



The Buzz

www.prsc.org



Volume 27, Issue 3

March 26, 2014

Joe Bruce on Snakehead Fishing

Upcoming Items

PRSC Meeting
April 30, 2014

PRSC Raffle
Summer 2014

Case Plastics Sale
March Meeting

Potomac Riverkeeper
April 2014

Potomac Conservancy
April 2014

In This Issue
UPCOMING P. 2

MARYLAND DNR SMALLMOUTH BASS CATCH RATE SURVEY P. 3

FLORIDA FISHING TRIP P. 5

CONSERVATION CORNER P. 7

FISHING CONTEST P. 8

When John Odenkirk of the Virginia Department of Natural Resources spoke to the club in September 2013, he identified Joe Bruce as one of the best he's seen at catching northern snakeheads in our local waters. Coming from a guy who has zapped and handled as many fish as John O, that's a pretty strong endorsement!

After hearing this endorsement, your Webmaster and Program Chair jointly went about securing Joe as a speaker, and he has agreed to join the club for our March 26th meeting. Joe will talk to the club about Snakehead fishing by a number of different methods. You can get a head start by checking out his book on Snakehead fishing available at his website, www.joebruce.net.

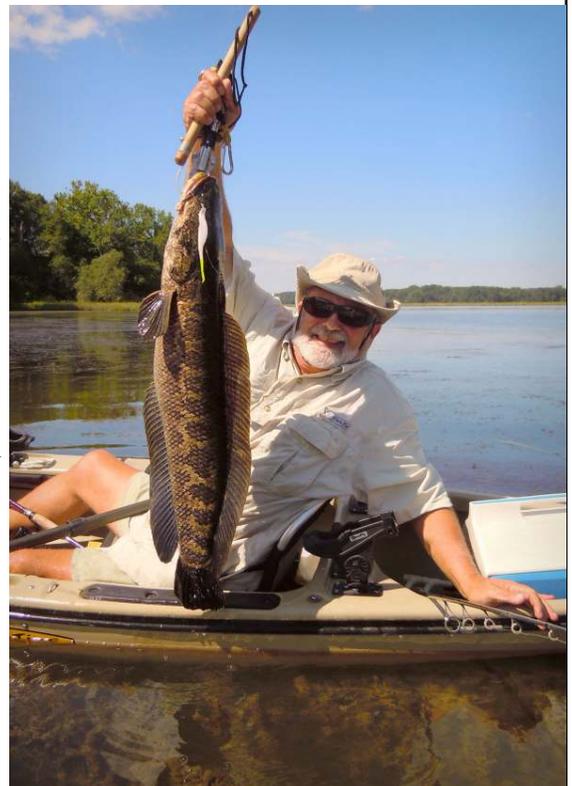
A half century of fishing has given Joe Bruce a pretty good understanding of fish and their environment. Joe started fly fishing some 50+ years ago, and soon after started to tie his own flies. He developed a love of designing flies that has never left him. Joe estimates that over the years he has helped thousands of folks to enjoy fly fishing. He opened The Fisherman's Edge Fly Shop in 1989 and it existed for 15 years before he decided to retire and play more. In retirement, Joe became a freelance writer and authored four books and numerous booklets on fly fishing and tying. Among other designs, Joe has developed some interesting adaptations of classic trout streamer patterns for bass fishing.

Most recently Joe has turned his attention to chasing northern snakeheads, the dreaded "frankenfish" that started appearing in the lower portion of the Potomac in 2004.

His most recent book, which focuses primarily on pursuing northern snakeheads using conventional tackle, with some advice on fly fishing for the species, is an excellent read.

It appears that the Snakeheads are here to stay, so why not learn more about them? Please join us for what promises to be an engaging and informative evening.

For more information on the distribution of the northern snakehead in Virginia and regulations regarding possession, as well as links to other resources, refer to the [Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries FAQ page](#).



Club Executive Board
President Steve Kimm president@prsc.org
Vice-President Kristen Sorensen vp@prsc.org
Secretary Dave Lockard (h) (301) 656-1964 secretary@prsc.org
Treasurer Jamie Gold C (571) 213-4699 treasure@prsc.org
Trip Coordinator Steve Kimm trip_coordinator@prsc.org
Program Chair Bill Amshey Programs@prsc.org
Conservation Chair Herschel Finch (H) (540) 635-7636 Conservation@prsc.org
Librarian Chip Comstock Librarian@prsc.org
Additional Programs
Fishing Contest Jack Cook H (703) 573-4403
The Buzz Jamie Gold (C) (571) 213-4699 Buzz_Editor@prsc.org
Merchandise Ernie Rojas H (703) 729-0128 Publicity@prsc.org
Past President Steve Moore
Publicity Ernie Rojas H (703) 729-0128

Upcoming Items

Potomac River Smallmouth Club - Next Meeting - See You in April

April 30, 2014, 7:30pm. Join us in April at the Vienna Firehouse for another great meeting. Noted Potomac River Guide Mark Kovach will be talking about fishing for smallmouth on the Potomac River (details at www.PRSC.org). Be sure to join us for what should be a great evening.

