



# The Buzz

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July 29, 2015

## Bruce Ingram Returns

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August 26, 2015

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2015

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Author, sportsman, photographer, and conservationist Bruce Ingram will share his deep knowledge about fishing for smallmouth bass and engaging personality at the PRSC Club meeting on July 29. You can usually count on Bruce to sprinkle in lots of interesting and controversial viewpoints on sporting topics.

When not teaching English in the Botetourt County, Virginia, school system, Bruce spends much of his time fishing, hunting, birding, and enjoying the great outdoors. He has been an outdoor writer/photographer since 1983. His extensive knowledge is reflected in the many books he has published, including *The South Branch and Upper Potomac Rivers Guide*, *The James River Guide*, *The New River Guide*, and *The Shenandoah/Rappahannock Rivers Guide*. One of Bruce's recent books, *Fly and Spin Fishing for River Smallmouth*, covers how to catch smallmouth on fly and spinning rods throughout the year, plus such topics as conservation easements, riparian zone creation/protection, taking kids fishing, canoe camping, birding by canoe, and much more.

Bruce's books on the James, New, Potomac, Shenandoah and Rappahannock Rivers cover a wide range of float trips available on these rivers, plus information on access points, rapids, fishing hot spots, and trip planning. Basically, paragraph by paragraph, mile by mile, Bruce takes you on a trip down these rivers, so that when you go on your own trips, you will have a safe, productive fishing experience. You'll have the opportunity to purchase signed copies of Bruce's books.

In addition to his books, Bruce has also placed some 2,100 articles in magazines and some 2,400 photos. He regularly writes for such magazines as *Virginia Wildlife*, *Wildlife in North Carolina*, *Whitetail Times*, *Turkey Country*, *Turkey & Turkey Hunting*, *Game and Fish Publications*, and many others. The Outdoor Writers Association of America has honored Bruce with six writing awards.

You can learn more about Bruce Ingram, as well as purchase his books, by visiting his web page. For those of you able to attend the July meeting, this should be a very interesting and informative evening. Bruce plans to speak on a variety of topics, including the state of the James River. And, of course, he won't miss the opportunity to talk about his controversial research on lure color and what bass really can and cannot see color-wise. PRSC will have copies of his books on sales at the meeting.

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# Upcoming Items

## Potomac River Smallmouth Club - July Meeting

Join Us Wednesday, August 26 for PRSC's next monthly meeting. Joining us will be Capt. John Page Williams, who is a Senior Naturalist at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, speaking about the environmental conditions in the Bay as well as fishing this wonderful natural resource. We will be back at our usual location and time...the Vienna Firehouse at 7:30pm. Please join us for what should be a very interesting presentation.

## Picture Raffle - Smallmouth Bass Print

As a fund raiser, PRSC is raffling off a smallmouth bass print. 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.



## Potomac Riverkeeper

**Riverkeeper Investigates Coal Ash Mines.** Dominion, one of Virginia's largest energy companies, owns and operates the Possum Point Power Plant, located just south of Alexandria on a peninsula between Quantico Creek and the Potomac River. Since filing Notice of Intent, PRKN has been monitoring the facility for illegal discharges into Quantico Creek and taking water and sediment samples at the site perimeter, to test for unsafe levels of heavy metals. They have also joined state lawmakers in calling for testing of drinking water wells for nearby residents, to find out whether their drinking water has been affected by the coal ash leaks into groundwater. PRKN is using litigation and grassroots political outreach to push for a full cleanup of Possum Point's coal ash pollution, investigation of Dominion's handling of coal ash, and the excavation and removal of all coal ash at the site to a lined landfill away from the Potomac River. Their goal is to make sure these toxic coal ash ponds are no longer a threat to Quantico Creek, the Potomac and public drinking water supplies. For more information, please visit their website at <http://www.potomacriverkeepernetwork.org/possum-point>.

