



The Buzz

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Volume 26, Issue 6

June 26, 2013

Boat Night Returns

Upcoming Items

PRSC Meeting
July 31, 2013

Shenandoah River Events
Summer 2013

Potomac Cons.
June/July 2013

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Join Us June 26th for Boat Night at Riverbend Park

Boat Night has become a Club tradition. The event typically features an

example of every type of boat used for river smallmouth fishing, from jet boats to pontoons, canoes and kayaks. After the popularity of last year's event, this year's event will return to [Riverbend Park](#) in Great Falls, VA, offering the opportunity to see boats in their natural habitat and the potential to paddle or ride in some. This is a great opportunity to see a variety of different boats, see how they are outfitted, and talk to the owners. Also, the Tidal Potomac Fly Rodders will be joining us to provide some fly casting instruction. The event will start at 6:00 and we'll be grilling hamburgers, so come hungry! To the right is the picnic area we will be using. For more information on the park, go to

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend/>.



Club Executive Board	<h1>Upcoming Items</h1>
President John Lipetz (h) (703) 609-8083 president@prsc.org	
Vice-President Kristen Sorensen vp@prsc.org	Potomac River Smallmouth Club - Next Meeting
Secretary Dave Lockard (h) (301) 656-1964 secretary@prsc.org	<p>Join Us Wednesday, July 31 for PRSC's next meeting. We will be back at our usual spot, the Vienna Firehouse, and meeting at our usual time, 7:30pm. The speaker will be Chesapeake Bay Captain Brady Bounds. Join us for what should be a terrific presentation.</p>
Treasurer Jamie Gold C (571) 213-4699 treasure@prsc.org	Shenandoah River Events
Trip Coordinator Steve Kimm trip_coordinator@prsc.org	Shenandoah River Rodeo Sat, 07/13/2013 - 5:00pm - 9:00pm
Program Chair Bill Amshey Programs@prsc.org	<p>The Shenandoah Riverkeeper will host the 6th Annual Shenandoah River Rodeo! Save the date for a day of fishing with our region's best fishing guides, and an evening of BBQ, music, door prizes and much more. And if you want a little more adventure, you can camp out, too! Individual tickets cost \$30 (\$40 after July 7). Tickets for a couple are \$50 (\$70 after July 7). Also, go fishing for a day with a guide - \$250 minimum donation. You can sponsor a keg, band, food, or a tent for the event. For more information and tickets, visit their website at www.potomacriverkeeper.org/Rodeo.</p>
Conservation Chair Herschel Finch (H) (540) 635-7636 Conservation@prsc.org	Shenandoah River Fest Sat. 08/10/2013 - 10:00am-4:00pm
Librarian Chip Comstock Librarian@prsc.org	<p>The Shenandoah Riverkeeper and the Shenandoah River State Park are joining forces to bring you the Shenandoah Riverfest, an unforgettable day of river fun, family activities, live music and food. Join them along the banks of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River at the Raymond R, "Andy" Guest State Park for a day of unforgettable fun!</p>
Additional Programs Fishing Contest Jack Cook H (703) 573-4403	<p>Riverfest is a rain or shine daytime event that is open to the public and is designed to connect people with the Shenandoah River. Special Event Admission & Parking for the event is \$8 per vehicle, unlimited passengers. NEW this year Canoe Trips will be \$5 each and Tube Trips will be \$2 each. Entrants are also given a free trial membership to Shenandoah Riverkeeper and will be entered in a drawing for a chance to win a kayak.</p>
The Buzz Jamie Gold (C) (571) 213-4699 Buzz_Editor@prsc.org	<p>Come gather at the river to celebrate the recreational, historical and natural beauty of the Shenandoah River! You can find more information at www.shenandoahriverfest.org.</p>
Merchandise Ernie Rojas H (703) 729-0128 Publicity@prsc.org	Potomac Conservancy
Past President Steve Moore	Canal Stewards at Fletcher's Cove. Sunday, June 30 - 10am-12pm and Sunday, July 7 - 10am-12pm. Join them at Fletcher's Cove! They will be meeting at 10 am at Fletcher's Cove to clean up the picnic area and surrounding trails. This cleanup is open to all ages, and they will provide all the necessary supplies - just wear clothes that can get dirty! This event is part of the National Park Service's Canal Stewards program, engaging volunteers to become long-term caretakers of a site within the C & O Canal National Historical park. Contact Lien Vu at vu@potomac.org with any questions.
Publicity Ernie Rojas H (703) 729-0128	

James River Trip

By Jamie Gold

From June 5-8 of this year, a group of your fellow PRSC adventurers decided to spend several days fishing the Upper James River. This dubious group included: David Lockard, Mark Myers, George Thurston, Steve Copps, Jamie Gold, Randy Chandler and Leon Kates. The trip was organized and led by Terry Cooney. The original plan was drive down to Buchanan, VA on Wednesday morning, June 5th, and fish that afternoon. Then stay over a few nights and fishing the next few days. But as the old saying goes....the best laid plans of mice and men....

