



The Buzz

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March 28, 2012

PRSC Experts Night 2012

Upcoming Items

PRSC Meeting
Steve Chaconas
April 25, 2012

PRSC Picture Raffle
Drawing April, 2012

Potomac Riverkeeper
April and June, 2012

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At the March meeting, some of the PRSC's own experts will reveal their favorite lures, teach fly-tying techniques, and share their secret fishing holes.

Wallace Harvey will show off his favorite top-water baits, among them poppers. Herschel Finch will discuss his newest favorite cold-water bait, the hard jerkbaits made by Lucky Craft and Rapala. A long-time fan of jerkbaits, Bill Amshey will show off his collection, which includes Smithwick Rogues and the Devil's Horse. In addition, Bill will bring his collection of jointed, or broken back, lures, as well as a uniquely jointed crawdad imitator.

Randy Chandler will show off his arsenal of soft plastic baits, including Senkos, flukes, creature baits, tubes, worms, and more. Last year, Randy won the big fish award along with winning Section II and overall total on all three sections, so he must know what he's doing. Let's hope he'll let the rest of us in on some of his secret techniques.

Steve Kim will bring his collection of buzz baits, which are a favorite of smallmouth on many of the rivers that club members fish.

Dave Post and Bob Abrams will both demonstrate their fly-tying skills. So come prepared to watch and learn from two pros at work. And Steve Moore will demonstrate the collapsible Tenkara Rod. He will bring the 11-foot and the 13-foot models for members to play with. The Tenkara is longer than the typical fly rod and uses a fixed length line. It is described as the "ideal" rod for mountain stream fly fishing.

Last – but probably most important – Steve Adams and Jamie Gold are going to share information on their favorite area fishing spots. They will discuss put-ins and take-outs and the best floats in the area and have maps to display.

These are the experts who volunteered at the last meeting, but hopefully more will come to the meeting willing to share their secrets. But as they share their secrets, remember this comment attributed to fishing enthusiast President Herbert Hoover: *"Lord, suffer me to catch a fish so large that even I in talking of it afterward shall have no need to lie."*

March Swap Night

In addition to the experts, we will lead off the evening with a reprise of our popular Swap Nights from last year. If you have gear you would like to sell or trade, bring it in and give a good deal to your fellow club members. Swappers may begin to set up at 6:45 and are welcome to begin swapping/selling as soon as they are ready.

Also, if you have any rods and reels that you would like to donate to Food for the Poor, please bring them in. Terry Cooney is collecting them and will get them to the charity.

Club Executive Board	<h1>Upcoming Items</h1>	
<p>President Steve Moore (h) (703) 494-8208 president@prsc.org</p> <p>Vice-President Randy Chandler (H) (301) 253-6092 vp@prsc.org</p> <p>Secretary Dave Lockard (h) (301) 656-1964 secretary@prsc.org</p> <p>Treasurer Jamie Gold C (571) 213-4699 treasure@prsc.org</p> <p>Trip Coordinator Steve Adams (703) 409-3846 trip_coordinator@prsc.org</p> <p>Program Chair Bill Amshey Programs@prsc.org</p> <p>Conservation Chair Herschel Finch (H) (540) 635-7636 Conservation@prsc.org</p> <p>Librarian Chip Comstock Librarian@prsc.org</p> <p>Additional Programs</p> <p>Fishing Contest Jack Cook H (703) 573-4403</p> <p>The Buzz Jamie Gold (C) (571) 213-4699 Buzz_Editor@prsc.org</p> <p>Merchandise Ernie Rojas H (703) 729-0128 Publicity@prsc.org</p> <p>Past President Randy Chandler</p> <p>Publicity Ernie Rojas H (703) 729-0128</p>	<p>Potomac River Smallmouth Club Wednesday, March 28, 2012</p> <p>Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 28, 2012, at the Vienna Firehouse in Vienna, VA. At this meeting our speaker will be Steve Chaconas of National Bass Guide Service. He spoke to the club last year about fishing for snakeheads. This talk will be about largemouth bass fishing on the Lower Potomac River. Please come out for what should be a great talk.</p> <p>PRSC Picture Raffle - Mark Susinno Print</p> <p>As a fund raiser, PRSC is raffling off a Mark Susinno print. It was donated to the club by Garnet Kauffman. It is signed by the artist, and numbered 112/400. Tickets are \$4 per ticket, and 3 tickets for \$10. We will be selling tickets until we have the drawing at the April PRSC meeting. We will have the print at the upcoming meetings. Here is a photo of the print.</p> <p>Potomac and Shenandoah Riverkeepers</p> <p>SPLASH. April 28, 2012. The Potomac Riverkeeper will be hosting the final event of the SPLASH series. The Waterkeeper Alliance SPLASH Event Series is a program that engages local citizens and clean-water enthusiasts in water-based activities like swimming, paddling or boating. For more information go to www.potomacriverkeeper.org/SPLASH.</p> <p>Potomac River Watershed Cleanup. April 14, 2012. Join Potomac Riverkeeper and Calleva for the Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup. This cleanup will take place at Riley's Lock as part of the Alice Ferguson Foundation's 24th Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup. It will be an on-the-water and land event.</p> <p>Potomac Riverkeeper Gala. June 10th, House of Sweden, Washington, DC. Our annual gathering of friends and supporters set in the spectacular House of Sweden overlooking the Potomac is our major fundraising event of the year. Planning begins now to ensure success in June.</p> <p>12th Annual Virginia Fly Fishing Festival</p> <p>April 21 - 22, 2012. Waynesboro, VA. The Virginia Fly Fishing Festival is held outside each spring on the banks of the South River in Waynesboro, Virginia. On April 21-22, 2012, the 12th Annual Virginia Fly Fishing Festival will draw anglers from across the Mid-Atlantic with nonstop free lectures and tips on where, when, and how to fly fish in the Old Dominion and across the globe. There will also be wine tasting and live music. For more information turn to the next page.</p>	

VA Fly Fishing Festival

By Beau Beasley

Fly anglers from across the country will celebrate the 12th Annual Virginia Fly Fishing Festival on April 21-22, 2012. Held on the banks of the South River in Waynesboro, the Virginia Fly Fishing Festival is the largest outdoor fly fishing event in the country that offers on-stream instruction. Only here can you learn all the latest techniques from the experts and then walk right over to the river and try them for yourself.