## Potomac Conservancy

### Canal Stewards at the River Center - Lock 8

**Saturday, August 22 - 9:00am-12:00pm.** The [C&O Canal National Historical Park](#) gets its fair share of wear and tear from the over five million visitors that hike, bike, and camp within the park each year. Take a day to cool off down by the river and join Potomac Conservancy as we collect trash, maintain trails, restore picnic tables, and remove invasive plant species from the area around the [River Center](#) at Lock 8! For more information, visit their website at [www.potomac.org/events](http://www.potomac.org/events).

# Message from PA Boat and Fish Commission

## "S.O.S. - Save Our Susquehanna!" Campaign Aims To Help Sick Bass

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has launched an "S.O.S. - Save Our Susquehanna!" campaign to fund water and soil conservation projects along the Susquehanna River, whose young smallmouth bass population has been plagued over the last decade by illness and elevated mortality rates.

From now until the end of the year, the PFBC expects to receive \$3 million in revenue from sales of approximately 130,000 resident annual, senior resident annual, and non-resident annual licenses. Under the S.O.S. - Save Our Susquehanna! campaign, once the \$3 million threshold is met, all additional sales from the three licenses will be dedicated solely to funding Susquehanna River projects.



"To kick off the campaign, we are pledging \$50,000 in matching funds from the Commission," Executive Director John Arway said. "I'm optimistic that we will raise and exceed the \$50,000 from anglers, other conservationists, and anyone who cares about our natural resources and supports our efforts to do everything in our power to protect and conserve them."

"The Susquehanna River is sick and someone has to take steps to fix it before it is too late," said Arway. "This is about conservation and protecting our aquatic resources so they may be enjoyed by future generations as guaranteed by our state constitution. We need leadership to begin working on fixing problems that we know exist."

The campaign coincides with the upcoming start of bass season on June 13.

Arway added that anyone can contribute to the campaign by purchasing a fishing license. "The fishing license is simply the mechanism we're using to raise the funds," he said. "You don't have to be an angler. You just have to care about the Susquehanna River. By buying an annual fishing license, you can help make this campaign a success."

Also, individuals can further demonstrate their support by purchasing a special S.O.S. - Save Our Susquehanna button for just \$10. A fishing license is required in order to purchase the button and all proceeds from the button sales will also go to fund the campaign. Buttons will be available to purchase on June 8.

Arway added that anglers and individuals also have the option of contributing to the campaign by writing a check to "S.O.S. - Save Our Susquehanna" and mailing it to the PFBC headquarters at P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106.

Fishing licenses and buttons can be purchased online through the PFBC's [Outdoor Shop](#) or at any of 900 licensing agents across the Commonwealth.

# Upper Delaware Fish

By Terry Cooney

Over 910 miles later I pulled into my driveway after a trip to the upper Delaware River with Jamie Gold, Steve Adams, and Dave Lockard. A beautiful river, great weather, good friends, and ample food and drink to enjoy. Just one thing was missing - da freakin smallmouth bass!

We stayed in a great mountain top cabin outside Hancock, NY, arriving on Wednesday, 8 July, and leaving on Sunday, the 12th. The 9/10 mile ride from the road was a steep ten minute off-road experience. Nice warning though on the cabin wall about keeping windows on the ground floor closed at night to avoid a black bear visit. We didn't see any bears but we saw deer everywhere, dead and alive.



Here is the view from our cabin out over the valley. But it did take a 4x4 vehicle to get up to the cabin - it was a very steep climb up an unpaved road.

We did three shuttles, all about 6 miles long:

- Narrowsburg to Ten Mile Access
- Callicoon to Cochecton
- Lordville to Long Eddy

The floats had no real scary rapids. Put-ins and take-outs maintained by the National Parks Service, NY State, and PA were excellent and well spaced. The water was absolutely clear (down to 10') and no snot grass!