Most of us did drive down Wednesday morning and met at the house we had rented in Buchanan. We had rented it through Twin Rivers Outfitters (www.canoevirginia.net). Among other things they offer, these guys have a very nice large house, the James River House, that they rent out at very affordable rates. It easily accommodated 8 of us, plus an unexpected guest, and was within easy walking distance of the Upper James River.

Since we only had a few hours to fish on Wednesday afternoon, we did a short float trip starting at the ramp in town. Terry had a good day, catching 40-50 fish, including a lot of rock bass (aka red eyes). Most of the others caught decent numbers of fish, mostly smallmouth. The big fish of the afternoon was caught by, who else, Randy Chandler. He is pictured with this beautiful 19" smallmouth he landed. The James was in beautiful shape that afternoon with clear water and good levels and flow.

Unfortunately that was it for the fishing on this trip. Wednesday night the rain moved in, and didn't stop until sometime on Friday. Thursday morning the river hadn't changed much, but it was a strong, steady rain that no one wanted to fish in. And by the afternoon the river was up several feet with the opacity of chocolate milk. However, we did spend the day scouting out some of the put-ins and take-outs we had planned on using for our excursions. It all looked to be great water, so I hope to get back there next year to actually fish it.

We did get an unexpected visitor on Thursday. In the afternoon, while we were sitting on the covered porch of the house, doing what fishermen do - drinking and swapping lies - a guy hiking the Appalachian Trail came walking up the street. Terry offered the guy a beer and a chance to get out of the pouring rain. He stayed for several more beers. He turned out to be a very nice guy, so someone got the idea of offering him a hot meal for dinner and a dry bunk for the evening...we had the room. He gladly accepted and was a welcome addition to our group for the evening.



On these sorts of trips, I've learned that there are four keys to having a great experience. Good company, good accommodations, good food, and good fishing. The company was great....this was a terrific set of guys to spend a few days with. As I said, the house was very nice with plenty of room. The food was great, highlighted by Terry's wife's restaurant quality lasagna, George's famous BBQ pork, and Steve Copps bringing a grocery store's worth of food. Unfortunately the fishing got rained out after Wednesday. Three out of four ain't bad, and I really want to go back next year to fish the other spots we looked at.

Roaches Run, a Swim in the River, and My First Snake Head

By Terry Cooney

9 June 2013

Bummed by a rained out trip on the James this past week, I took off after church (in a state of grace of course) for a few hours of fishing on Roaches Run. The Run is just off of the George Washington Parkway (and the Potomac) near Regan Airport going south (take the last exit off of I-395 north). It is a *very easy* put in. Basically it is a 30 foot drag of the yak to the water from the parking lot.

Since it is a bird sanctuary, there are always beaucoup avian viewing opportunities. Also, it is a turtle haven and there is beaver lodge. All this with jets buzzing your head, trains rumbling by, and a view of the Washington Monument.

So I put in at 11 AM on a high tide (recommended over a low tide). The water was stained with maybe a foot or two of visibility. I had numerous hits during the day, including two interesting and mysterious yak sleigh rides which broke off, but only managed three greenies and two blue gill until ...

But first, I was in my Loon versus my sit-on-top and managed, while working a line issue, to go swimming. *Embarrassing*. And I was solo in deep water. Always wear your PFD like I was. I swam the yak to shore and sorted things out. My wallet is still drying out but fortunately my electronic keys were in a dry bag.

So, fishing the east side of the lagoon again I cast to a root ball of a large evergreen in about 1 – 1 ½ feet of water. *Game on!!* My first snakehead and about 2 ½ feet long. It hit like a freight train and completely cleared the water on a spectacular jump – akin to a porpoise. It took a while to bring it along side. I didn't have any grippers so I had to cut it off. I did not want to have it and its teeth in the yak in between my legs. I was using a 5 ½ foot, fast action, St. Croix rod with 6# mono and a Case 3 ¾ inch Magic Stick, brownish with black dots, Texas rigged. It then occurred to me what the previous sleigh rides were courtesy of. They are ugly, they kill other fish, but they are a dynamite sport fish.