This year, our festival sponsors include Temple Fork Outfitters, Dominion Resources, Subaru, Orvis, Hanover Fly Fishers, Natural Retreats, Augusta Health, DuPont Community Credit Union, *Blue Ridge Outdoors*, *Eastern Fly Fishing*, the City of Waynesboro, Montana Fly Company, Blue Ridge Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, South River Fly Shop, *Virginia Sportsman*, Appomattox River Company, *Virginia Living*, Mid-Valley Press, Tidal Potomac Fly Rodders, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and Waynesboro Downtown Development Inc. The festival is also delighted to have the Herring Alliance as this year's conservation sponsor.

The highlight of the weekend is the Festival Foundation Dinner sponsored by Dominion, at which the festival committee presents the 2012 Virginia Fly Angler of the Year Award. Tickets for the all-you-can-eat prime rib buffet are \$50 apiece and sell out well in advance of the festival.

Last year many attendees enjoyed small-group casting classes with fly fishing and fly tying expert Bob Clouser. Bob's classes are back—don't miss out! A new set of casting classes with master casting instructors Ed Jaworowski and Wanda Taylor will also be offered for \$75.

The 2012 festival will feature noted fly anglers from across the Mid-Atlantic, including fly fishing icon Lefty Kreh, Ed Jaworowski, Bob Clouser, Harry Robertson, Beau Beasley, Wanda Taylor, King Montgomery, Dusty Wissmath, Eric Stroup, Brian Shumaker, Mike Smith, Colby Trow, Bryan Kelly, Steve Vorkapich and festival artist Alan Folger. Several expert fly tyers will also be on hand, including Tommy Mattioli and Walt Cary. Kayak expert Captain Cory Routh from Freedom Hawk Kayaks will also be on hand demonstrating how to use these unique watercraft to access hard to reach waters.

Between lectures, classes, and lunch, sample fine wines from a number of noted Virginia wineries (tastings included with festival admission). Attendees can wash down their wine with live riverside music.

Members of the Federation of Fly Fishers will help children catch native brook trout from an on-site Children's Catch and Release Trout Pool and then release them into the South River (with the help of their parents). Members of the Tidal Potomac Fly Rodders Club, the largest Federation of Fly Fishers Club in Virginia, will also provide paid spey casting classes and offer basic fly tying tips to beginners.

Feeling lucky? Try your hand at winning over \$10,000 worth of raffle prizes. This year's Grand Prize is a week's fishing at Alaska's Alagnak Lodge, compliments of Hanover Fly Fishers. One lucky winner will get to fish in the wilds of Alaska for multiple species of salmon, beefy rainbow trout, and grayling. Other prizes include kayaks, high-end rod-and-reel outfits, artwork, and guided trips.

If walking around the festival grounds sounds tiring, consider taking a break in a 2012 Subaru: The conservation-minded company will be showcasing some of their newest models at the festival. Interested anglers will be happy to learn Subaru will be giving away custom-made popping bugs tied in Subaru colors by Walt Cary, the best known popping bug maker in the Mid-Atlantic. We'll also hold a private drawing for one lucky angler to spend a weekend in the City of Hampton with a day's fishing on the Chesapeake Bay with Captain Tommy Mattioli.

The Virginia Fly Fishing Festival is a one-of-a-kind event: Monies received from sponsors, vendors, ticket sales, and raffles are used to cover the cost of next year's festival with the remainder going to the Virginia Fly Fishing Festival Foundation, which promotes conservation and stream restoration projects. Daily admission to the festival is \$20 per person, and the festival runs from 9 AM-5 PM on Saturday and Sunday. For more information about the festival, visit

www.vaflyfishingfestival.org

Fishing Rods and Reels Collection to Benefit *Food For The Poor (FFP)*

PRSC'ers – Your old gear can change lives! Terry Cooney, a PRSC member, is working with five churches collecting those rods and reels that have been gathering dust in attics, garages, and basements for donation to the south Florida-based *Food For The Poor (FFP)*. *FFP* is a highly rated charity that serves the destitute in 17 countries. Haiti and Jamaica are very poor, but they are blessed to be surrounded by the sea. The greatest need for *FFP's* Fishing Village program is salt water rods and reels, but all gear, except fly rods, will be accepted.

At the March PRSC meeting, he will take any donations of rods and reels to add to the church collections. Functional rods and reels only, and leave any line on the reels. No tackle (hooks, lures, sinkers, etc.) please.

FAST FACTS - FISHING VILLAGES

- Currently Food For the Poor has 37 operational fishing villages in Haiti and 17 in Jamaica.
- Food For the Poor supplies destitute coastal villages with fiberglass boats with outboard engines, global positioning systems (GPS), fishing tackle, 100-quart coolers, safety equipment, a gear shed with freezer, a generator and powerful solar light for the village common area and training in deep-sea fishing.
- Fishing villages transform communities by offering residents hope and an opportunity to improve lives.

For more information about Food For the Poor's fishing villages visit: <http://www.foodforthe poor.org/about/work/spotlight-fishing.html>

Forbes Magazine — In a survey of the 200 largest U.S. charities, Food For The Poor was ranked the fifth-largest recipient of private support. Food For The Poor's charitable commitment ratio was an impressive 97%. *Forbes* magazine reported an average of 86% for this rating measure, which shows how much of an organization's total expenses are applied to its charitable purpose, excluding management, overhead or fundraising. Food For The Poor's fundraising efficiency ratio of 98% contrasted with an industry average of 90%.

Rappahannock Access Updates

By Steve Moore

I need to clear up some confusion from last month based on too many things being called "Motts Run." The access point on the Rappahannock near Motts Run that was closed down is the one at the corner (Prettiman's Camp) as shown on the Google satellite picture. A rock wall blocks the area as shown.



Kellys Ford and the Hogue Tract have also seen some access changes (see Google satellite picture). The parking lot on the east side of Kellys Ford bridge and the one at the disabled hunter access point are closed during the summer. The VDGIF did this to solve the problems associated with inappropriate use of the facilities. At Kellys Ford the area immediately under the bridge is also closed. To fish upstream from Kellys, continue north on the ridge trail for about 0.2 miles. At that point, the trail drops back to the level of the river and you can walk over to the shore.