PRSC Picture Raffle - Mark Susinno Print

As a fund raiser, PRSC is raffling off a Mark Susinno print. It is signed by the artist, and numbered 309/400. Tickets are \$2 per ticket, 3 tickets for \$5 and 7 tickets for \$10. We will be selling tickets until we have the drawing at a PRSC meeting later this year. We will have the print at the upcoming meetings. Here is a photo of the print.



Case Plastics Sale

PRSC Meeting, March 26. For the March meeting, Ernie will be having a sale on Case Plastic lures. Buy 3 bags and get the 4th bag free. So bring your money to stock up on some great lures for the upcoming fishing season.

Potomac Riverkeeper

Riley's Lock Paddle and River Clean up with Calleva and Canoe Cruisers Association

Saturday, April 5 - 10:00am-2:00pm. Come paddle on the Potomac and help the Riverkeeper clean it up as they join Calleva and Canoe Cruisers Association at Riley's Lock (Lock 24). Please register in advance by emailing Kay Fulcomer at KayFulcomer@comcast.net.

Learn to Fly Fish with the Riverkeeper and Orivs at the Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove

Sunday, April 6 - 9:00am-12:00pm. Never fished before? No problem. Don't own a rod? No problem either? Come learn for the first time for free at the Boathouse of Fletcher's Cove. Hurry and register today, space is extremely limited! Please call the boathouse for registration at 202-244-0462.

Potomac Conservancy

Potomac River Watershed Cleahup

Saturday, April 5 - 9:00am-12:00pm. Join them for the Alice Ferguson Foundation's 26th Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup! Help them improve the health of our Nation's River by rolling up your sleeves and removing trash along the Potomac's shores. Potomac Conservancy will host volunteer sites across the watershed. To volunteer with Potomac Conservancy at one of their cleanup sites, please contact Rebecca Long at long@potomac.org or 301-608-1188 x215. You can find more information at <http://www.potomac.org>.



2013 Potomac River Smallmouth Bass Catch Rate Survey Summary of Results

Information provided by fishermen is cost effective and an important part of managing fisheries. Creel surveys provide insight into fish population trends, angler success, harvest attitudes, and the effectiveness of regulations. Inland Fisheries uses creel surveys, including tournament results, in addition to annual electrofishing surveys to evaluate the Potomac River Smallmouth Bass fishery.

During 2013 bass anglers were surveyed using two methods, on the water distribution of postage pre-paid creel cards and through the on-line volunteer angler survey page. A total of 212 usable creel cards were returned while 55 trips were reported through the on-line survey. Due to the variability of wading opportunities and the low number of cards/trips returned by wading anglers, only the information from boat anglers was summarized. The information was analyzed for the river as a whole and by three segments, upper (PawPaw to Dam 5), middle (Dam 5 to Dam 3), and lower (Dam 3 to Seneca). A summary of the results is shown below:

Table 1. Summary of 2013 Potomac River Smallmouth Bass angler catch data, by river segment, obtained from postage pre-paid creel cards. Cards were distributed to anglers between March 1 and October 31. Catch rate is bass/hr.

	Lower	Middle	Upper	Total
total catch rate	3.0	3.8	3.0	3.3
≥ 12" catch rate	1.1	0.9	0.5	0.9
Number of Cards	86	82	44	212
% ≥ 12" in catch	36	24	18	27
average catch/outing	16.9	20.0	16.4	18.0
average ≥12"/outing	6.1	4.8	2.9	4.9
average hrs per outing	5.6	5.2	5.5	5.4

Highlights:

- **The catch rate of Smallmouth Bass in 2013 (3.3 bass/hr) was higher than the mean catch rate of 2.3 (1.8 – 2.8) reported from a creel diary survey conducted 1979 – 1985.**
- Smallmouth Bass $\geq 12''$ made up a greater percentage of the catch in downstream areas due to faster growth rates.
- **The Smallmouth Bass size distributions determined from electrofishing were comparable to size distributions reported by anglers.**
- Catch rates for larger bass were higher during March and April
- September had the highest total catch rate.
- The highest number of trips were reported during May, June, July.
- **Only 1% of the legal-size bass caught were reported as harvested.**

