantic salmon weighing 1,811 pounds into the St. Marys River.

DNR staff talked with students while stocking the Red Cedar River in East

Lansing, near Michigan State University's campus. Included in this year's total are just over 2.5 million walleye spring fingerlings. These fish were reared in ponds by the DNR, with extensive support provided by local sporting organizations. These fish were stocked at 61 inland lakes and rivers and Lake Michigan.

Some hatcheries will also provide fish for a few additional stockings – consisting of brook trout, Atlantic salmon, walleye, lake sturgeon and muskellunge – to be made this fall. The lake sturgeon will come from the cooperative hatchery in Tower, Michigan, operated with Michigan State University.

The public is welcome at any of Michigan's state fish hatcheries to see the fish-rearing process firsthand. For more information



or to plan your trip, visit Michigan.gov/Hatcheries.

To find out where many of these fish were stocked, check out the DNR's Fish Stocking Database at MichiganDNR.com/FishStock.

Visit us on our website: Michigan.gov/DNR





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Cook Your Catch: Grilled Cedar Plank Salmon

A simple recipe that proves less can absolutely be more.

Recipe from www.mercurymarine.com

There's an almost infinite number of ways one can prepare salmon, but the beauty of this fish is that you really don't have to do much to bring out its gorgeous flavors for a meal that is both healthy and delicious.

One very simple way to capture the inherent deliciousness of this vibrantly colored fish is to grill it on a cedar plank. Doing so gives the fish a unique, smoky finish and provides a meal every bit as flavorful as one you'd find in a restaurant, and at a fraction of the price. And with the complexities of flavors created by the cedar, there's no need to purchase a bunch of costly ingredients.

We eat a lot of salmon in our household, and while one of my favorite recipes is short on ingredients, it's tall on flavor. The addition of a little salt, pepper and a little parsley is enough to complement the clean, smoky goodness created by the wood.

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- Four 4 to 6 ounce salmon fillets
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Sea salt
- Fresh parsley



You'll want to get started by pre-soaking your cedar planks in water overnight or at least several hours before you are ready to grill. This will prevent the planks from catching on fire on the grill. Pre-cut cedar planks for cooking can be ordered online or purchased at stores that carry outdoor gear.

Prepare the salmon by cutting the fillets into manageable serving sizes. I like

to cut the fish into strips about 2 inches wide, cutting across the fillet from top to bottom. This allows the flavor to absorb deep into the salmon on all sides.

About 30 minutes before going on the grill, brush some olive oil on your salmon fillets and season them with crushed sea salt, freshly ground black pepper and parsley to taste. Remember, you only want to use enough seasonings to

bring out the inherent flavors of the fish.

Next, pre-heat the grill to high heat. This will make the grill hot enough to char the cedar planks when they are placed onto it. Don't worry about the smoke or burning the boards. That's what makes the flavor. Be prepared for things to get smoky. In fact, smokiness is a sign that you're doing things right. After all, it's the smoke that is creating

all that delicious flavor. Do keep in mind that some salmon, like Chinook, can be extremely high in omega-3 oils, and can catch on fire. For that reason, I recommend keeping a small spray bottle of water handy in the event that you need to douse out any small flames.

Place the planks on the grill prior to placing the salmon on them and close the lid. This will char the underside of the plank and

release even more flavor. After a couple of minutes flip the cedar plank over and place the salmon on the charred side. Close the lid and let the salmon cook on the plank for around 5 to 7 minutes before checking it.

The salmon should turn from a translucent red color to pale pink as it is cooking. The best way to determine when your fish is ready to be removed from the grill is to use a sharp knife to peek

into the thickest part of the fillet. If the meat begins to flake, but still has a little translucency in the middle, it is ready to be plated.

Now, all there is left to do is to pair it with a nice salad or vegetable, and perhaps some fresh bread, dig in and enjoy!