You can still gain access to the good fishing farther upstream by parking in the Rock Wall lot used to walk to the Civil War Memorial dedicated to Major Pelham. The lot is approximately a mile to the north of the Kellys Ford launch on Route 674. Follow the path leading to the north from the lot for 0.4 miles to the memorial for Major Pelham. Continue 20 feet beyond the stone and turn left on the path to get to the river. Do not take the path behind the stone, it is not as open.



River Safety – March Notes

While many of us recognize that hypothermia is life-threatening if you tip your canoe or kayak during the winter months and take an unplanned swim, the danger persists through May. Hypothermia occurs when body temperature falls below 95°F. A dunk in cold water accelerates the process as it impacts your brain, heart and other key organs. Even a brief exposure has an adverse effect on your ability to think clearly. In our area, the Little Falls Gage on the Potomac is the only one that still provides current temperature information. The good news is that, based on historical averages, it is a good surrogate for the temperature on the Rapidan and subtract 3° to approximate the temperature on the Rappahannock. According to the nine years of records available from the USGS, the temperature does not break through 60° until mid April and does not hit 70° until the end of May - something to consider if you plan on wading. If you take an unexpected swim when the water temperature is between 50 and 60°, you only have between one and two hours before becoming exhausted or unconscious. Therefore, taking a spill in the early Spring can be life-threatening since, even if you get out of the water immediately, your clothes will still be wet and will continue to drain heat from your body. If you are several hours from the take-out, the situation is serious. If the worst happens, your priority must be to prevent further heat loss and get warm as soon as possible. If you get wet, keep your PFD on until you can change your clothes since it provides good insulation. In fact, the Coast Guard strongly promotes the use of life vests as a protective measure with their 50/50/50 rule - if in 50° water for 50 minutes, you have a 50% better chance of survival wearing a vest. Given the considerable risk, anyone venturing onto the river during this season should dress for the worst and pack a dry bag with a change of clothes and a warming blanket.

Update on the Boathouse

By Dan Ward

The Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove is in the starting gate for "spring fishing season, 2012." The tackle-shack is open and selling D.C. fishing permits. Bait, hooks and lures are on display and the phone is ringing with inquiries. Our fleet of 31 wooden skiffs are repaired, re-painted and ready for anchors, oars and anglers.

Whether you are confident about, or doubtful of, the theory of global-warming, there is no denying that the Washington region is currently experiencing "Potomac-warming" at an unprecedented pace. Usually, mid March features water temperatures in the Potomac of approximately the upper 40's. This range is the crucial point at which the early spring species of white perch and the ocean-run herring make their first seasonal appearance at Fletcher's. These two species signal the beginning of prime weeks of angling at the headwaters of the tidal Potomac. Following the tasty perch and the silvery herring are the striped bass, hickory shad and the larger American (or white) shad.



Fletcher boats at rest by the dock. Photo by Dan Ward.

However, March 2012 is an altogether different animal. Today (March 19) the water temp hit 63 degrees and rising. Never have I seen the water zoom through the 50's so early and so fast in the season. Not only is the water warming quickly, but the flow is very low and the clarity is extreme. All the species mentioned above have already been caught at Fletcher's. An American shad was landed by Alex Binsted on the 14th of March, the earliest in any of us "old-timers" memories. As long as the river flow is low and the water is so clear, the bulk of the fish will be out in the deeper water where there is flow and down in the water column.



Shiny rowboats ready for the new season. Photo by Dan Ward.

use at Fletcher's Cove

The rapid warming of the river will rev-up the pace of the spawning activity, so this season above all previous, demands that you get out fishing soon. Washington is a city of extremes, in politics and weather, so as surely as we set warm climate records this month, we may be shivering in our boots come April or May. Last year, the river flooded over and over... yet now we have a spring drought. All things average out over time!

Fletcher's web site is

www.fletcherscove.com.

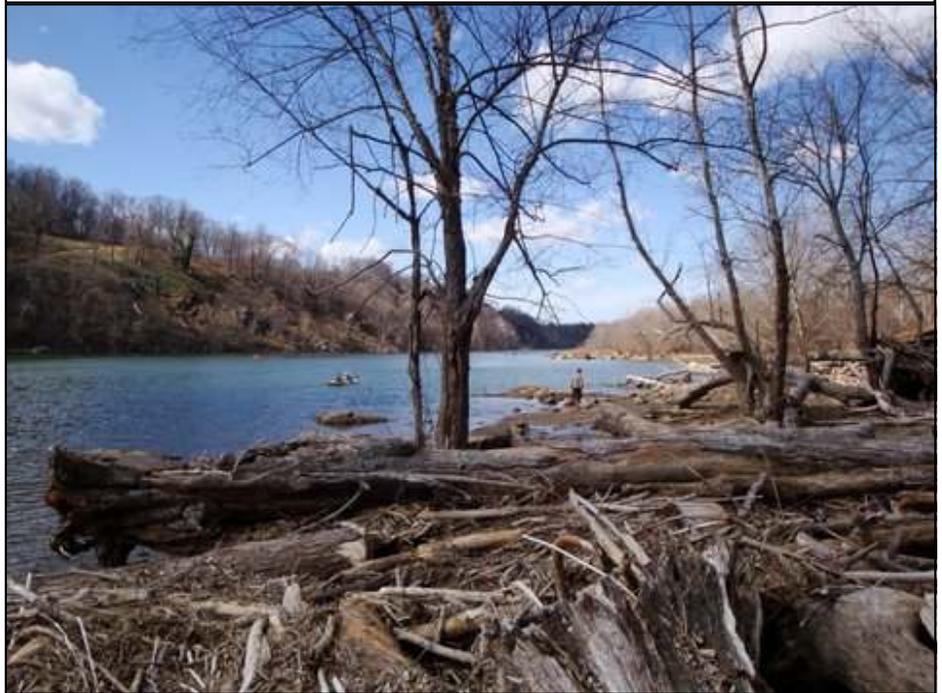
Many folks looking for our site end up at the "old" site that includes the words "fletchers boat house." This is a dormant site that sits on the web attracting hits. It does have plenty of interesting photos, but is NOT our current site and is not active. Guest Services is our parent management company now that long-time family boss and expert fisherman Joe Fletcher is enjoying a well deserved retirement.

I hope you will wind your way down to Fletcher's soon. It is a tricky place to find and even harder to get in and out of by car, but worth the effort. Fletcher's is a Washington institution, a beautiful spot along the Nation's River and can provide amazing angling opportunity.