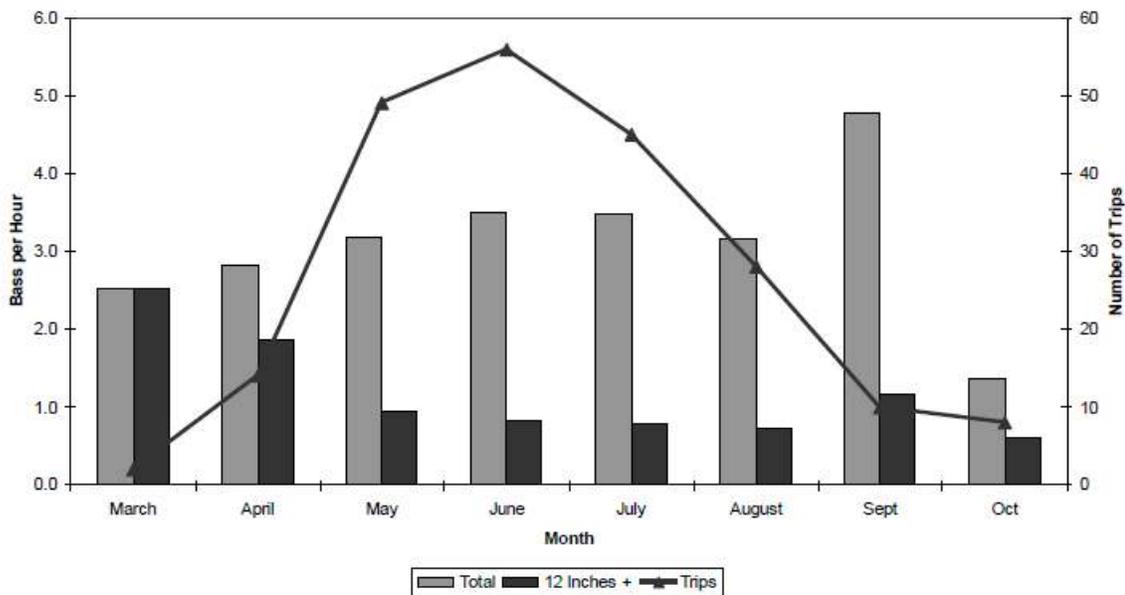


Figure 1. Monthly angling catch rates (total catch and $\geq 12''$) for Potomac River Smallmouth Bass reported from 212 creel survey cards distributed between March 1 and October 31, 2013.

Fishermen are encouraged to report their Potomac River Smallmouth Bass trips using the Volunteer Angler Survey page: <http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/survey/index.asp>. For more information about this survey please contact:

John Mullican, Western Region, District II Manager
jmullican@dnr.state.md.us
 301-898-5443

Florida Fishing Trip

Article by Ernie Rojas

As anyone can imagine, the anticipation for this trip was intense. Since I had a conference in Miami, I took advantage of it and took some vacation time.

Mike Sines and I met up with Capt. Mark Hall at 7:45am to do some urban fishing. Mike is a major in the Army stationed down in Doral. He is a helicopter pilot who did 2-3 tours over in the hot zone. Cool dude too!

As you can see from the pictures, we fished in an urban environment and were able to experience the unique fishery that they have down there right in the city.

As I always mention, if you are in Miami, you should hire Mark. He gives you a great chance to catch some neat fish. Plus he is very reasonable and very knowledgeable....just a pleasure to fish with.

As soon as we hit the 1st spot, Mike hooked up with a feisty jack and the skunk was off.

We then proceed to work a lot of shoreline but only caught a few small LMB but we were picking them off here and there. We were using X-Rap type of shallow divers but after a bit we switched to a DOA 3" soft plastic minnow. That was the ticket and we started hooking up more often.

The weatherman had called for a sunny, warm, humid day with temps in the low 80s.



Florida Fishing Trip (cont'd)



Well, we looked east around 10am and the blackness made us concerned. Then the winds picked up so we knew we were going to get dumped on so we hurried under a bridge. Good decision as it rained for a bit but we still got wet because the bridge leaked in several places.

The storm moved out and we continued to catch many a bass (over two dozen at least but we were not counting, measuring or weighing). They turned on and we were just having a great time with them.

Our goal was to look for Peacocks but the sun only

came out later in the afternoon. We did see a few but they were skittish. Most of the time they hang around and could care less that you are looking at them. I think we were a week or two early for the bedding pattern but we caught plenty of bass to keep us in the game. We spent that last couple of hours hunting them down but got no real shots at them.

Finally, at around 3pm I told the guys that we really needed to call it a day. We didn't want to stop though. It was supposed to be a half day charter and we were way over our time. Plus, Mike needed to get



home to his family.

We took a few more casts and on my last cast (fly rod) I hooked up with a bull. I was sure it was a peacock but when Mark saw the fish, he proclaimed it was a jaguar guapote. Basically, it looked like a black crappie on steroids. What a great fight on a fly rod!

We called it a day....satisfied and tired in a good way. We also agreed that we would schedule another trip down there as soon as a s possible.