# ing Trip - July, 2015

I was lucky to have the most luck (double lucky?). On the first day I caught 14, then 16, and then 9. On the best day I had two 15s", two 15 1/2s", and a 16+". These were the biggest of the trip. There were days when some caught no fish (that's right - zero). Turns out the Delaware is fed by the Cannonsville Reservoir and because of the rains they were releasing water. The water releases from the dam bottom which has the

coldest water. It was cold. The local fly shop said 100 fish are common when the water is over 70 degrees. The water temperatures when we were there weren't even close – maybe 60 degrees. The air temp at night was down in the 50's and we didn't get to 80. BTW, the guy in the fly shop almost dropped his jaw when told we were fishing for smallies instead of trout.

Jamie, Steve, and Dave also tried their long rods. Not too much luck with those either. The bottom line is it's a beautiful river and beautiful country, but a long way to drive (6 1/2 hours) for not so great a pay off in terms of fish caught. Time to research another river.

**The three fly fishermen.**



**Steve Adams enjoying his new sit-on-top kayak.**



# Chesapeake Bay Rock Fishin'

By Richard Mrstik

Early on Sunday morning June 28th, PRSC club members Rick Mrstik and Jed Woodill along with their wives Amy Mrstik and Joan Woodill and a few other friends drove to Chesapeake Beach Marina and headed into the Bay aboard the Tricia Ann II (<http://www.triciaanncharterfishing.com/>) in search of Chesapeake Bay Rockfish. Captain Wayne Schuhart and first mate Doug are experts at finding Rockfish and keeping up to 21 trolling lines tangle-free and catching fish, and this day was no exception.

By 6:00 AM we were heading east into the Bay, and in less than an hour Doug was sending bucktail jigs and 12" purple worms over the transom and out on the planer boards. Soon enough we had our first cry of "fish on!" The first three fish were below the 20-inch minimum size, but before long Joan had the first keeper, a nice 24" Rockfish.

Fishing action was fairly steady, and by 1:00 PM eight anglers had hooked and landed 25 Rockfish, with 10 over the legal 20-inch mark. Amy landed

two keepers at 22 inches, while Rick landed three with no keepers among them. Jed proved that he can handle big fish, as he landed the largest fish of the day, a beautiful 34-inch Rockfish.



Joan Woodill and a 24" Striped Bass.



Amy Mrstik with a nice 22" striped bass.



Jed Woodill with his terrific 34" striper.

# Fishing Trip - 7-8-15, San Juan Puerto Rico

By Ernie Rojas

This month I got a chance to fish the lagoons of San Juan.....the target was tarpon! I joined my friends Bill and Robert...and we were excited for some action.

And then this! A banana on the boat!!!! We quickly explained the issue and he dearly paid for it!



One of the coolest things we did was to stop at the local bait shop....

This is how it's done down there. The local charter guides know these fisherman and buy live fish (look like little fat stripers) for a buck a

piece!

As we motored to an area to help another guide who was stuck on the bottom, we saw this boat.....maybe too much rum?

Anyway, we fished a big lagoon and Robert hooked into a very nice ladyfish. Of course, it came unbuttoned when it was up close to the boat.

Fishing was tough as it was windy and we could not see the bait fish. No hit for a long time and then Robert got nailed but the hook slingshoted back and smacked Bill in the hand. He thought it was a weight...we did not have one on the line. When I saw it, I hit the deck!

We moved around and then I got slammed! The fish jumped four times....what a rush! I forgot to bow down the 1st two times but he stayed on.....just barely though!

We figure it was around 35 lbs. (*Editor's Note: Please see the picture of the month on the last page of this issue.*)



Robert then got hit again and after a nice jump....limp line.

Moral: DO NOT bring bananas on the boat!

When we got back, this guy was waiting for a snack.

Even though the fishing was tough (other boat got zero), we had a good time with Capt. Armando who is Puerto Rican born of Cuban parents. Yes, we bonded!