Editor's Note: I cannot urge you strongly enough to go and check out this wonderful fishery. Shad fishing at Fletcher's Cove is a terrific way to shake off the winter rust and to get back into fishing. The fish are plentiful, the weather is beautiful, and you might bump into a few friends. I like to get out after work for a few hours to relieve the stress of the day.

Finally, the folks who work at Fletcher's are really terrific. They know the water, more importantly they know the fish, and most important of all they know what the fish are hitting and are happy to sell you what you need.

Late winter view upstream from a driftwood pile below Fletcher's Cove.
Photo by Dan Ward.



Alex Binsted with a shad he caught at Fletcher's on March 15, 2012.

Wisdom and wry humor from the “A

By Roger Hamilton

Off to one side of our meeting hall, our librarian Chip Comstock presides over quite a variety of titles, including one book with a cover so dull that it practically cries out for someone to *please* give it some attention.

I took pity, and was rewarded by discovering one of the wittiest and liveliest books on fishing that I have read, albeit in a wonkish sort of way.

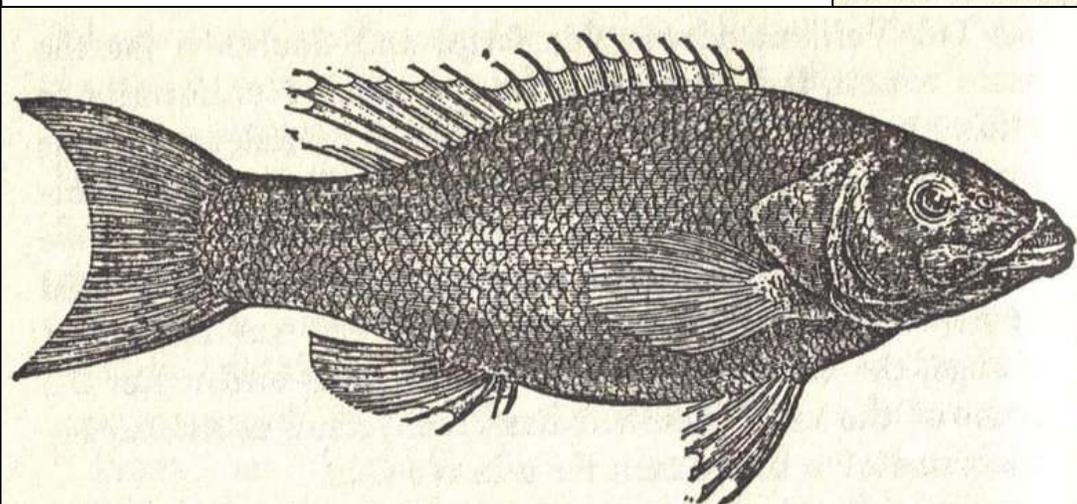
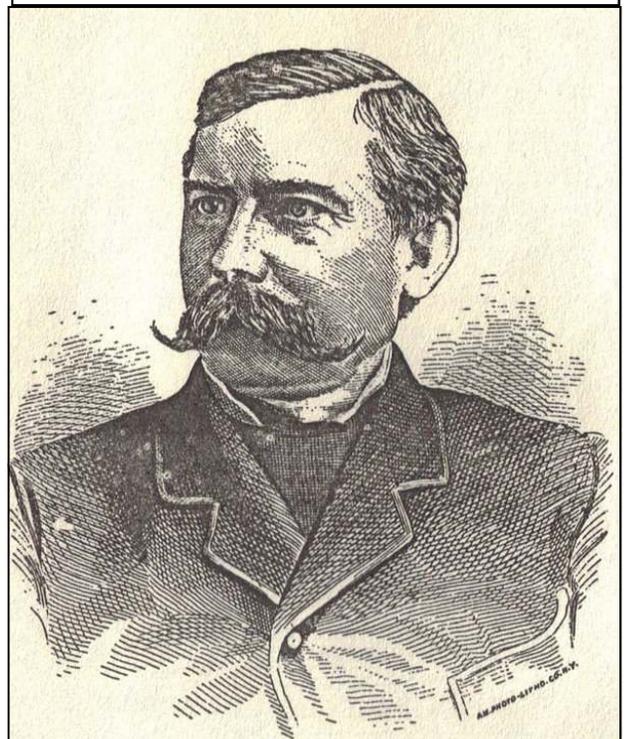
Of course, it's Dr. James A. Henshall's *The Book of the Black Bass*. It was published in 1881, and right away the reader gets in the mood when he meets Dr. Henshall there in the frontispiece engraving, with his handlebar moustaches and steady gaze into the distance. As I turned the pages, I quickly discovered why he is still remembered as the “apostle of the black bass.”

There's a lot about the book that I enjoyed. Such as his account of the smallmouth's introduction into the Potomac. And his admonition in the final paragraph: “Always kill your fish as soon as taken from the water,” he writes. “By so doing, your angling days will be happy, and your sleep undisturbed.”

But most of all, I was delighted by Henshall's wry account of scientific misadventures in naming the fish. More than any ordinary farce, it was a Gallic farce.

The name game began about 1801 when French naturalist Bernard Germain de Lacépède received a smallmouth specimen for study. He noted its diminutive dorsal fin, and called the genus *Micropterus*, which means “small fin.”

The good doctor: a playful spirit behind an imposing countenance.



MICROPTERE DOLOMIEU.

But what Lacépède didn't know was that several of the rays of this particular specimen's fin had been bitten off when the fish was young. Comments Henshall: “Its scientific birth was, like

Recognize this fish? No wonder the early French taxonomists had a hard time.

postle of the Black Bass,” circa 1887

Macduff’s, untimely; it was, unhappily, born a monstrosity.” And the following barb: “Its sponsors were, most unfortunately, foreign naturalists.”

In his choice of a species name, Lacépède played it safe by honoring his friend Déodat de Dolomieu, a distinguished geologist. The full name would be *Micropterus dolomieu*.

Matter settled? Not by any means. Henshall tells in page after page of mind-numbing detail the deliberations and disputes of scientists—mostly French—who in the end made some 57 pronouncements on the subject and offered up a minor lexicon of Latin names for this one fish.

The mighty citadel of scientific taxonomy.

NOMENCLATURE AND MORPHOLOGY.

CLASS PISCES.

SUBCLASS TELEOSTEI.

ORDER ACANTHOPTERI.

