



## Blue Water Sportfishing Association Newsletter



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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING - TUESDAY,  
MARCH 4, 7:00 AT MCMORRAN**

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING - WEDNESDAY,  
MARCH 12, 7:30 AT MCMORRAN**

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

February's general membership meeting included two speakers. Milford and Tim Purdy of Purdy's Commercial Fishery in Sarnia and Jim Boase from the US Fish & Wildlife Service put on a great show.

Tim showed a video of the day-to-day operations of his Canadian commercial fishing company. Tim's company is allowed to gill and trap net Whitefish, Perch, Walleye, Sturgeon, Lake Trout, and a few other species of fish in Lake Huron's Canadian waters. The video showed how unwanted fish are released due to size or species limitations or quotas. It also showed how they interact with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and how every pound of fish taken must be weighed to meet OMNR quotas.

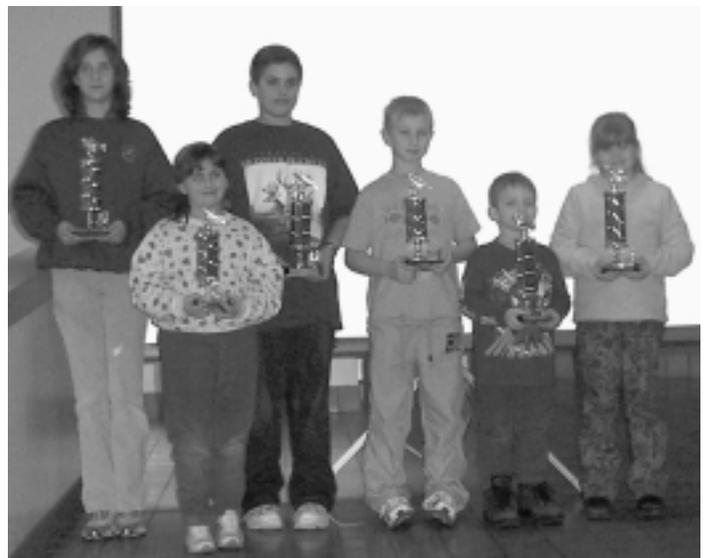
Jim and Tim also did a slide presentation on Lake Sturgeon. Jim is working on documenting sturgeon-spawning areas in the great lakes region. Jim is currently working on the St. Clair River, and he has documented a spawning area in the Algonac area and one upstream from the Blue Water Bridge. Milford and Tim lend a helping hand to Jim's work. The Purdy's are allowed a very small quota of sturgeon, so a lot of the sturgeon that captured in their nets are released. Before the fish is released, it is tagged. Sometimes, if the fish is large enough, a small signaling device is placed inside of the fish. The Purdy's company had tagged and released over 3500 sturgeons.

March's guest will be Jim Baker, a Biologist from the Michigan DNR.

### BIG FISH WINNERS



*Adult division*



*Juvenile division*



## 2003 IMPORTANT CLUB DATES

March 1	2003 Fishing Licenses Go on Sale
March 27	Fishing Forever Banquet
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

## BECHHOLD TO VISIT MICHIGAN

Jerry Bechhold will be coming to Cabalas in Dundee, MI on March 7-9. Jerry is the inventor of the Fishcatcher flasher. Jerry will be doing a couple of seminars over that weekend on all of his products.

I personally have had pretty good success with the 8" Fishcatcher and only limited success with the 11" flasher. I have not used any of Bechhold's other products (5" flasher, Daisy Chains, Single Flasher & Jig, or the Rotary Bullet Bait Holder). I am planning to attend the event, as it should be very informative. I have also heard rumors that there will be new and different tapes specifically designed for the great lakes that will only be available at this show.

