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A Welcome to Spring...

Report from Fletcher's Cove, March 18, 2009



Buds and blossoms swell, while the piercing cries of a nest-building hawk herald the arrival of Spring along the banks of the Potomac. Washington has many precious places which fill the human spirit with a sense of renewal. The gardens of Dumbarton Oaks, the Rock Creek gorge, and the spectacularly delicate display of cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin are a few that come to mind. These are experiences that should not be missed by residents or visitors. Likewise, Fletcher's Cove is a special spot to soak in the warmth, breathe in the smells and take in the sights that make Spring the season of re-birth.

Unseen and silently, waves of fish have been swimming their way up the Bay and Potomac and are just now arriving around Fletcher's Cove. The first White Perch to be shown to us was caught yesterday by Buster Braxton. Buster is an "old-timer", and he fishes as such... calm and optimistic, he takes the slow days knowing the productive ones will find their way to him. We at Fletcher's are always happy to see his car pull in. He grounds us.

Small schools of herring are showing up now, with many more to follow. Remember, a "run" of fish is NOT one big wave. A run is made up of many individual schools of fish, each arriving independently, over the time frame of the run. A March school of perch or herring is a very different group than a May or June school. Provided you don't wait too long, if you miss one wave of fishing you may well get another shot. Of course the weather and river conditions play a big part in all of this, but from one year to the next, things pretty much

happen similarly and over the same time period. That's why I characterize each fishing season as "predictably unique".

By the time you read this, hickory shad should be out from Fletcher's, ready to strike that pretty Lockett's dart you just purchased. American shad will follow the hickories, and with luck, run well into May. Try to resist timing your fishing for the "best" or "hottest" day. Like those of us holding skeletons of our 401-k's or 403-b's, we kid ourselves that timing fishing will work. Steady as she goes... take it as it comes... accept the bad with the good... and you will get your just reward.

As always, you can call 202-244-0461 for up to the minute angling info. Keep in mind though, if we are really busy, away from the phone, waiting on an in-person customer, (or out fishing!), we may not get to the tele. Don't turn into a 'phone fisherman'. Stretch your legs, dust off your tackle-box, pick a favorite lure, tie a good knot and REALLY GO FISHING. You will have done yourself a favor, just through the effort. And if you bring a kid or two, all the better!

Now for some actual reporting. That monster you see at the top of this page is a big blue, held by Duncan "Spike" McGrath. Caught out from Fletcher's on Monday, it must have been in the fifty pound range. Released after the photo, (by Mike Bailey), it's out there somewhere, waiting for YOU! Duncan will get back to fishing after he finishes de-sliming himself.

Another impressive fish to note was an eight pound plus walleye landed by Gordon Leisch a few weeks back. Walleyes are cold water spawners and before most people even think of fishing, a few beauties are caught in the Potomac around and above D.C.

Fletcher's has D.C. fishing permits, bait, tackle and questionable advice. We will be commencing rentals soon. That's it for now... hope to see you on the river!

Dan

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