SUBORDER PERCOMORPHI.

FAMILY CENTRARCHIDÆ.

SUBFAMILY MICROPTERINÆ.

Genus MICROPTERUS LACÉPÈDE.

Henshall was clearly amused by all of this, which he describes as Gallic people “indulging their national love of novelty.”

He tells, for example, how the “versatile and eccentric Professor Rafinesque appeared upon the scene” and gave different scientific names to bass of different sizes. Then a M. Le Sueur, “with a lofty scorn for Rafinesque,” gave these same different size fish a wholly new suite of names, again failing to realize they were all the same species.

Even Georges Curvier, the great French naturalist, added to the confusion. He lumped the smallmouth bass together with the largemouth bass, and gave them both the genus *Grystes*, which means “howler.” Remarks Henshall: “I have never met an angler who had heard a Black Bass “growl.””

This goes on for many pages, some of them in French in the

style of Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*, written around the same time. In the end, Henshall votes for Lacépède’s original name, flawed though it was. “Priority, like charity,” he wrote, “covers a multitude of sins.”

All in all, a great early season read, heartily recommended.

For a similar illustration showing how to cast to the right, consult the book.

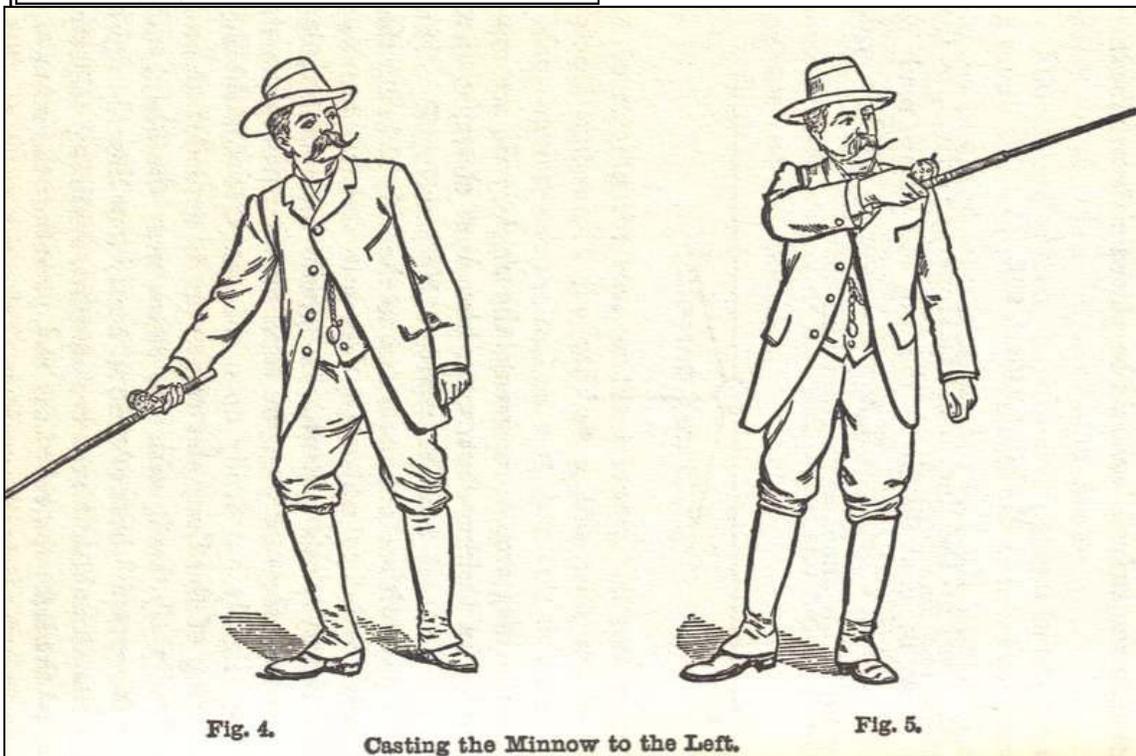


Fig. 4. Casting the Minnow to the Left.

Fig. 5.

Smallmouth Bass Food Nonpareil

By Ken Penrod

I write this article with about 10 days left to prepare for my guide season. That may not seem like such an ordeal to some of you but my “beginning” is a little different than most guides. I will literally move to Duncannon, Pennsylvania, for about six weeks and I need to pack for all kinds of weather—all kinds of fishing conditions—all kinds of boat and motor issues. There will be days when my cold weather gear is not quite enough and there will be days when a tee-shirt is sufficient. My Cabela’s Guide Wear is hard to beat but I need long underwear, fleece shirts and vests, Grabber hand warmers and really good head and face gear. I take a case of mercury outboard motor oil, a spare boot for my jet and a spare steering cable. I’ll need tools. Since I’ll live in a motel, I’ll want some food and essentials for the room, a shotgun since turkey season comes in while I’m there and my PC complete with BlackBerry tethering capability so I can create and send my weekly fishing reports and photos. PA trout comes in while I’m there and if we get a cancellation or a dangerous day—I’ll need my fly rod and hip boots.

For my boat, a spare battery charger, push pole, anchor, tree limb clippers and power chords to hook-up my on-board, three bank charger at Riverfront Campground. A bag of boat towels, shop-vac and spray-on cleaner are must-have.

I’ll take about a dozen Gator fishing rods of all lengths and actions—some baitcasting but most spinning. I will probably use two bulk spools of 8# monofilament line and I have need for some braid also. Because we have to plan for fish behavior in water temperatures ranging from 36 to 60 degrees, our lure selection could be huge—but it isn’t. Yes, we will fish in “no” current during the cooler water days—and we will fish nothing but current near the top-end of our expected range. We will offer our lures in presentations from dead-slow to damn-fast. The bass tell us what they want—and we just deliver.

One of my least concerns however will be lure selection. Ninety percent of every smallmouth bass fishing day will find my clients and I casting tubes on spinning rods and while tubes have been around for a long time—by many manufacturers, we have improved upon them and I want to pass along our results.

Campground Specials in the KP Series is an exclusive distributorship of Johnny Cunningham, owner/operator of Rent-A-Boat and Riverside Campground in Duncannon, PA. John will send orders by mail and accept credit card orders for orders over \$40.00. You can reach Johnny at 717-877-2704.

If there is a better tube, better plastic, better anything for river smallmouth bass than the KP Series of tubes by Campground Special & Johnny Cunningham—let me know please.

