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## FISHING REPORT

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### SEPTEMBER 11, 2012

Now that cool temperatures have replaced summer's torrid heat, I'm hopeful that fishing along the Potomac will perk up a little. Fish eat less, and are generally not as active and aggressive when the water temperature is high, so a cool-down of the river usually brings increased angling success. Fletcher's has just ordered a supply of the most appropriate lures to effectively fish this coming fall season.

In spite of the hot, dry weeks of July and August, the flow of the Potomac never dropped to seriously low levels. This is good news for the millions of baby herring and shad which will migrate downstream, through the Bay, and out eventually into the open Atlantic. Shoals of these baitfish can be seen shimmering on the river's surface at dawn and dusk. It is an enriching experience to see life in the water like that, even inspiring hope that man can turn the corner on environmental degradation.

I'm always happy to get interesting fishing photos from visitors to Fletcher's Cove especially ones with kids. One of the summer's beauties came from regular angler Matt Murtha, who sent three photos of stripers, walleyes and catfish. Here is what Matt had to say...

*If you can only use 1 of them, please use the 33 pound catfish that the 10 year old caught this past Saturday morning 7/14/2012. Myles is the son of a neighbor friend of mine. Largest fish he has ever caught. Used a small bluegill as bait, on the bottom, in about 30ft of water, above Chain Bridge. He fought the fish for 10 minutes and it barely fit it in the landing net. His dad took the picture. We then measured it, weighed it in a sling, and released it in good health. We landed 8 blue cats that morning, rest were btwn approx 3 and 12 pounds.*



Often at Fletcher's Cove, the nearly invisible events of nature are some of the most amazing - there is so much to see if one looks very closely. A couple weeks ago an emerald green praying mantis set up camp on a bright red canna-lily blossom right in front of the tackle shack. It stayed there day after day. Several times during the days, a hummingbird would come to drink nectar from the blossom only to find the menacing looking mantis guarding her territory. The bird would hover, then think better of the drink, and move on to other blossoms. Last week, a skinny brown stick figure appeared on the back of the green mantis. It was a male, come to close the circle of life in its own fascinating way. By the end of the day, the pair was gone

and the blossom was again free to feed the hummingbird's thirst.

Another amazing insect adventure, still in progress, involves a large garden spider, which spun its web among Ray's colorful zinnias. The intricately patterned spider has



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"Matt Murtha holding a 33 pound catfish caught by his young friend, Myles" (photo sent by Matt Murtha)

been feasting on one incautious bug after another. Everything from common flies to skipper butterflies to grasshoppers have become buffet meals for this spider. Even a full sized monarch butterfly could not avoid the spider's sticky web. The hungry and very busy spider wrapped up the monarch in filaments like a neat package and took the rest of the day off!

If you visit Fletcher's Cove you will see beautiful vistas of the river and lush woodlands spread out along the Potomac Valley. But don't forget to look very closely at the natural world around you. The really big picture is often defined by the tiniest events.

Thanks for reading, I hope to see you by The Cove.

Dan



"A beautiful garden spider waits for a meal in front of the tackle-shack" (photo by Alex Binsted)

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