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## FISHING REPORT

## ARCHIVED FISHING REPORTS

August 15, 2016

People from all over hear about the amazing fishing at Fletcher's Cove. And, indeed, Fletcher's is a great place for a variety of angling options. But a season like this can spread a warm, wet blanket over the most optimistic of anglers. When people, especially those with wide-eyed kids, show up on a torrid summer day, I cringe a little with the fear that their high expectations of success will not be met and they will leave thinking it's all a "fish story."



An Arrowhead flower rises above the leaves of the tidal flat (photo by Dan Ward)



A boat, slightly larger than our rowboats, glides by the cove on a hot summer day (photo by Dan Ward)

So, what to do? First, dispense a gentle dose of reality. The water this month has hovered around 90 degrees and that makes the fish want to siesta. They lay around, only wanting the occasional nibble with their Corona and lime. Unlike us, the fish have no access to air-conditioning! With the Potomac as warm as it is, some species of fish are not far from expiring in large numbers. Hopefully, there will be a cool down in the near future and some beneficial rain will grace the watershed.

But talk is cheap and I've got a father and son from Schenectady wanting to catch some fish. O.K., think positively. Angling isn't only about catching fish; it's also about getting out in the midst of nature, away from one's normal routine with hope and a process. I've had a fair amount of practice over the years gently adjusting anglers' expectations to match the conditions at hand. Excitement may be less than likely, but relaxation is certainly a prime objective. Find some shade, put on some floats and see how many pretty sunfish and bluegills you can catch. Whoppers they aren't, but even an over-worked dad or mom can get a smile from watching their little bundle-of-joy giggle over a bouncing bobber!

If our visiting anglers want to get down and dirty and go for the lunkers that still have a summer

### "AN IMMOVABLE FEAST"

*Old friends add flavor to an annual fish fry*  
by Bill Heavey  
(credit to [www.fieldandstream.com](http://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.

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

appetite, then a boat rental and some bottom fishing with our sushi-grade frozen alewife may be the ticket. The big blue catfish that now inhabit the Potomac are always on an Atkins diet. No one said fishing wasn't a smelly business sometimes!

The more picky fish species, large and smallmouth bass and walleyes, are much harder to coax into grabbing a lure or bait. The challenge is there and success can be measured in the effort and, with a little luck, a hard-won catch. Fletcher's Cove stocks a selection of rods and reels as well as time-tested lures and baits that work particularly well here. The tackle shack will remain well stocked into the fall season when the fishes' appetites will increase due to cooler water.

So please feel most welcome to come to this renowned fishing spot. Just adjust your expectations to the reality of the moment. The angler who gets skunked but comes back to the dock with a smile of his or her face has "caught" something more precious than a smelly fish. For at least a little while, they have captured a touch of Zen. The fish will come in due time.



A juvenile painted turtle pays us a ten minute visit (photo by Dan Ward)



Our marsh harbors many tiny jewels (photo by Dan Ward)

A tropical hot summer such as this has produced a lush jungle of green down in the cove. I only half joke when I say that Fletcher's "Cove" is now really Fletcher's "marsh." With significant effort we usually are able to get our rentals out into the main river, but much of the cove is often devoid of water even at half high tide. The positive in this is the amazing variety of beautiful flowers and plants to be seen by the river side. It's a mini aquatic garden down here and if you care to linger and look closely there are many jewels to be discovered. The canal is full as well, and turtle watching is in full swing. Last week a man "rescued" a turtle that was crossing the Capital Crescent trail and carried it down to me. He thought it was a box turtle but it was really an aquatic painted turtle, which we carefully returned to the canal unscathed.

There was a time when air conditioning did not exist. My mom told me recently that they did not even have electric fans when she was a young girl in old Georgetown (Georgetown was NOT a rich neighborhood pre-World War Two!). Please consider sharing a little sweat with us down by the cove when the heat is high. There is plenty of Gatorade, water and ice cream at the tackle shack, and we'll find some shade for you at the picnic tables under Murto's Maple!

Dan



Santiago Alvarez from Pasadena, CA with an August Sunny from the canal (photo by Mark Binsted)



One of Ray's famous Zinnias at the tackle shack (photo by Dan Ward)