Ken Penrod with a beautiful river smallmouth bass.

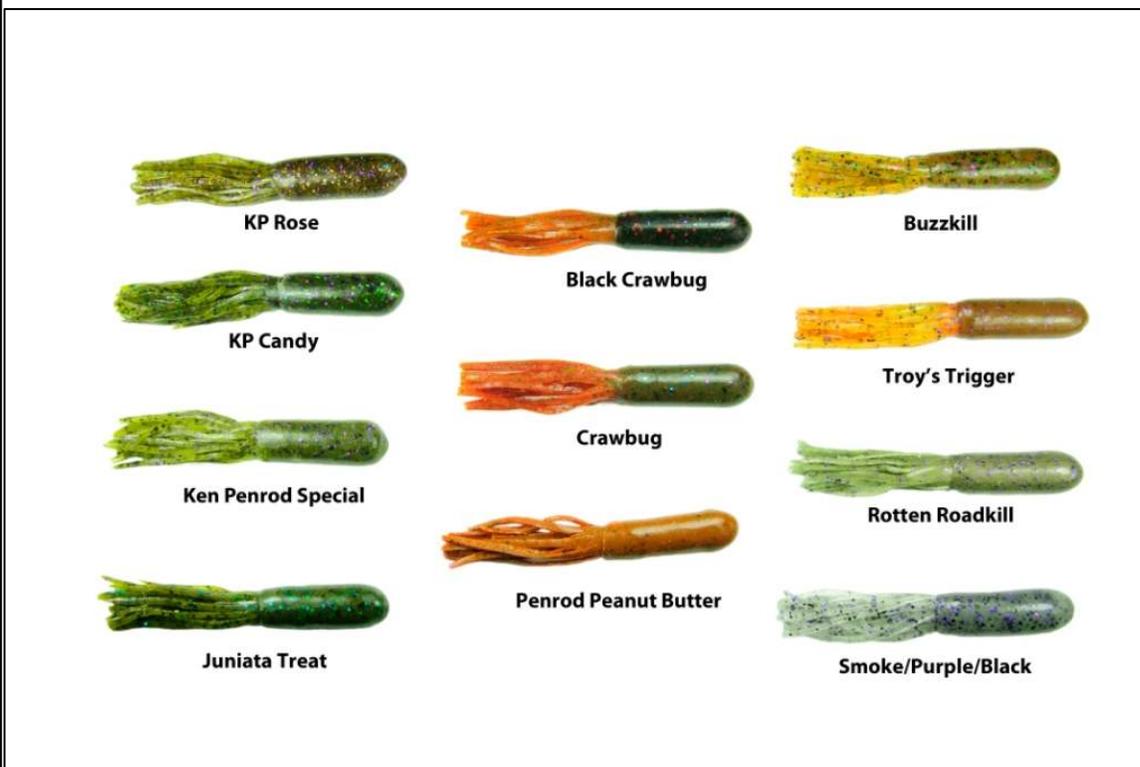


Smallmouth Bass Food cont'd

We have designed our own colors specifically for Susquehanna, Juniata, Potomac (both upper and tidal) and eastern shore tidal waters. We did so by studying the crawfish colors of those waters—and the seasonal changes in crawfish color. We examined how smallmouth react to crawfish size and learned early on that while the four-inch size was quite good, the 3.5 (small jaws) and 2.75 (teaser) were better, by far, most of the time. If you have been reading my fishing reports or sitting-in on my numerous seminars you know that I am a big disciple of Mizmo. The KP Series of tubes is made for John by Mizmo and another friend of John's. In addition to the KP Series of tube colors, Johnny also has a patent on his own line of tube jig-heads called RAB Jigs. They come in 1/0 for the Small Jaws and Teasers and the 3/0 for the four-inch plastics. By the way, I also use these for jigging wacky-rigged Case Plastics and grubs. They are available

in 1/16th, 1/8th and 1/4 ounce. I like the 1/4 size for faster current and on windy days. I prefer 1/8th whenever practical.

I've been a river smallmouth bass fisherman all of my life and a professional guide since 1982 and I can look you in the eye and tell you without reservation that the salt impregnated plastic tube is the best offering I have ever used for smallmouth bass—ever, and I can tell you that the Campground Special, KP Series is the best tubes ever for regional rivers such as



A photograph doesn't do justice to the colors of the KP Series, but take it from a guy that must please clients of all skill levels—these do the job.

the Susquehanna Juniata and Potomac—by far.

Gator Rods and I have pooled resources and knowledge to come up with a series of fishing rods for the jobs we face in our region. Gator calls this line the Pen-Rod Series. The medium action, 6-foot, 3-inch size is the perfect length and action for tube and Stick presentations for our river bass. I love monofilament, especially Excel by Bass Pro Shops and Sufix, in eight-pound test and I want green line. My reel must be a fast-retrieve model in the 2500 class with no less than 6/1 gear ratio.

The RAB jighead with wire guard is preferred but it may take you some time to get a handle on rigging it. The wire goes in the hollow butt end first and must come back out about 1/4 inch before the dead-end at the head.

I've said it a million times but "there is no magic lure, just magic places," so you can't catch fish where there are none. I've also said "find the food and you have found the fish." The KP Series of tubes will more than do its part. If you

Smallmouth Bass Food cont'd

deliver your tube to your target and may I suggest that you overcast it when possible. Close the bail with your hand, tug on the line to get it started on the spool tightly and remove all slack from the surface. Move the lure with you rod tip but only 4-6 inches at a time. The “pause” between moves is every bit as important and the move. Keep your line “taut” but not tight. When you feel the bass take your lure, drop the tip of the rod, wind up slack line until you actually feel her swimming—and set the hook as if that fish owed you money.

One other little trick before I go back to packing. I’m sure you are familiar with drop-shot techniques where a lead weight is on the bottom with a small hook and small plastic is further up the line. Why the lead weight? Use a Mizmo tube and ¼ ounce RAL jighead.

Learn our techniques first hand by booking a trip with us. I will have four or five guides with me on the Susquehanna from mid-March until the end of April. That’s trophy time folks and if you haven’t tried this—you are missing out on one fine adventure. We love the upper Potomac and we will begin there in April also—and then there is the famous tidal Potomac, Deep Creek Lake and all those eastern shore tidal waters. So much to do and so little time.