If you are interested in checking out the Bechhold Fishcatcher website, visit:

<http://www.fishcatcher.com/index.html>

*Mike Rymar*

## COHO PLANT MAY HELP LAKE TROUT FISHERY

The Michigan DNR plans to begin planting 6" Coho salmon in Lake Superior next spring to improve the Munising Bay fishery and reduce pressure on its prime lake trout population. The DNR will plant 25,000 Coho salmon this spring and continue planting for three or four years before evaluating the success of plants.

By planting Coho salmon, the DNR hopes to give anglers another species to fish for, reducing pressure and harvest on the lake trout fishery. The DNR had previously planted Coho in Lake Superior, including Munising Bay, but stopped in 1993 after creel surveys showed only a 5% return of hatchery fish being taken by anglers.

Munising Bay was one place where Coho stocking didn't catch on well. Natural reproduction didn't really work in Munising Bay.

*Great Lakes Basin Report*

## ANDERSON'S PRO BAIT

GLO bait and tackle in Port Huron is now under new ownership. Long time club member Joel Anderson purchased the store in January. The store, which will now be called Anderson's Pro Bait, is located on Pine Grove Ave.

Joel is an avid salmon angler so his purchase of Anderson's Pro Bait is a natural fit. Joel's plan is to make this a family business. Joel's wife Tammi, children Laura and Jaron, father Dave, and brother Jeff are all learning the business and ready to lend a helping hand. All BWSA members probably remember Dave, as he was the president and tournament committee chairman for the club for quite a few years.

Joel plans on keeping the same inventory that the previous store had in the past, plus adding more salmon tackle. He wants to triple the number of Silver Streaks that the store previously stocked and carry a few salmon items that it previously did not have. Also, if you need any type of special item that the store does not usually carry Joel will special order the item for you. The store also has a certified scale.

The store is open now, but a Grand Opening is planned for March 1st. Winter hours are M-F 9am-5pm, Sat. 7am-5pm, and Sun. 7am-2pm.

The number to the bait store is 810-984-3232.

## 2003 BWSA CLUB TOURNAMENT RULES ARE ONLINE

There are only a couple minor changes for the upcoming season, all of them to the team format tournaments. One of them was to better define what happens to a boat that only fishes the second day of a two-day tournament. Another was to give a boat a replacement partner if their original partner was unable to fish the second day. Please see the rules for the exact rule changes. They can be found at the general membership meetings and online at:

<http://www.bluewatersportfishing.net/clubtournaments.html>

## FISHING FOREVER

The 4th annual Fishing Forever Banquet & Dinner will be held on March 27. The event has been moved to the Crystal Gardens, 1200 Gratiot Ave. in Marysville. The reason for the move was give us enough room to put on a great event. The doors will open at 5:30pm, and steak dinner will be served at 6:45pm.





## 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, Anderson's Pro Bait in Port Huron, and from Jeff Parker, the tournament chairman (810) 984-5743.

You can also get your registration form from our website: [www.bluewatersportfishing.net/rivercrab.html](http://www.bluewatersportfishing.net/rivercrab.html). (Registration forms only)

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. The overall prize money total is still the same, however, instead of a \$5,000 club prize for most total weight, the participant that weighs in the heaviest fish in each of 5 categories: Super Skipper (most weight by 1 boat), Largest Chinook, Largest Coho, Largest Steelhead, and Largest Brown Trout not only wins the individual \$500 prize but if he is a member of a registered and pre-approved club, his club wins \$1,000. So, make sure your registration form contains the club you belong to.

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.



## EL NINO NOW IN STRONGEST PHASE

WASHINGTON — El Nino has strengthened and is expected to worsen the drought in the U.S. Plains states while drenching California and the Southeast through the spring, the government said.

NOAA said El Nino, which is blamed for vicious droughts and floods worldwide, had entered its "mature stage" and would linger through April. El Nino usually occurs every 4 to 5 years and can last up to 18 months. El Nino has meant scant rainfall and snow for the already drought stricken Mid-Atlantic and Midwest states.

