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FISHING REPORT

ARCHIVED FISHING REPORTS



March 29, 2015

Fits and starts... that's how a Washington spring comes to us most years, and this year's spring certainly fits into that category. Mid 70's on Thursday, barely freezing for a high on Saturday. The poor fish don't know whether to spawn or swim for Florida! If you've ever read Louis Halle's "Spring in Washington" (I highly recommend it) you will gain a great appreciation for the many signs of spring that appear even in mid winter. By now, in late March, the season is rushing full speed ahead, and yet we shiver. A deep breath and patience will do for now. By the end of the week, who knows, shorts and a tee?

As cold as it was, The Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove opened Saturday for our anxious angling community. In the short term, only biking and fishing-related business will be offered. The water is still too cold for kayak and canoe rentals; they will be available when the temperature of the river and canal reach the upper 50s. For the hardy, Fletcher's rowboats are available daily subject to the prevailing water and weather conditions. The Potomac flows with a strong current at this time of year and boaters are advised to know their true ability to ply the waters. Wishful thinking does not propel the boat! If you think that "up the creek without a paddle" is bad... well, down the river with a useless pair of oars is even worse.

The C & O Canal is where we begin the canoe and kayak rentals, followed by the river when the current subsides and some of our angling customers have worn themselves out catching fish. The canal was frozen over longer than I can remember this past winter. It was left full by the National Park Service, a rare bonus in recent years, and the thick ice provided a great opportunity for skaters to do their thing. The ice is gone now and the flush canal and level towpath are wonderful windows on the emerging season. A walk or bike ride on the C & O may well be just what the doctor ordered for winter-weary Washingtonians.



The frozen C&O, a skaters dream
(photo by Bob Bushkoff)

As for fishing, Gordon Leisch reeled in the first few white perch we got to see on March 21st. Gordon has seen 80 springs in D.C. and he told me that this is just about the latest start to the spawning runs of fish he can remember (The good side of that is that if you have not fished yet, you haven't missed anything!). Bob Smith, a regular and passionate shad

"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 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.



Bob Smith with Fletcher's first shad of 2015
(photo by Alex Binsted)

fisherman, caught the first hickory shad seen at Fletcher's on Friday the 27th. Bob was fishing with our own Alex Binsted who considered pushing Bob overboard after he landed the coveted first shad. Alex thought better of it when he remembered that it was against company policy to push people overboard for that specific offence.

Perch, herring, striped bass, hickory and white shad will all run together during the month of April. With a little luck and a benevolent hand from Mother Nature, angling will continue to produce happy results into the early summer. When the first couple of tropical heat waves envelope our once swampy city, fishing action will slow to a more civilized, if somewhat less productive pace.



the view downriver from Dixie Landing
(photo by Dan Ward)

Fletcher's offers D.C. fishing permits for sale (\$10 for residents, \$13 for non-residents). The permits are good for the calendar year, not a year from when you buy them. Please remember, a resident permit is only good for someone who has actual residency within the borders of The District of Columbia. If you live in D.C. but are not an actual legal resident, then you must buy a non-resident permit. Additionally, there is NO multi-jurisdictional fishing permit. Maryland, D.C. and Virginia all have their own separate permits. Fletcher's only sells D.C. fishing permits. As the Potomac flows through thru D.C. proper, the entire river is District of Columbia property to the high tide line on the Virginia side. Even if you are standing on the Virginia shoreline, if you

are opposite D.C. you are required to have a D.C. fishing license!

The [tackle shack at Fletcher's](#) has a nice assortment of shad darts from Locketts and Nungesser as well as tin darts and shad flies. We try to keep bait in stock, but call if you need the highly perishable bloodworms. Bass lures, hooks, sinkers, line, plus spinning rod and reel combos for adults and kids can all be purchased at the shack. We do not rent any tackle, but there are numerous low cost options.

Happy spring and we hope to see you down by the riverside...

Dan

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



Skating the eerily frozen canal at Fletcher's
(photo by Bob Bushkoff)