The all-new Pen-Rod series of graphite rods by Gator Rods features an exposed blank near the butt of the rod and a lot of thought and skill throughout.

Ken Penrod is the owner/operator of the 30-year old guide service known as Ken Penrod’s Life Outdoors Unlimited and they serve most of the fresh and brackish waters of Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware and District of Columbia. Ken was elected to the Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame as a Legendary Guide In 1997. He has authored seven books and has been awarded four national awards for conservation work as well as 13 such regional awards. Visit his website www.penrodsguides.com for lots of information including a weekly fishing report and our magazine, LOU Magazine. Ken also operates a summer youth camp where boys between 12 and 18 are taught the fishing and shooting arts from Ken’s lodge in PA. reach Ken at kenpenrod@comcast.net or via his cell at 240-447-2206.

Ken sponsors include: Mare Inc.; Ranger Boats; Mercury Outboards; Minn Kota Trolling Motors & Chargers; Lowrance Electronics; Mizmo; Case Plastics; Rapala; Luhr-Jensen; Sufix Line; Gator Rods; Big Mouth Lure Company and NRA.

Fishing Everglades National Park in February

By Terry Cooney and Steve Kopps

Steve Copps had asked me before to fish with him in Florida and this time the stars aligned. My wife was visiting her sister and some relatives in Fort Myers Beach at the same time frame. So Lil and I flew down on Saturday, February 10th; we stayed with her sister and brother-in-law that night, and I drove down to meet Steve at Everglades City on Sunday afternoon. Fortunately, at the January meeting Steve had graciously picked up my rods, a duffle bag of gear, and a plastic milk crate for yak fishing with tackle bag and rod holders. He was driving down a week ahead with his motorized Mokai yak.

Upon arrival, I was introduced to his two other fishing companions, Brian Callahan and Scott Owitz, both nurse practitioners from Kingston, NY, who had been given reprieves from their offices, and wives and kids to pursue some fish in Florida. Steve had fished with them before including the kayak striper tournament in Jamaica Bay, NYC.

It was Brian's last day but he managed to show me his GoPro camera video of a battle last May off Satellite Beach, FL, that brought a 5 ½' foot, 130 pound tarpon to his 16 foot kayak, a half mile off-shore. Obviously I was not in the company of amateurs. It also turned out that Scott was a contender in another sport, pork barbecue, where he is a ranked competitor having placed 3rd in the world championships in Kansas City last year. Needless to say we ate well. Trust a man who brings a 2 foot roll-up with his own cutlery and a freezer full of food.

So by Monday we were down to the three of us. Our accommodation was a trailer type cabin with shower bath, four double bunks, a kitchen, and living room, with a great screened in porch for our toys, er I mean fishing gear and a nice gas grill (which Scott put to good use).

Steve wanted me to get the full experience and he did a great job. On Monday, guide Rick Jones, kayakfishingtheeverglades.blogspot.com, met us with his trailer loaded with three Native Water Craft, 14 foot Ultimate Anglers. We pulled off

the road near what appeared to be a drainage ditch. We went a long way dragging or paddling with half paddles until we hit our first lake of three or four, all connected with skinny riverlets.

Although he warned us of alligators an apparent overnight temperature drop had the same effect on them as the fish – OTL (out to lunch). Rick managed a few and Steve got one. I got skunked. BUT, the trip was unreal.

The next day, Tuesday, he met us again. We drove almost across the road to the Park's Gulf Coast Visitor Center



Fishing hacienda in Everglades City

Fishing Everglades cont'd

where we put in for our paddle across Chokoloskee Bay to the oyster beds. Scott met us in his Mokai. After a slow start the fishing really turned on. I got into double digits with Sea Trout. Scott took off and got some Redfish. My catch of the day, which resulted in a Chokoloskee sleigh ride, was when I foul hooked a cow-nose ray with a 30" wing span. Steve had a slower day and as the sole long rodder took his ribbing good naturedly. However, don't ever try to out paddle him.



Guide Rick Jones taking us on safari in the Everglades swamp.

By Wednesday I was glad to hear Steve had us set up to fish with Capt Charles Wright of Chokoloskee Charters in his 24 foot Parker center console. The three of us set out with our intrepid Captain to fish that day, as we did the next, among the mangroves of the Ten Thousand Islands and

out into the Gulf beyond the offshore park boundary. Wow. We tied into more Sea Trout, speckled and silver, Spanish mackerel, Jack Cravelle's, Mangrove and Vermillion snappers, flounder, and even a Leather Jacket than I could have imagined. At one point, Scott was catching Jacks on almost every cast with a 3/8 ounce jig head with no lure. I couldn't believe it so he gave it to me and voila, a Jack.. The weather and seas were perfect. During our two days on the Parker we saw Eagle Rays jumping, a 4 foot + Spinner Shark that came completely out of the water, many huge loggerhead turtles and even a manatee.

The decision for the second day was for either Charles to take us out in his large 23' Carolina Skiff and drop us off in yaks or to fish with him in the Parker. I sort of wimped out and voted for the life of ease in the Parker. We again did well and this time Steve did great bringing in the only two pompano of the trip.

It was a great four days and reasonably priced. I won't bore you with the great meals with Capt Charles and his wife, Vicky, our visit to their place, and the rest of the social world but it was great and very relaxing.

Fishing Everglades cont'd

Bottom line is if Steve ever asks you if you'd like to fish with him, try and make it happen. Thanks Steve.



Picture above left: **Terry Cooney with a Sea Trout in Chokoloskee Bay**



Picture above right: **Scott with a typical Sea Trout, Steve with his usual pipe.**



Steve Kopps with a Pompano

PRSC On the Water

By: Jamie Gold

Members of PRSC have been busy this past month catching and photographing some awesome fish. Enjoy, and feel free to submit pictures of fish that you've caught for next month's Buzz.

18 3/4" Shenandoah smallmouth, caught on creature bait.



Jedediah Plunkert, photo by Jacob "bump&grind" Phillips.

Shenandoah River in March? George Thurston, Herschel



Finch, Jamie Gold, Steve Kimm and John Lipetz.

Great 30" saltwater catch from Ft. Lauderdale, FL.



Munhan Herman Yam, photo by Ron Mallett.

Dragging a boat through the Everglades.



Terry Cooney. Photo by Steve Kopps.

