



## Blue Water Sportfishing Association Newsletter



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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING - TUESDAY,  
APRIL 1, 7:00 AT MCMORRAN**

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING - WEDNESDAY,  
APRIL 9, 7:30 AT MCMORRAN**

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Jim Baker was the club's guest speaker in March. Jim has spoken to the club on a few occasions. He is a Biologist for the DNR and is involved heavily in the salmon & trout fish plant projects in Lake Huron. Several interesting topics were covered, followed by a very long Q&A. Jim talked about how they are now planning their stocking dates around the cormorants migration along Lake Huron's coast. Also, Jim talked about the surprising coho fishery that Lake Huron enjoyed through the spring and summer. It is surprising, because zero coho are planted in Lake Huron; it is believed that the coho that we were catching came from Lake Michigan. Another topic that was discussed was the poor success rate in the brown trout fishery in lower Lake Huron. A lot of browns are being planted, but few are being caught.

April's guest speaker is to be announced, but look for a return of the SWAP TABLE in April. There will be two large Planer Boards, Dipsy Rods, a couple of 209 Penn Reels, Sea Bags, and an unused Big Jon Planer Board Mast. So if you are looking to sell some old tackle, bring it in with you. And if you are looking for some old tackle, bring your \$\$\$.

### 2003 IMPORTANT CLUB DATES

April 1	2002 Fishing License Expires
April 26	River Crab Salmon Stakes
May 3-4	Fish-On Tournament Contact 989-479-9230
May 16, 17, 18	Blue Water Classic
June 6-8	Sarnia Bay Marina Tournament Contact 519-862-2291

### SALMON STAKES

The 25th Annual Salmon Stakes is coming up fast. The tournament date is April 26th.

Again the tournament will benefit the Blue Water Mental Health Clinic and other programs serving troubled children, adults and their families throughout Michigan. This tournament raised over \$100,000 last year.

State budget cuts have made the revenues this event produces even more important than ever before. The Grand Prize for the raffle is a 5-day trip for 4 to Orlando, which includes hotel, airfare, & attractions. There are also many other prizes (weekend getaways, Tiger's games, etc.). Also, the tickets are good for \$10 off dinner at any Muer restaurant nationwide.

Raffle tickets are on sale for \$10.

Raffle tickets and registration forms are available at our General Membership meetings, Mullin's Sports-n-More in Lexington, Anglers in St. Clair, Anderson's Pro Bait in Port Huron, My Trophy Shop in Port Huron, and from Jeff Parker, the tournament chairman at (810) 984-5743.

If you are planning to fish, everyone on your vessel over the age of 16 needs to have a raffle ticket AND you need to register your boat. A new requirement is that each member registering must sign his or her name on the registration form.

The purse is significantly different than previous tournaments, and we need as many boats entered as possible to help capture the 5 club prizes.

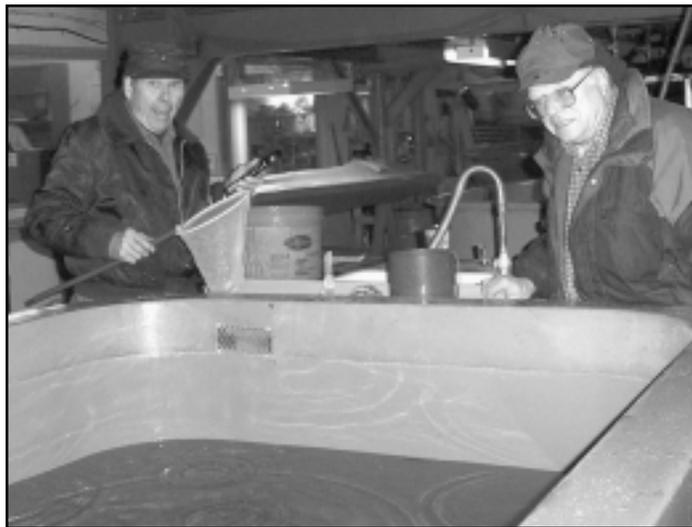
Jeff is looking for volunteers to help on tournament day, April 26th. It should be noted that our club gets a lot of exposure to the press and community during that day so we need enough help to put on a good representation. Please contact Jeff at 810-984-5743 or email [redcharters@advnet.net](mailto:redcharters@advnet.net) if you can help.



## BLUEWATER ANGLERS FISH HATCHERY

One of the great programs that the Blue Water Sportfishing Association has been supporting is the Bluewater Anglers Fish Hatchery located in Sarnia, ON. In the past, the club has been donating money to this program. More recently, in 2000 the club donated \$3,000 and in 2002 we donated \$5,000 to this cause.

