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FISHING REPORT

ARCHIVED FISHING REPORTS

October 6, 2016

With the fall season settling in on our fair realm, a look back at a hot, dry and dusty summer is in order. If you are not yet convinced of global warming, Washington's summer of '16 may well have nudged you in that direction. While it is a truism that the only "norm" in weather is a series of extremes, it seemed to me that our extremes this summer were mostly in the toasty direction. That situation certainly did not improve the prospects for angling this past July, August and September. Water temps have now dropped considerably and if you want to wet a line at Fletcher's Cove you still have the opportunity. We will remain open until the last Sunday of October with a full selection of tackle and bait. D.C. fishing permits are still for sale as well and purchasing one will carry you through the entire fall for angling in any D.C. water.

As this is written, all eyes are on Hurricane Matthew. A hit by a tropical system could muddy the waters for an extended period of time but keep in mind that as far as precipitation is concerned, it is what falls upstream that matters most for river levels. Just last week Fletcher's employees went on full flood preparation mode when the Advanced Hydrologic Predictive Service forecast a river level at just below flood stage. All of our canoes and kayaks were removed from the dock to higher ground, rowboats were daisy-chained and rowed to a safe spot in the upper cove, and flood strength ropes were readied. Thanks to muscles more youthful than mine, I survived the day to wake again. As it turned out, all that prep was not necessary as the amount of rainfall in the upper watershed was much less than predicted. But as the old saying goes, "better safe than sorry."

Because of the severe siltation of Fletcher's Cove, the window of opportunity to move our dock to its safe spot during floods is very short. The river level needs to be quite high to lift the dock off of the mud, but a short time after it is at that level, the current becomes too strong in the cove to make the move. We've been lucky (and on top of the situation) during recent high waters, but (knock-on-wood) luck has a way of running out!

Highlighting some notable catches in recent weeks, I should mention Rob Catalanotto's 26 inch striper caught on September 19th up in the swift water of Little Falls. Rob and Alex Binsted have been nailing the smallmouth up in the rapids as well. With the cooler water, early morning or late evening top water lures can be quite productive. Fishing the Little Falls area demands an extra measure of caution as this is dangerous water for those who are careless or disrespectful of the river!

"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.

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



Anabela Eriksen-Brottet, 12, with a tech-rendering of her surprise catch. (Photo: Mark Binstead)



Rob Catalanotto plucked this pretty striper from the rushing Potomac and released it back in the rapids. (Photo: Alex Binsted)

Anabela Eriksen-Brottet was out for a relaxing rowboating afternoon with her dad when a purple rubber worm she was trolling just happened to attract the attention of a beautiful Walleye. Annabela thought better of holding the toothy creature herself and left that honor to her father! Through the magic of cellular technology she was able to display her catch for all to see.

The C&O Canal is scheduled to be drained later this fall for some needed repair work in Georgetown. We will be sad to see the old ditch that way for sure. The filled canal has provided some really excellent fishing opportunities this summer. A young angler named Mateen nabbed a particularly beautiful largemouth bass using a boathouse nightcrawler on September, 6th.

On October 5th, the "Georgetown", a replica of an old canal boat was towed by two beautiful mules one last time up the canal from its berth below lock number 4. The Georgetown took many a tourist and school child on an historic ride through a canal lock as did the commercial canal boats in the C&O's heyday in the mid and late 19th century. Now, the boat is not sea-worthy (canal-worthy?) and the cost of refurbishing is too great. The boat will be taken apart and removed from the canal at Fletcher's later in the year. A new boat is planned for 2018 when repairs to Locks 3 and 4 are complete in Georgetown. I look forward to that day as my time along the big ditch spans an even earlier canal boat named "The Canal Clipper." On summer Friday and Saturday evenings of the 60's and 70's that boat would often glide up the canal past Fletcher's. It was headed towards Brookmont, Maryland and Lock 5 carrying party goers, a band, and stocked with the kind of refreshments that a merry party does make. I would have to run up to the canal and drop the pulley rope of our passenger ferry boat so the Clipper could slide over the rope. In those days there was no bridge over the canal and folks who parked on the Canal Road side of Fletcher's had to pull themselves over the canal in a big scow boat that held six or eight people.



The Georgetown makes a last journey up the canal to Fletcher's. (Photo: Dan Ward)

With the cool nights and dwindling sunlight, the marsh plants of the cove are dying back now. There is still time to visit Fletcher's before our season is done to view some of the wilds within Washington and possibly take a paddle or row on the river. Our season will end on Sunday, October, 30th, so don't dally! Please call for current conditions and hours. Thanks so much for reading...

Dan



Young angler Mateen with a chunky canal bass on a nightcrawler (Photo: Dad)



A goodbye glance from a faithful servant (photo by Dan Ward)