Next time the wallet will also be in a dry bag and I will have a pair of lip grabbers. And I will be sure my knife is *sharp*.

Florida Everglades Adventure

By Joseph Potts

Editor's Note: The June 2012 issue of the Buzz featured Terry Cooney's article about doing this trip with Steve Copps and the good folks at Chokoloskee Charters. A group of us, including me, did a trip with them this year....and this is our story.

I love fishing for smallmouth around home, but I'm always on the lookout for opportunities to expand my angling horizons. So when Captain Charles Wright spoke to the club about the dynamic fishery in and around the Florida Everglades, I was ready to go home and start packing my gear right away. The chance to check a few new species off my "bucket list" while exploring a unique ecosystem had me sharpening hooks and spooling reels all winter in anticipation.

By the time the end of April arrived, I had been ready to go for weeks. I'd bought literally everything on the list of recommended gear, and I'd organized and re-organized it all so many times that I caught my wife researching OCD symptoms online. I could barely sit still on the flight south, and I'm pretty sure I burned a little rent-a-car rubber as I sped west from Fort Lauderdale on the road to Chokoloskee Island.

I wasn't alone in that rented minivan. With me were club members (and fellow Everglades rookies) Doug Marshall, Jamie Gold, and John Lipetz. Already waiting for us on the other side of Florida were Steve Copps and his buddy Scottowitz, a pair of veterans who'd been visiting the area to fish with Captain Wright for years. The six of us ransacked a fried chicken buffet and hit the sack early, eager to get started the next morning.

Chokoloskee Island is tucked into the northwest corner of Everglades National Park, where the nutrient-rich water of the Everglades completes its long, slow journey across the state from Lake Okeechobee and empties into the Gulf of Mexico. This mixing bowl makes an ideal breeding habitat for snook, redfish, sea trout, tarpon, and a host of other species.

While the fish are abundant, finding them is no easy task. Simply navigating the miles of mangrove-lined canals seems tough enough; actually knowing when and where to fish in that maze is a task I knew was beyond me. That's where our guides would make or break the trip, and that's what was on my mind as we made the long run south to Broad River.

It turns out I should have been less worried about whether or not our guides would find fish and more worried about whether or not I could catch them. I hadn't cast a fishing rod in six months, and it showed as we trolled along the mangroves in a flats boat and I attempted to zip my jig into the narrow gaps between the gnarled branches and the tannin-stained water. For the first part of the day, I found myself catching more trees than fish, even though we saw a few tarpon rolling and my boat partner picked up a couple of snook and a nice redfish.



Florida Everglades

As we worked our way north, creek by creek, my casting improved and I started catching fish too. I picked up a small red as well as several jacks and ladyfish as the afternoon wore on. We caught everything on 1/4-ounce jig heads coupled with Cotee's 3-inch gold flake shad body. Even though Captain Wright told us in advance this was his go-to setup, I still couldn't believe just how versatile and consistently successful this one specific bait was in this particular area. I had a whole tacklebox full of different baits, but I was starting to think I should get rid of them all to make room for more gold Cotee shad.

Not satisfied with my production from the day, after dinner I took a rod out to the docks in front of our trailer in search of snook. Snook are ambush feeders notorious for nighttime activity, so I figured I might find some action along the rocks and pilings of the marina. I worked my new favorite bait past the structure for a little while to no avail, eventually starting to worry the only thing I would catch was West Nile Virus from all the mosquito bites. I tried one final cast between the piers and was rewarded with a noisy short-strike on a fast, shallow retrieve. I threw back to the same spot, and this time I hooked into and eventually landed a snook in the two-foot range.

I figured a decent afternoon and a nice snook in the evening meant things were looking up, so I was pretty eager to try my luck in a kayak the next morning. We watched the sun rise over the port bow of the Yak Attack, which is essentially a long center console skiff with room for six kayakers and fishermen. The idea is to move from spot to spot throughout the day, offloading the kayakers at each stop so the group could paddle the area in search of fish. Combining the enhanced mobility of power boating with the up-close-and-personal nature of kayak fishing was one of the main reasons I was attracted to this trip, so I was excited to be speeding toward prime fishing ground so early in the morning.

Unfortunately, the fine-tuned whine of the outboard turned into an irregular rattle before we reached our first target area. The engine had thrown a rod, and the Yak Attack was dead in the water. On the bright side, we'd broken down in a grassy-bottomed bay partially enclosed from the Gulf by a small key and a few stands of mangroves. With a two-hour wait for a tow in our immediate future, we launched the kayakers. By the time our rescuers arrived, the group had landed several nice trout and a couple of large black drum.