Last October, two club members volunteered to help the Bluewater Anglers extract eggs from adult chinook salmon at the Syndeham River, which is up towards Owen Sound. They were able to extract eggs and sperm from 63 females and 56 males. Those eggs were then brought back to the hatchery in Sarnia. The eggs were then fertilized, placed in waterfall incubation towers, and sorted weekly for deformed or spoiled eggs. Next, they were placed into tanks and given different foods monitored by how much the fish weigh.



*Vic Ruehle and Bill Lill  
getting ready to weigh chinooks.*

Every Tuesday, BWSA members Bill Lill and Vic Ruehle have been weighing the fingerling salmon, and then plotting their growth on a chart at the hatchery.

There are approximately 70,000 fingerling chinooks in the 3" to 3.5" range as of March 18th. These fingerlings will be released in several Canadian rivers along Lake Huron in May. At that time the fish should be about 5-6" long. Along with the chinooks being raised, they are also raising 45,000 steelhead and 73,000 brown trout. The steelhead are about 12-14" long and will be released this spring also.

According to Jake VanReuen and Don Cox, the people in charge of the hatchery, the hatchery rate of mature fish is about 80% better than the natural survival rate.



*Dave Drury feeding the steelhead.*



*Vic weighing the kings*

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Want to have a load of fun this spring? You're needed at the Blue Water Classic Tournament. Join fellow club members, May 16, 17, & 18, selling tickets on Friday, inspecting boats Saturday or Sunday, being an observer on one of the top boats for Sunday, or running a raffle at the weigh-in tent.

We have many jobs that we need your help. You can volunteer for as many hours as you would like. It's a great experience! Contact me at 313-881-0689 or at the next general membership meeting. Get involved in your club; you'll have a "whale" of a time.

*N. Heinrich, BWC Chairman*



## DIFFERENT RULES/ DIFFERENT WATERS

I don't know if many of you know this, but there are different rules for salmon and trout trolling when you are fishing the St. Clair River. Since we have a club tournament scheduled this month in April, I thought I would point them out seeing that some boat may choose to fish the river.

The first difference has to do with lake trout. Anglers fishing in Lake Huron are not allowed to keep lake trout between Oct. 1 – April 30. But on the St. Clair River, there is NO closed season on lake trout. Although it is rare to catch lake trout in the river, I have seen it done from shore and have personally done it by boat.

The next major difference is rod limits. Anglers fishing Lake Huron while trolling and targeting salmon/trout are allowed to fish 3 rods per person. This is stated as an exception in the 2003 DNR fishing regulations on Page 8, under Hook and Line Fishing. Generally, anglers are only allowed two rods per person, but an exception is made for anglers targeting salmon and trout on Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Superior, and the St. Marys River. This exception does not cover the St. Clair River. So if you are planning on fishing the river, also plan on fishing only 2 rods per person.

*Mike Rymar*



## MUDPUPIES MUST BE RETURNED SAFELY TO THE WATER

Michigan Department of Natural Resources officials today reminded anglers to return to the water any mudpuppy caught while fishing.

DNR Fisheries managers recently investigated several reports that ice anglers in Southeast Michigan have been catching large numbers of mudpuppies and leaving them on the ice to die. While perhaps not the most appealing creatures to look at, these salamanders serve an important role in Michigan's aquatic ecosystem and are protected under state law.

In southeast Michigan, mudpuppies often are caught on Lake St. Clair and the Detroit River.

"Anglers often leave mudpuppies on the ice to die, because they think they are competitors for popular game species and feed on fish—which is not true—or because they think they are worthless," said Robert Haas, research biologist at the DNR Mt. Clemens Research Station.

## LAKE MICHIGAN RUFFE DNA ANALYZED

They came from the Great Lakes, not an overseas location. Recent DNA samples of Lake Michigan ruffe analyzed at Cleveland State University show these ruffe originated from within the Great Lakes and not from an overseas location, as has been suggested by some industry carriers.

The USFWS Ruffe Control committee sent tissue samples of the Lake Michigan ruffe to Dr. Carol Stepien for genetic analysis, in hopes in determining origin. Dr. Stepien informed us that DNA analysis of the Lake Michigan ruffe tissues definitely indicates that these ruffe originated from within the Great Lakes and not from an overseas location.

Furthermore, there are some DNA differences between Lake Superior ruffe and Lake Huron ruffe. Stepien feels there is a good chance that she may be able to determine whether the Lake Huron ruffe originated from Lake Superior or Lake Huron. She is currently working on that determination.