Conservation Corner

By Herschel Finch

First off...I'm gonna go all "Rocket Surgeon" on ya:

- **30% of water used on the East Coast goes to watering lawns; 60% on the West Coast.**
- **18% of municipal solid waste is composed of yard waste.**
- **The average suburban lawn received 10 times as much chemical pesticide per acre as farmland.**
- **Over 70 million tons of fertilizers and pesticides are applied to residential lawns and gardens annually.**
- **Per hour of operation, a gas lawn mower emits 10-12 times as much hydrocarbon as a typical auto. A weedeater emits 21 times more and a leaf blower 34 times more. Where pesticides are used, 60 - 90% of earthworms are killed. Earthworms are important for soil health.**

The preceding statistics were blatantly lifted from eartheasy.com's website. A couple of them are really eye popping, especially the water usage stats so I double checked them. They're dead on correct and even higher in places like Arizona, Nevada and places like that. I also want you to take a look at that third one. Ten times?!?! Yep...Farmers as a general rule only use pesticides when they see evidence of it being needed for most crops. Pesticides, on a scale needed by farmers, are an enormous expense. They don't want to use them anymore than they have to. Lawn services do it about every other time they show up to cut your grass. It's coupled with an herbicide/fungicide stew as well.

Most of you have read this column before but with the influx of new members, I felt like it was a good time, considering the time of year and growth of the club, to break it out, dust it off and use it again. You know me...I'm the Conservation guy...I'm all about recycling!

Anybody out of the Potomac Riverkeeper organization will tell you that developmental and suburban runoff is the number two biggest polluter of our rivers. Our quest for the perfect lawn and a Walmart or Wegman's on every suburban corner is really doing a number on our favorite rivers. And with just few a simple changes, we can lessen our personal impact on our rivers.

First...let's talk about that big bag of Scots + Halts you buy every year. And then that spreader made by the same company. You always end up burning a few spots with it right? That's because you can't crank down that discharge enough to keep from doing that. They *want* you to use a lot of it. That means you come back for more sooner. I buy a 40 lb bag when I buy it. It takes me almost 5 years to use it up! How you may ask? I ditched my spreaders about 15 years ago. A get a small bucket, fill that up with the stuff, and throw it by hand and I throw it WIDE. It really does not take very much of the stuff to do the job. When I'm done, I've used maybe a gallon and half of the stuff. That 40 lb bag lasts me a loooooong time. Yeah, I get a few dandelions pop up here and there, but I got a solution for them too.

And it's literally a solution: 5 parts white vinegar, 2 parts water, 1 part Dishwashing detergent. Mix that up in a hand sprayer and nail them puppies individually. Takes only about 15 minutes and you still have time to dash down to the river and go wading a bit before sundown.

Lawn Grubs chewing on your grass roots? Get thee unto your closest farm supply store (or Internet) and get some milky spore. Just toss out these granules in your yard and problem solved. The spores cause grubs to contract a disease that's fatal and it's completely harmless to people, birds, pets, wildlife, etc, etc. It is said that one application will last 20-30 years! And by the way, those big fat white grubs are the larval stage for June Bugs. So you just killed 2 bugs with one stone...or something like that. It's hard to beat that kind of 'bang for the buck' these days. So hurry up, get the lawn treated, cut, whatever...and lets go, we have fishing to do!

PRSC
P.O. Box 1240
Vienna, VA 22183

PRSC would like to thank the following for contributing to Member Night and being friends of PRSC.



Big Time BBQ (Scott Cocherell)



WALT'S POPPERS
 Handmade Virginia Popping Bugs



PRSC Wishes to Thank our Recent Speakers

July 2011 - Jeff Little. Blueridgekayakfishing.com

August 2011 - Beau Beasley, www.beaubeasley.com

September 2011 - Walt Cary of Walt's Poppers

October 2011 - Capt. Steve Chaconas, www.nationalbass.com/steve.htm

January 2012 - Brent Walls, Upper Potomac River Manager

February 2012 - William Heresniak, www.eastertrophies.com

2012 Contest Results

March 2012 Report By Wallace Harvey

We are off to the races! We have our first entrant to the Potomac River Smallmouth Club Fishing Contest. Bill Pearl braved the waters of Section II of the Potomac River in late February to net an 18 incher. Congratulations to Bill! Where are the rest of the fishermen that I have heard of being out there and catching fish? Does no one care about our contest? We need more entrants to have a real contest.

As I write this, it is 72 degrees and sunny. It is a lovely day in early March to warm up the river and heat up the desire to go fishing. I know the water is still rather cool, but I also have talked to enough people in the club that some one is bound to be out there hooking that winner for this year's contest. I don't know how to make you call Jack Cook at 703-573-4403, but I sure wish you would. Jack isn't much for email, but a quick phone call is all we need. At least Jack is up to date to have an answering machine, so you can leave a message. He will get it.

I am getting all my equipment ready for the season. As one who wants to go fishing, but can only stand the warmest of weather and water, there is not much else I can do for now. However, I know a lot of you have the equipment and pluck to get out there. Please let us know how you did. The more entrants we have in the contest, the better the contest is for everyone. Do not feel you cannot win. Largest fish are usually caught in early Spring or late Fall. Keep a tight line and call us!

2012 Results

Section 1, Biggest Fish:

Section 1, Best 5 Fish:

Section 2, Biggest Fish: Bill Pearl, 18"

Section 2, Best 5 Fish:

Section 3, Biggest Fish:

Section 3, Best 5 Fish:

Largest on Fly:

New Member:

William Schriver Award:

Grover Cleveland Award:

The Potomac River Smallmouth Club was founded in 1988 as a non-profit recreational club in accordance with IRS section 501(c)(7). Dues are \$35/year. Monthly meetings are held at 7:30 PM on the last Wednesday of each month (except December) at the Vienna Volunteer Firehouse. Club by-laws and member rosters are published once a year and available during meetings or upon request. The Club newsletter, "The Buzz", is emailed to all members prior to each month's meeting and is available at local fishing/tackle shops. Articles, photographs and general information relating to smallmouth bass fishing are solicited. The Buzz reserves the right to edit all materials submitted for publication. Observations, conclusions and opinions expressed in The Buzz are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the club, its officers, or the editor. All materials submitted become the property of the club. Every effort will be made to return photographs at the monthly meetings, however the printing process occasionally results in the destruction of a photograph. Send copies and make sure YOU have the negative.