Conservation Corner

By Herschel Finch

We already have enough reason to oppose fracking due to the resulting damage to our wilderness and rural areas and our ground water. There is also the harm it does to our rivers because of the discharge of the fracking water and drawing down river volume, which damages our fisheries. But did anyone think about that discharge water being radioactive?

That's right, even with all the other issues that fracking has, we are just now finding out that the discharge water that is brought up from underground carries varying levels of radioactivity. Some of those levels are even life-threatening. A report on 60 minutes on March 2nd alarmed me so much I did some of my own investigation and the report is indeed correct. And even in the frack-happy state of North Dakota, they were concerned enough about it to ban any materials that come in contact with that discharge water from being discarded into ANY North Dakota landfills.

Part of the treatment of that water is to initially filter it through a fabric tube they call a filtration sock. This 'sock' catches a lot of sediment, heavy metals and other such discharge. They are apparently used a number of times until they are worn out, and then replaced in the filtration process. But then what? They can't just toss them into the trash because the radiation levels they pick up can be quite considerable, and even high enough in some cases to warrant them being handled under Nuclear Regulatory Agency protocols.

Well that's a tad expensive as you might guess, involving sealable 55 gallon drums being placed into special containers after that and then transported to actual nuclear waste sites ...like Yucca Mountain in Nevada. That's a long way and a lot of fuel away. So some of these gas and oil drilling companies have been playing a little fast and loose with these socks, bagging them up like so much trash, and then depositing them in various and sundry places that are unlikely to be checked with any regularity. Regulatory officials from Nevada found one very large pile in a group of buildings way out on the prairie that contained several hundred pounds of these filter socks just stashed in these buildings. Apparently some had been there for years; out of sight, out of mind I guess.

But it's not just North Dakota that has this radioactivity problem. Radium deposits and/or Radium gas is present virtually everywhere underground in the US. But it's especially present in the shale. And we all know where the major drilling operations are done. This water used in fracking is coming in contact with Radium and Radium gas and is being brought to the surface during these drilling operations. Pennsylvania is slowly but surely coming to realize they've made a Faustian bargain with the gas and oil exploration companies as radioactivity is showing up more and more in ground water and in wells during the tests that have been mandated by their DEQ up there.

The US Forest Service still has not released their 15 year usage plan for the George Washington National Forest. So if you have not written your representatives in Congress and to the US Forest Service concerning this issue, I urge you to do so soon.

Jeff Kelble is still trying to get the Shenandoah River on the impaired rivers list with the EPA for our continuing issues with algae growth. He is still pressing everyone to write to the EPA and our Virginia Department of Environmental Quality office in Richmond about this. So if you haven't written your letter yet, please do so at your earliest convenience. Otherwise, I'm gonna start flicking this nasty stuff on ya the next time we go fishing.

**PRSC
P.O. Box 1240
Vienna, VA 22183**

This is my favorite picture(s) that I received this past month. Roger Brown took this picture of Herschel Finch and me staffing the PRSC display at the annual Rapidan Trout Unlimited Fly Fishing show. We all had a great time catching up with old friends and making new ones



2014 Contest Results

March 2014 Report By Wallace Harvey

Good Morning Sports Fans! Here we are into March and no one has reported that they were crazy enough to go fishing this winter. I guess the ice on the river was not thick enough to stand on, but too thick for a yak. Good for all of you! No need to be stupid and be out there in the weather we have had. But there is good news, as I write this today should reach 70 degrees for the first time in months. Therefore there is hope for a new season. We have had good snows to help the ground water and the rivers should be at good levels when spring arrives. I, for one, can hardly wait.

I also have not heard that anyone is willing to tackle the wonderful job of writing this article. Therefore, you get stuck with the same old foolishness from this old goat. There are changes coming where I have my part time job and hopefully, I'll get Wednesdays off before too long. Once that happens, I'll have the honor of your company again at meetings. Yes, you will get to feast your eyes on my ugly mug again. One good thing is that I will still have Saturdays off. Therefore, I am looking forward to fishing with many of you again. Hopefully, we can wet a line in some new places as well as the old. I want to lead a trip or two. That way I know I get to go. Please keep me informed of any planned club trips or any other trips that come along.

It has been hard the past year not seeing everyone to give me ideas for this article. Any input is always welcome. And, if you secretly desire to become a writer, this is a good way to practice your skills. Jack Cook is easy to work with and wonderful person. You will enjoy working with him. Give it some consideration and let me know. I hope to see everyone in the near future. Keep the faith. Summer is around the corner.

2014 Results

Section 1, Biggest Fish:

Section 1, Best 5 Fish:

Section 2, Biggest Fish:

Section 2, Best 5 Fish:

Section 3, Biggest Fish: Jack Cook, 19.5"

Section 3, Best 5 Fish: Bill Pearl, 84.5"

Largest on Fly:

New Member:

Grover Cleveland Contest:

William Shriver 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.