Dr. Stepien is a Ph.D and Director of the Great Lakes Environmental Genetics Lab at Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH. She has performed all of the genetics work on North American ruffe thus far, including the identification of our strain of ruffe (Baltic Sea). Stepien is currently working on another ruffe genetics paper and will include this latest ruffe data.

The Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council is a long time member of the Ruffe Committee, represented by Dan Thomas.

"Their diet consists of crayfish, snails, insect larvae, worms and some fish eggs, but there is no evidence they damage fish populations."

If a mudpuppy is caught during the ice-fishing season, the law requires its release back into the water. They cannot be taken out of Michigan waters from Nov. 15 through the last Saturday of May. Those caught by anglers typically are 8-12-inches long.

Mudpuppies are native to North American lakes and streams, but their populations have been declining severely in recent decades. They have flattened heads, slimy skin and four legs with four toes on each foot. They also have bushy, reddish gills behind their heads. Their color varies, ranging from a brown to a grayish-brown with scattered dark spots or blotches.

*Michigan DNR Press Release*



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## **FISH KILLS EXPECTED STATEWIDE**

March 20, 2003

State Fisheries officials today reminded residents to expect fish kills in many lakes throughout the state, noting that spring fish kills are most often natural and not related to environmental contamination.

Large-scale fish die-offs usually are one of three seasonal types, sparked by natural causes that cannot be controlled. The spring kill predicted by state fisheries biologists is related to the recent weather shift from a long, cold winter to above-normal, spring-like temperatures.

“Most Michigan lakes have been locked under ice and snow for months, which can lower dissolved oxygen levels in the water and stress the fish,” said DNR Fisheries Biologist Todd Grischke. “The abrupt warming trend of the past few weeks has the potential to raise lake temperatures too quickly, further stressing the fish and potentially causing some die-offs in a variety of water bodies.”

Winter fish kills occur in shallow lakes with excessive vegetation. Dying weeds rob dissolved oxygen from the water, and ice cover prevents lakes from drawing fresh oxygen into the water. Fish also suffocate in particularly hot summer months, when plants consume large amounts of oxygen at night as part of the photosynthesis process and create large, oxygen-depleted areas in lakes. These summer kills claim fish in the hours just before dawn, when dissolved oxygen levels in shallow, weedy areas are at their lowest.

“Michigan experiences a full range of weather conditions in a normal year,” Grischke said. “Fish kills are simply nature’s way of thinning fish populations and, ultimately, ensuring healthy fish populations.”

While it does occur, rarely are fish kills attributed to pollution or improper use of herbicides or other chemicals. Fish kills are unsightly, but most are not cause for alarm. However, if a chemical odor is noted in the area of a large die-off, or a strange water color or surface film is observed, residents should contact DNR Fisheries Division immediately at 517-373-1280.

*MDNR Press Release*

## **ANGLER HELP NEEDED FOR TROUT & SALMON STUDY**

March 14, 2003

Michigan Department of Natural Resources officials today reminded anglers that their participation is needed again this year in lakes Huron and Michigan with an ongoing trout and salmon study.

DNR fisheries workers annually distribute nearly one million chinook salmon in the Great Lakes. These fish are marked with a coded-wire tag and clipped adipose fin. The tags are implanted into the snout of the fish and are not visible to the angler. Trout or salmon with only an adipose fin missing may contain such a tag. Anglers who catch these fish are asked to record the following information: angler’s name and address, species of fish, length, weight and sex of the fish, along with the date of capture and capture location.

Anglers are asked to freeze only the head and take it with the requested information to the nearest MDNR Fisheries Division office or participating drop-site location. A list of drop-sites and the tag recovery form are available. “This research is a vital part of our effort to maintain healthy, plentiful populations of trout and salmon for Great Lakes anglers to enjoy,” said DNR Fisheries Chief Kelley Smith. “This information has been used in selecting stocking locations and evaluating the performance of different strains of trout and salmon. Providing this information will help determine the course of Michigan’s fishing future.”

Participating anglers will receive a letter describing the stocking history of the fish they caught and possibly a reward lure. Between 5,000 and 7,000 salmon and trout with CWTs are processed annually. Rainbow trout, lake trout, and chinook salmon accounted for the majority of fish collected for CWT processing in 2002.

For more information regarding Great Lakes fisheries research and coded-wire tagged trout and salmon, contact the MDNR Charlevoix Fisheries Research Station at (231)-547-2914.

*MDNR Press Release*