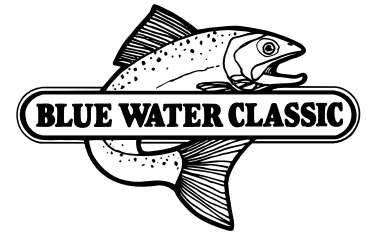




Blue Water Sportfishing Association Newsletter



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

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

WILD GAME DINNER

February's general membership meeting will be the club's first wild game dinner. All are welcome to attend. The event will take place on February 9 at McMorran. Bob Lane is organizing the event. Bob has several volunteers bringing around 10 different wild game entrées. If you are planning on bringing a wild game entrée, you should contact Bob @ (810)-367-6202 if you have not already. People are welcome to bring more wild game entrées and we also need desserts.

Currently, the only special presentation we will have for this meeting is Bob Roskey presenting the Big Fish awards. This meeting is meant to be more of a social event, so we suggest you bring some pictures of your recent hunting and fishing trips from last year.



CLUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Several of the club's committees have started meeting on a weekly basis. Advertising, Fishing Forever, Classic, and Salmon Stakes have all met in the past week to discuss changes and organize the 2005 events. If you are interested in helping out at any of these events, please join us at the wild game dinner to find out how.

SPRING BOAT AND FISHING SHOW

BWSA has decided to rent a space at the Birch Run Boat and Fishing Show on March 4-6. We are doing this to help promote the club, Salmon Stakes, and BW Classic tournament. We need a few volunteers to run the booth. We have two members handling the setup on Thursday afternoon. Friday, we need two people to man the booth from 3pm-9pm. Saturday, we would like to divide into two shifts. First shift will be from 10am-3pm, and the second shift will be from 3pm-9pm. Currently we have two people who are open to take either the afternoon or evening shift. So we need two more volunteers to work the booth on Saturday. We have two people to work the booth on Sunday and for clean up. Volunteers who work the booth receive free admission. If you are interested, please call Mike Rymar @ 586-215-3972.

There are several free seminars discussing Great Lake Trolling. Also, Great Lakes Angler has a \$25 seminar on Saturday from 1-4pm.

CLUB TOURNAMENTS

The 2005 club tournament schedule and rules will be handed out at the February General Membership Meeting. They also can be found on the club's website at: <http://www.bluewatersportfishing.net>

FISHING HOTLINE

The club's fishing hotline is available with current reports. The number for it is 810-987-FISH. Joel Anderson from Anderson's Pro Bait is keeping it up-to-date with current reports.



Big Fish Contest

Here are the final standings for the Big Fish contest. If you were one of the lucky anglers to be listed, you need to attend the February general membership meeting to receive your trophy. Please direct any questions or comments about the contest to the Big Fish Chairman, Bob Roskey, at 987-7891.