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Massive Invasive Fish With A Voracious Appetite

By Mike Pearson
Insidehalton.com

A massive invasive fish species with a voracious appetite was found recently in Lake Huron, raising concerns for native fish and aquatic life.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) confirmed a recreational angler reported finding a dying grass carp floating in Baie du Doré on Lake Huron on July 14. Baie du Doré is about a 10-minute drive north of Tiverton, Ont.

DFO spokesperson Sam Di Lorenzo said the federal agency collected the fish and confirmed it was a triploid (sterile) female — meaning it cannot reproduce.

“This was one of the

were also triploid (sterile).

Ontario’s Invasive Species Centre notes online that grass carp is one of four invasive Asian carp species threatening to invade the Great Lakes. The others are bighead carp, black carp and silver carp. These fish were introduced to the southern United States in the late 1960s and 1970s for use as biological control in aquaculture facilities, the centre adds.

Threat To The Great Lakes

Of the four species, the grass carp is considered the most imminent threat to the Great Lakes. The Invasive Species Centre notes researchers have found evidence of natural reproduction in the Sandusky and Maumee rivers, both



Above: Live grass carp. Photo credit: Ryan Hagerty/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Fisheries scientist Trisiah Tugade holds a 26-kg grass carp. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada confirmed a recreational angler reported finding a dying grass carp floating in Baie du Doré on Lake Huron on July 14. Baie du Doré is about a 10-minute drive north of Tiverton, Ontario. Photo credit: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada

largest grass carp specimens DFO has processed,” Di Lorenzo added. “It was 1,230 mm in total length, 780 mm in girth and 26 kg in weight.”

Third Grass Carp Since 2013

Since 2012, DFO’s Invasive Carp Program has processed 34 grass carp collected in Canadian waters of the Great Lakes. The fish captured July 14 is the third grass carp captured in the Canadian waters of Lake Huron since surveillance began in 2013.

The previous two captures were made by commercial fishers near Sarnia in 2017 and 2018. Both

tributaries of Lake Erie in the U.S. While there’s no evidence of an established population in Ontario’s Great Lakes, monitoring continues.

The Invasive Species Centre says grass carp mostly eat aquatic vegetation and can consume up to 40 per cent of their body weight in food daily.

They digest about half of the plant material they consume and expel the remaining material, which pollutes the water and can promote algal blooms, the Invasive Species Centre adds. Just 10 adult grass carp per hectare can reduce wetland vegetation by up to 50 per cent. If the fish

becomes established in the Great Lakes, it could pose a significant threat to 33 fish species and 18 bird species.

What’s Being Done About It?

Di Lorenzo said DFO’s invasive carp program conducts early detection and response sampling every year in more than 30 high-risk tributaries and wetlands on the Canadian side of the Great Lakes, including multiple rivers that flow into Lake Huron.

“These waterbodies were determined to have suitable spawning and feeding habitat for invasive carps using scientific modelling,” she said.

The invasive carp pro-

gram includes an outreach team working to educate the public on the impacts of aquatic invasive species in the Great Lakes and the ways to identify and report the species, Di Lorenzo added.

DFO will complete additional early detection surveillance activities near Baie du Doré throughout 2025.

What To Do If You Find One

If you think you’ve captured a grass carp, you should take a photo, record your location and contact Fisheries and Oceans Canada to report it.

You can also report it to the Invading Species

Hotline by calling 1-800-563-7711, via email at info@invadingspecies.com, or online at eddmaps.org.

If you’re unable to reach someone directly, do not release the fish back to the water, Di Lorenzo said.

Under the federal Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations, it’s illegal to introduce an aquatic species into a body of water where it is not native, unless authorized by federal, provincial or territorial law, Di Lorenzo added.

Learn more about invasive carp and DFO’s efforts to prevent their introduction and spread online.

Report It

If you think you have found an aquatic invasive species:

1. Do **not** return the species to the water
2. Take photos
3. Note: The exact location (GPS coordinates) the observation date identifying features
4. Contact DNR to report it



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