In recent years, mild winters have kept ice coverage sparse as we are realizing even today on the Great Lakes. For Lake Michigan during the winter of '97-'98 maximum ice coverage never exceeded 15%. This winter to date has kept with the recent trend: Current Lake Michigan ice coverage is at a minimum, so are Lakes Erie and Superior. As of January 12, Lake Michigan's mid-lake temperatures are still running around 40°. Without ice cover we normally see significant evaporation and lower water levels.

*Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council*

## NEW RUFFE EXPANSION

The Keweenaw Waterway and Lake Michigan have been invaded by the Eurasian ruffe. This exotic fish was initially found in the Duluth/Superior harbor in 1986, where the U.S.G.S. Lake Superior Biological Station tracked its population explosion through the 1990s.

This past September, during a routine surveillance survey in waters off Escanaba, Michigan, FWS biologists from the Ashland Fishery Resources office (FRO) captured one adult Eurasian ruffe. This is the first confirmed finding of a ruffe in Lake Michigan.

Just two weeks later, another survey made a significant ruffe discovery in Lake Superior. In cooperation with the Michigan DNR, FWS captured two additional ruffe in Little Bay de Noc. One adult ruffe was captured in a bottom trawl from Escanaba harbor near the site of the original ruffe discovery. A juvenile ruffe was also captured in a bottom trawl north of Gladstone, Michigan, six miles north of the capture site in Escanaba harbor. The capture of both adult and juvenile ruffe suggests that ruffe reproduction may be occurring in Lake Michigan. Also this fall, a male ruffe was captured in the River Sloughs, of the Keweenaw Waterway. This discovery represents a range expansion of 63 miles from the Ontonagon River, MI.

*Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council*



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## **BILLS BANNING LEAD SINKERS INTRODUCED, EMOTIONS RUN HIGH IN MINNESOTA & LEGISLATURE**

Citing concerns over Loon mortality from ingestion of lead, the Audubon Society has sponsored legislation that has been introduced in both chambers of the Minnesota State legislature.

Targeting lead sinkers one ounce and under, and referencing studies primarily from New England states they are pushing forward with legislation, while discounting existing studies done in MN, MI other Great Lakes States and by the federal government.

The bills HF. No. 192, and SF 23 basically state: An angler may not use a lead sinker to take on any waters lying wholly within the state or any portion of boundary waters within the jurisdiction of the state except use is permitted in the waters of Lake Superior where depths from surface to bottom are twenty feet or greater. A person may not sell or offer to sell a lead sinker in the state except for the intended use in the waters of Lake Superior and that the lead sinker must be packaged and labeled "Intended for use in Lake Superior Only". For purposes of this section, "lead sinker" means a device that: (1) contains lead;(2) weighs one ounce or less; (3) is designed to be attached to a fishing line; and (4) is intended to sink the fishing line.

With emotions running high and fanned by

environmental and animal rights groups, legislators apparently are ignoring recent scientific studies released by the USGS National Wildlife Health Research Center.

The most comprehensive research on lead fishing sinker impacts on birds was commissioned in 1999 by the USFWS and conducted by USGS' National Wildlife Health Research Center in Madison, Wisconsin. Scientists radiographed samples of 2,749 individual birds representing 30 species and reviewed necropsy records of 36,671 other birds from the files of the National Wildlife Health Center dating from 1975–1999. The results showed 23 out of the 3,000 radiographed birds (including 11 loons out of 313) had ingested lead sinkers. Review of the nearly 37,000 necropsy records indicated 27 birds had ingested lead fishing sinkers.

The results showed that only 3.5% of common loons (from a sample of 313) had ingested lead sinkers and just 27 of 36,671 waterbird and bald eagle carcasses (0.007%) contained ingested lead sinkers. Fishing tackle, other than sinkers, including hooks, line, and other materials, was also found in 14 common loons, 99 brown pelicans, 12 cormorants, one bald eagle, one great blue heron, and one Pacific loon.

*Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council*