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## FISHING REPORT

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**April 14, 2013**

There are days at The Cove when the stars align and the angling gods smile sweetly down on Fletcher's. Friday, the 12th was such a day. The preceding three days had seen temperatures soar and angling success dwindle. Prospects for successful weekend fishing seemed doubtful. I knew that a little pulse of new water and cooler air could turn things around. But hope realized for more water from upstream and a drop in the temperature often brings a gully-washer of mud and stiff northwest winds. Not this time.

Thursday evening brought a back-door cool front and a falling barometer that seemed to energize both fish and fishermen. By Friday morning the slim pickings of the previous days were just a bad memory. The rush-hour storms dosed the river like a splash of vermouth in a martini. The clouds and lightning passed quickly and as I paused between readying boats for rental, I watched anglers scattered along the eddies between still and swifter water hook one shad after another; it seemed someone was always engaged with a silvery visitor. Joe Fletcher hooked a fat hickory in the calm water not 30 feet from the boat dock. The bite was on!

And then came Alex Binsted. Alex is to fishing at Fletcher's as Tiger Woods is to golf (minus that "other stuff").



Sam Hauser with a beautiful striper caught April 13th (photograph provided by Mr. Hauser)

Eschewing the hot shad bite, McFly decided to rebalance his angling universe after two big stripers straightened hooks on him the previous day. As he rowed out from the dock late morning, I kept an eye on him, knowing his "birdie" or "eagle" might be a big walleye or fat striper. Sure enough, not twenty minutes later, I watched him battle a big striper as the boat drifted for more than a hundred yards downstream. Over the next three hours, Alex proceeded to put on a green-jacket style demonstration of angling skill. Finally again, good news for our clients. The "spoil me" fishing was back on at Fletcher's.

As the dogwoods and redbuds finally bloom, we can realistically hope for at least a month more of excellent shad and striper fishing. With a little luck, that reality could extend into early June. Remember that shad and stripers are currently catch and release only. Try to release fish with the barest minimum of handling. A "water release" is always best. The white perch run has been spotty this season but (as of this writing) there should



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[Check out Dan's article on Fletcher's Cove in the March 2012 issue of \*The Buzz\*](#)  
(pages 6-7)

[March 2011 issue of \*The Buzz\*](#)  
(pages 11-12)

[Click here](#) for a great interactive map of the area around Fletcher's  
(opens in new window)

### CHAPTER SHAD REPORTS



During the shad run (usually April thru mid-June), our chapter sends out reports of fishing conditions at Fletcher's Cove and elsewhere as we receive information. If you know someone who might want to receive these reports, [email NCC-TU](#) with "SHAD" in the subject line and provide your name and email address. If you received shad reports last year, you don't need to resubscribe to get them in 2013.

[Click here](#) for a great interactive map of The Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove Area Fishing and Outdoor Fun (opens in new window)

be at least two more peaks to come. Not all the spawning fish arrive at the same time! It is wave after wave over a long period of weeks. This is nature's way of protecting the species from a short term calamity of environment or predation.



When the dogwoods bloom, shad are in the river! (photo by Dan Ward)



A spectacular Wood Duck rests on Fletcher's Cove in early March." (photo by David Gwynn)

Fletcher's Cove is much more than a place to fish. As I have mentioned numerous times before, bird watching here is richly rewarded. Over the course of a year, the number of species that make an appearance is just amazing. An old friend of Fletcher's, a former employee, expert fisherman and now a skilled photographer, David Gwynn took the beautiful shot of a wood duck floating on The Cove in early March. David's love and respect for the Potomac and its wildlife clearly shows in his sensitive images, taken after the requisite patience of an artisan.

The C&O Canal is finally refilled in our level after a winter of what might be called the great C&O Ditch. We are happy to see the

water again as this brings life back to an amazing resource that melds man's work and natural processes, and also provides a great place to canoe, kayak and fish. The National Park Service is trying to bring water back to most of the canal bed from Great Falls Maryland down to Georgetown, which would be a wonderful thing for the ecosystem and for visitors to the C&O Canal National Historic Park. Please ask of your local, state and national representatives to provide the funding necessary to maintain the integrity of this irreplaceable park that celebrates both nature and man's engineering skill. I have a personal fantasy that one of our current distinguished Supreme Court Justices would hike the length of the canal with a few respected journalists to highlight once again what Justice Douglas knew so many years ago... that this unique park must not be lost to neglect or the ravages of encroaching development. (Could a wealthy benefactor be out there somewhere? Is another "Dan" reading this?)

That's all for now. Remember, more frequent updates on fishing are now available on our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) tabs as well as the T.U. report and [interactive map](#) connections.

See you at The Cove,

Dan



Matthew Morris and Rory Kretzer have fun at Fletcher's (photo by Jeff Morris)