After a long ride home, we spent a few hours kayak fishing Chokoloskee Bay within paddling distance of our trailer. We'd been assured the bay was a productive fishery, but the fish were few and far between that afternoon. When the incoming tide failed to change the bite, we decided to paddle home and come back fresh the next morning.



s Adventure cont'd

Back in a flats boats on day three, everything finally clicked. The sun had barely risen above the mangroves, and already I had boated a half a dozen nice trout walking the dog with a Zara Spook. When the topwater trout action tapered off, I switched to a suspending twitchbait and promptly hooked a keeper-sized flounder (which Captain Wright's wife later turned into an excellent ceviché.)

As we poled through a series of broad, shallow creek mouths, my MirrOdine produced several more trout as well as a few redfish and a decent snook. Captain Wright informed me I had earned "Gulf Coast Slam" honors for catching trout, snook, and redfish in a single day. Right after that, I spotted a telltale shadow under the fringe of the mangroves, cast just past it, and reeled in a redfish over two feet.

The Yak Attack was still out of commission, so we decided to head offshore into the Gulf of Mexico the next morning. The ride out was a little rough, but the fishing once we got there was unbelievable. We anchored near some structure about three miles out in about 20 feet of water, and immediately started catching fish on just about every cast. Most of the fish were trout in the 18 inch neighborhood, but we also pulled in cobia, Spanish mackerel, and a few other species. We also had a few larger hookups – probably sharks or grouper, but despite our best efforts we were unable to land any of them on the light tackle we were using.

We fished until a looming thunderstorm forced us to head for home, and we thought we might beat the storm until we spotted a school of big tarpon slamming baitfish just under the surface of the water. We spent ten desperate minutes trying unsuccessfully to hook one, and in the end we only earned ourselves a boat ride in the rain instead of ahead of it.



As we sat at dinner on our last night in Florida, the group discussed whether or not each of us would consider a return trip. There were definitely moments during the week when I was completely frustrated, but for me the main story of the trip was a mix of encouraging success and unfinished business. For me, the question isn't if I'll return to fish in Everglades National Park, but when.

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.

Nice 17" Potomac River Smallmouth.



Her First Smallmouth of the Year.



Bill Pearl. Photo by Randy Chandler.

Maria Schaupp. Photo by Chris Schaupp.

Mom Getting in on the Smallmouth Fun.



18" River Smallmouth.



Lisa Schaupp. Photo by Chris Schaupp.

John Lipetz. Photo by unknown.

Her First Smallmouth of the Year.



Sarah Schaupp. Photo by Chris Schaupp.

Another 18" Potomac River Smallmouth.



Randy Chandler. Photo by Bill Pearl.

Another Great Smallmouth.



Steve Adams' friend Gary. Photo by Steve Adams.

Thank Goodness He Paddles Better than He Fishes.



Jamie Gold. Photo by Herschel Finch.

Veterans' Fishing Day - June 23, 2013.



Photo by Jamie Gold.

Like Father Like Son.



Quinn Lipetz. Photo by John Lipetz.

Shenandoah River

By Jamie Gold

Photos by Herschel Finch

After not having fished in two weeks, this past week I was anxious to get out, so organized a little outing on the Shenandoah River. Herschel Finch, Pete Pfothenauer, Steve Copps, Steve Kimm and his brother, all chimed in that they wanted to go. After perusing the river gauges, making oblations to the river gods, and talking amongst ourselves, we decided to do the Newport to Whitehouse float on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River. This is about an 8 mile or so stretch of the river south of the town of Luray. While the water was high, it was safe to fish, the levels were dropping, and the water was clearing.

This is a great stretch of water, and if you haven't



fished it, I strongly urge you to do so. Apparently others already knew that as there were a lot of people out on the water.

While the water was clearing, it still had a green stain that made the fishing more challenging than usual. I actually had no fish in the morning. During our break for lunch, I felt that tubes were the way to go. Overcoming the doubts of my fellow fishermen, I ended up with about 15 fish for the afternoon. However, they were all small. The other guys had success with soft plastics.



As much as I hate to admit this, the fish of the day were the largemouth bass. Pete figured out that white spinnerbaits were the way to go, and Herschel quickly followed suit. They proceeded to catch some very nice fish. In fact, Pete found a spot, which shall not be specified, that held some really big largemouth. He caught one that weighed over 7lbs, saw one that was even bigger, and caught a few others over 3 lbs. Nice job. All in all a fun day on the water.

Conservation Corner

By Herschel Finch

Well, I think everyone knows by now, we've got good news and we've got bad news.

