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FISHING REPORT

ARCHIVED FISHING REPORTS



May 23, 2016

A shad run that got off to an early start this year came to a screeching halt when the Sahara-dry April turned into a Monsoon May. For 12 days early this month the water of the Potomac was murky and the river level too high to rent our rowboats. Scores of fisher-people who had witnessed the clear water bounty of April were suddenly cast out from the gates of angler's heaven into a purgatory-like place and left to wonder what would become of the remainder of shad season. Sadly, faith is fragile and many did not return last week when the "second-coming" of shad season burst forth and rewarded some die-hard shadders with five days of phenomenal fishing. Counts of American (not hickory!) shad were as high as 50 or more for those who "parked" their boats above the tightly packed school. For the first time this season, American shad were caught from below Walker's Point to above Chain Bridge.



A hickory shad thrashes on the surface at Fletcher's (photo by Mark Binsted)

Washington is a city of unpredictability... in traffic, politics, weather and fishing. Assumptions are not reliable in any of those areas and things change in the blink of an eye. One day, shad are practically jumping into the boat, the next day you can't even rent a boat. Shad deaths that are flying over the counter one week are suddenly an overstock item the next. Oh well, that's fishing and if you don't understand this truism, you should go bowling!

It was exactly one week ago today that Lane Thurgood christened the five day shad revival with two hours of hard fly fishing that produced five hickories, several Americans and various perch and schoolie stripers. Lane fishes even when he knows conditions are not ideal and therefore, having paid his dues, he is on the water when things get hot. From his successful Monday morning trip, things got hotter and hotter with each day until this weekend's rains turned D.C. back into Mighty Mudville. Fittingly, Lane was back out there this morning, dedicated angler that he is, to close the book on an incredible week of fishing.

The river will have its say and yes, June shad are possible if the water stays reasonably cool. June also should provide the opportunity to catch schoolie stripers. It is now the season to

"AN IMMOVABLE FEAST"

Old friends add flavor to an annual fish fry
by Bill Heavey
(credit to www.fieldandstream.com
and A Sportsman's Life)



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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)

[Rowin' on the River at Fletcher's Cove](#)
article in *KidFriendly DC*
July 2013

[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 Fletchers 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.

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

legally keep two striped bass per angler, per day, if they are between 20 to 28 inches in length, or one 20 to 28 and one over 28 inches.



Happy young angler Gloria K. with a 6.5 pound striped bass she caught on a shad dart at Fletcher's (Photo by Dad)



Shad planking at Family and Youth Casting Call (photo by Dan Ward)

Fletcher's Cove again played host to a very well-attended Family and Youth Casting Call event Saturday, May 14. The C&O Canal was stocked with hundreds of largemouth bass and sunfish to augment the natural supply of fish. The clouds parted for the morning and early afternoon and many happy, hopeful young faces could be seen intently watching their bobbers for a nibble. Thanks go out to Teresa Rodriguez and the entire D.C. Department of Energy and Environment staff for making this year's casting call so successful. Jim Cummings of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River again donated his personal time and much energy to do a shad planking demonstration that was fascinating to those who don't realize the historical importance of shad to the people and economies of the mid-Atlantic

river systems.

Fletcher's Cove is well stocked with District of Columbia fishing permits and all the basic fishing tackle you would need for a hopeful day of angling. Keep in mind that rods and reels are for sale, not rent, but prices start at rather modest levels so a big investment is not necessary for the casual recreational fisherman. We especially welcome young anglers who may just spark a life-long passion!



A Canadian family relaxing after lunch (Photo by Dan Ward)

The Cove is alive with the natural bounty of spring in Washington. Young Bald Eagles vie with Osprey for fish pulled from the water. Great Blue Herons squawk at being disturbed from their hunt by humans. Herring, shad and catfish dimple the river's surface as if rain were falling. Blue-tailed skinks creep out of crevices to catch some warming sun rays. Baby Canada Geese pluck fresh green grass and grow at amazing speed while guarded by attentive parents. All this while the traffic and planes zoom around the periphery of a show one might think of as Mother Nature's Broadway play in never-ending acts. Come see for yourself, no ticket necessary!

As summer unfolds, please visit Fletcher's Cove for a day in a waterside, urban oasis. Thanks for reading!

Dan



Alex Binsted captures an invasive snakehead with his bare hands! (Photo by Chris Montgomery)



Fletcher's regular angler Cliff holding a beautiful sunny from the canal (Photo by Dan Ward)