Adult Division

KING

Mike Rymar 21 lb 7 oz
Mark Vessella 20 lb 4 oz

ATLANTIC

Dale Phipps 4 lb 9 oz

COHO

Bill Odgen 9 lb 0 oz
Frank Rotondi 7 lb 2 oz

STEELHEAD

Paul Baker 11.95 lbs
Ed Loehnis 9 lb 6 oz
Ed Loehnis 9 lb 4 oz

BROWN TROUT

Jay Korneffel 12 lb 8 oz

LAKETROUT

Dale Phipps 12 lb 12 oz
Howard York 7 lb 14 oz

WALLEYE

Howard York 8 lb 6 oz
Howard York 7 lb 12 oz

Junior Division

KING

Matt Davis 16 lb 0 oz
Nick Durst 9 lb 1 oz
Rebecca Decker 8 lb 4 oz

Steelhead

Rebecca Decker 5 lb 7 oz

Lake Trout

Jayne Lynn Korneffel 8 lb 8 oz

Walleye

Chelsea Korneffel 5 lb 9 oz

BWSA Big Fish Winner

| Year | Angler | Species | Weight |
|------|-----------------|------------|------------|
| 1980 | Bob Bingle | King | 34.0 lbs. |
| 1981 | No Record | | |
| 1982 | Jim Turner | King | 29.1 lbs. |
| 1983 | Len Gerlach | King | 31.9 lbs. |
| 1984 | John Perry | King | 31.9 lbs. |
| 1985 | Les Smith | King | 27.3 lbs. |
| 1986 | Mark Cooley | King | 26.1 lbs. |
| 1987 | Pat Griffin | King | 26.0 lbs. |
| 1988 | Garrett Gaw | King | 29.6 lbs. |
| 1989 | No Record | | |
| 1990 | No Record | | |
| 1991 | Rick Kolady | King | 28.5 lbs. |
| 1992 | Joanne Stahl | King | 27.45 lbs. |
| 1993 | Jay Brueggeman | King | 27.0 lbs. |
| 1994 | Mike Rymar | King | 22.8 lbs. |
| 1995 | Judy Ogden | King | 32.2 lbs. |
| 1996 | Dan Fenner | King | 27.08 lbs. |
| 1997 | Eric Hutchinson | King | 28.12 lbs |
| 1998 | Andy Remeselnik | King | 26.5 lbs. |
| 1999 | Tim Cook | King | 26.3 lbs. |
| 2000 | Jim Kuehn | King | 24.85 lbs. |
| 2001 | Mike Rymar | King | 29.63 lbs. |
| 2002 | Brian Meredith | King | 25.1 lbs. |
| 2003 | Rich Cooley | Lake Trout | 36.55 lbs. |
| 2004 | Mike Rymar | King | 21.44 lbs. |

SALMON MARSALA

Yields: 4 servings

1/3 C. all-purpose flour
1/4 tsp. salt
1 1/2 lbs. salmon (6 oz. each) skin removed
2 Tbs. olive oil
1 Tbs. butter
2/3 C. Marsala wine
1/3 C. snipped fresh parsley
1/8 tsp. dried oregano leaves

In shallow dish, combine flour and salt. Dredge fillets in flour mixture to coat. In 12-inch skillet, heat oil and butter over medium heat until butter is melted. Add fillets. Fry for 4 to 8 minutes, or until golden brown, turning over once.

Add Marsala, parsley and orgeano to fish in skillet. Cook 2 to 4 minutes, or until sauce is reduced by half, spooning sauce over fish frequently during cooking. Serve fish with sauce.

2005 BOATING DATES

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------------------|
| February 12-20 | Detroit Boat Show |
| March 4-6 | Spring Boat & Fishing Show – Birch Run |
| March 31 | Fishing Forever |
| April 30 | Salmon Stakes |
| May 7-8 | Sarnia Bay Tournament of Champions |
| May 20-22 | Blue Water Classic |
| June 3-5 | Grand Haven Offshore |



ALEWIFE POPULATION TAKES DIVE IN HURON

Ann Arbor, Mich. — DNR fisheries biologist Jeff Schaeffer was shocked at the findings of a recent survey of prey fish in Lake Huron. Following back-to-back years without an influx of young-of-the-year alewives into the lake, Schaeffer didn't expect to find a thriving population when the U.S. Geological Survey Great Lakes Science Center conducted its annual fall surveys of forage fish. But he didn't expect to find what he did, either. "It's like nothing I've seen," Schaeffer told Michigan Outdoor News. "Lake Huron has undergone a change so drastic I'd never imagined. There was almost a complete absence of alewives."

The USGS conducted a bottom trawl survey and a hydro-acoustic survey this fall. "Each survey is a specialized survey and the two surveys are designed to complement each other," Schaeffer said. "The bottom trawl samples fish near the bottom that the hydro-acoustical survey won't see, and the hydro-acoustical survey finds fish up in the water column that the bottom trawl wouldn't find."

Neither survey found many alewives. Schaeffer said the hydro survey is conducted with basically a big fish finder that peeks down into the water. The trawl survey uses a large net towed across the bottom of the lake at different spots for 10 minutes each tow. Schaeffer said his crews sample about 40 different spots each fall.

The hydro survey turned up just four alewives during the Oct. 8-21 survey. The trawl survey turned up six adults and nine young of the year for each tow. That compares to 48 adults and 77,000 young of the year caught per tow last year. "And we thought that was low," Schaeffer said.

He attributes the crash to back-to-back losses of young-of-the-year fish during the past two hard winters and heavy predation by game fish. Also, this year's cold spring resulted in poor reproduction.

"This spring we found low numbers of adult alewives and basically no reproduction," Schaeffer said. "Last year was one of the better year-classes in the fall, but those fish didn't make it through the winter. This year, over-winter mortality won't be an issue because we have no young-of-the-year fish."

The alewife decline has been evident in the salmon catch. Anglers reported catching good numbers of fish this summer, but most were undersized compared to previous years.

Despite the gloomy picture on alewives, Schaeffer said that overall the prey availability in the lake, "is probably not as dire as we thought in the spring." That's because other prey species like rainbow smelt and bloater chubs are increasing.

"Over the past two years, the decline in the alewife population has been associated with increased reproduction of other species," he said. "We've had two strong year-classes of smelt and one very good and one pretty good year-class of chubs."