I talked with a few folks at May's outdoor meeting about what we were hearing about the conditions on the South Fork of the Shenandoah. They weren't totally dire, but then again, they definitely fell into the 'troubling' category. Our sampling trip would turn up about what Jeff expected. Somewhere in the 30% range of all fishing being caught had lesions. We were not hearing anything about lots of dead fish thankfully, only spot reports of one here and one over there.

Jeff Kelble suspects the cool, wet spring we've had has kept some of the viruses and bacteria that pop up every year lingering longer than normal. And with the elevated water and frequent rains we've had, well, that's just a contributor to the incubation process. As I sit here writing this, we've had large thunderstorms roll across the Valley today and we're seeing yet a third period of elevated water flushing more contaminants and pollutants into the river. I fear most of this year's spawn is pretty much well on its way toward the Bay. Hopefully some made swim-up and were able to get close to the bank and wait out the churning maelstrom (at least from their perspective) in the river. But the river started rising just a couple of days after the sampling trip I wrote about for a future issue. So you can understand my pessimism.

But up until the recent high water, the river was fishing quite well. The Potomac was also giving up some very nice fish so perhaps all is not lost. I suspect that once levels return to normal and the stain clears up a bit we'll return to good fishing. The lesions and such should clear up as more consistently warm weather (and water) returns. Water temps, consistently at 70 and above seem to clear up the lesions. At least that has been the case past. Lets hope it's the same this time.

In the meantime, I can't stress enough that the time for our vigilance has been extended this year. Examine every fish you bring up carefully. Lesions, healed lesions, fin rot, fungus, we need to report them all. Examine fish gills carefully for the tiny white parasitic nematodes that attach themselves to fish gills, and for their color as well. Fish gill panels should be bright bloody red. The color is very similar to a good fresh Porterhouse or Rib eye steak. And the individual filaments should be separate and distinct, anything less than this is a fish in trouble. Get good clear pictures as well of anything you think might be noteworthy. And don't forget the good stuff as well. Our riverkeepers deal with bad news way too much. Send them a good fish story and nice picture as well on occasion. They really appreciate it. But all is not lost, even in high, muddy water. This Saturday (the 15th) I'm headed down to Aquia Harbor in Stafford to do a little Snakehead Hunting with a friend from Harrisonburg. Hopefully, I'll have a good story to tell for next month.

PRSC
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This is my favorite picture that I received this month. Here is former PRSC Vice President and prior Editor of the Buzz, Pete Pfothenauer with a beautiful river smallmouth. Pete is fighting the good fight on behalf of education in Virginia, so doesn't fish as much as he used to. But he makes his time productive catching great fish.



2013 Contest Results

June 2013 Report By Wallace Harvey

Yippee! Hurray! Yahoo! Finally, we have a new member entrant in our fishing contest. As I recall we did not have one last year and it took until now to get one for this year. All new members, those with less than 3 years with the club, are now challenged to do better. Herman Yam has a nice 16-inch smallmouth on Section I, North Fork of the Shenandoah River. Way to go Herman! He has promised to do better as the year progresses. So, all you new guys get out there. I look forward to your reports!

Jack Cook reports he got a 21.5-inch smallie on Section III this past month. As we all know, Jack is on a tear this year. It may take some doing to unseat him, but I know a few in this club that have done better and there is still time. Wayne Tate has been out with his fly rod recently. He reports a 20-inch smallie on a fly. Nice job, Wayne!

As you can see, despite my ho hum trip this year, there are plenty of good size fish out there for all who care to venture on the water. I had planned a trip down the Shenandoah, but due to an unexpected business trip and high water, I had to cancel the trip for now. However, I had to promise that I would lead another trip later this summer. We are off to a slow start on club trips. I urge, encourage, & demand that more of you step up to the task and lead a trip. The two that I worked on this year were full of new guys wanting to fish. You old guys need to help out show them the ropes around here. Lead a trip! It is fun! It is easy! Everyone can do it! See you on the water.

2013 Results

Section 1, Biggest Fish:	Jay Eiche, 21.5"
Section 1, Best 5 Fish:	
Section 2, Biggest Fish:	Bill Pearl, 18"
Section 2, Best 5 Fish:	Bill Pearl, 80"
Section 3, Biggest Fish:	Jack Cook, 21.5"
Section 3, Best 5 Fish:	Bill Pearl, 92.5"
Largest on Fly:	Wayne Tate, 20"
New Member:	Herman Yam, 16"
William Shriver Award:	Jay Eiche, 21.5"
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.