"We didn't see a lot of big smelt," he said, "so I don't anticipate a big increase in smelt dipping because the large ones are getting cropped off by the trout and salmon. "I've seen habit data that shows predators are now eating smelt. My take is that the smelt will not replace the alewives, at least in the short term. There are a lot of them out there, but they're small so they won't replace the alewife bio-mass."

What that means to salmon anglers is that the fish are likely to remain on the small side, at least in the immediate future.

"For the next year or so fishing on Lake Huron will be a lot like fishing on Lake Superior," Schaeffer said. "There, anglers catch a mix of lake trout and medium-sized salmon."

"On the other hand, I anticipate that salmon growth will not improve drastically. We will not get back to where we were five years ago," he said.

Now, some good news: Despite the dismal alewife findings, other changes taking place in the lake should bring smiles to the faces of some anglers. For instance, more young-of-the-year native lake trout were caught in the trawl nets this fall than in the previous 30 years combined.

"The survey is not designed to catch lake trout," Schaeffer said. "This is the first time in many, many years that we saw (lake trout) reproduction in the main basin of the lake. That's pretty exciting news. Up until the last couple of days of the survey we actually had caught more lake trout than alewives."

"For many years we simply couldn't document any (lake trout) reproduction," he said. "It's hard not to make an association between the lack of alewives and the increased reproduction of lake trout. We haven't made a connection, but it's something a lot of people are thinking about."

Schaeffer said there was good news about the nuisance round goby population.

"Round goby numbers are down," he said. "A lot of exotic species go through a boom and bust syndrome, or it could be because of heavy predation." Walleye, smallmouth bass, yellow perch, and lake trout all eat gobies.

While the salmon population has taken a hit in the size of the fish being caught, there has been an increase in perch and walleye populations in recent years in Lake Huron. In fact, the walleye and perch populations in Saginaw Bay are thriving. There have been three strong year-classes of walleyes. This year's year-class of perch also was strong, and last year's was a record.

"We have smaller salmon in Lake Huron, but growing populations of walleyes and yellow perch," Schaeffer said. "It really represents a transition rather than a total collapse. I think we will have good fishing in Lake Huron, just not all chinook."

By Bill Parker, Michigan Outdoor News



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LAW HINDERS MICH. RAID ON DNR FUNDS

LANSING — Gov. Jennifer Granholm has signed into law a measure that prevents state officials from solving budget problems by raiding Department of Natural Resources accounts intended for uses ranging from new public boat docks to wildlife research.

And voters will get to decide in 2006 whether to toughen the new law by making it an amendment to the Michigan Constitution. Turning it into an amendment would make the accounts virtually untouchable, whereas lawmakers could overturn the new law by majority vote.

The law and proposed constitutional amendment, both resulting from action by the legislature last month, come amid growing worries by hunters, fishermen and boaters that revenue from the permits and licenses they buy will be diverted to state budget fixes.

There's already precedent for that: Officials transferred \$7.8 million from the state waterways fund to the general fund, the main state fund controlled by lawmakers, in the 2002-2003 budget year.

The chief sponsor of the proposals was ex-state Rep. Randy Richardville, R-Monroe, who said conservation-related revenues shouldn't be used for other purposes.

The proposed constitutional amendment is backed by key groups that can be expected to campaign for its passage, including Michigan United Conservation Clubs, Michigan Boating Industries Association and Michigan Snowmobile Association. It will be placed on the November 2006 general election ballot.

There's about \$130 million in the 13 accounts in question, which now will become part of a new Conservation and Recreation Legacy Fund. Examples:

- Michigan State Waterways Fund, which receives 17.5 percent of the revenue from watercraft registration fees. It is intended to pay for public marinas, harbors of refuge, boat launches and public access sites on lakes and rivers.
- Game and Fish Protection Fund, whose money comes mostly from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. It's earmarked for hunting and fishing programs, including research, enforcement of game laws and acquisition of state land.
- Nongame Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund, put together mostly from state income tax checkoffs. It is designated for the improvement of wildlife habitat.
- Forest Recreation Fund, whose revenues come from fees such as the \$10-a-day charge at state forest campgrounds. It's intended to improve facilities for hiking, snowmobiling, trail riding, camping and the like.

A key argument against protecting these funds with a constitutional amendment is that it would limit the flexibility needed to manipulate state funds during financial crises. Proponents of the amendment argue that using proceeds from camping, fishing and boating fees for other purposes amounts to an extra tax on outdoor enthusiasts.

By Gary Heinlein / The Detroit News