# Fishing Trip to Michigan

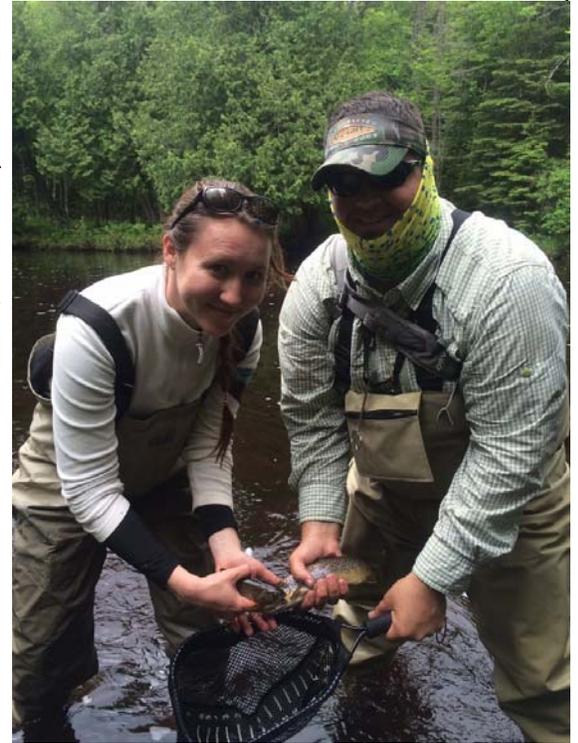
Article and Photos by Andrew Jennings

It has been awhile since I have been at a PRSC meeting. After about five months of Wednesdays being taken up by wedding planning and school work, I'm back! ...I think. Anyway, it has taken me until June to get out fishing this year, which is sad all in itself, but, starting my season in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan was the biggest treat I could have hoped for.

My wife and I planned a two week honeymoon in the "UP" which was exciting, but, it got even more exciting when Rachel started buying me books on Michigan's popular fishing locations and the information to several fishing guides she had found up in that area. That's when I knew my fishing gear was the first necessary thing to be packed for this trip.

The bodies of water that were fished were the Escanaba River, Yellow Dog River, Lake Independence, Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. Targeted species were Smallmouth Bass and Trout.

I was really looking forward to the guided fly fishing trip on the Escanaba River which also was Rachel's first ever fly fishing experience. After meeting our guide in town, we drove about an hour into the middle of nowhere to then turn onto a two track which took us even further into the middle of nowhere. After 30 minutes of white knuckling around and through mud pits, and sliding down small hills...in our loaded down Toyota Camry that is, we got to our ending point. After putting on our waders, getting situated and just about soaking ourselves in Deet, we had about a half hour of bush-whacking through the thick northern wilderness along with thousands of pterodactyls, AKA mosquitos.



Eventually we got to what was considered "fish camp" and started to get down to business. It was my wife's first time ever fly fishing so the basics were shown and then into the river we went. Naturally, she caught the first fish. It was Rachel's first pool to cast into, her first fish on the fly, first trout, first everything at that point! I was so proud and excited that I completely lost track of what I was doing. Next thing I knew, I heard splashing up river from me which was Rachel, again, with this look of, "Is this good?" as she pulls a 15" wild Brown out of the water. My jaw dropped as well as the guides...I married a natural fly fisherwoman! At that point, I couldn't stop smiling. My face just plain ol hurt!

Long story short, she got her hands on four trout (two Brook and two Brown) and unfortunately lost several others. She was into enough trout to keep her busy for hours! It was great! At the end of our trip, she admitted that she enjoyed fly fishing so much that she wants to get her own setup and start fly fishing! She has only spin fished with me twice, so, that was music to my ears!!!

# an's Upper Peninsula



I got my hands on seven trout, a mix of Brooks, Browns, and a Rainbow with my largest being a 16" Brown. I lost more fish than I wish to disclose...over eight...I'll leave it at that. At one point, we got a double just fifteen yards from each other on the river. That was a very special moment and photo opportunity!

After visiting several different locations in the "UP", we traveled south on the Mackinac Bridge into the lower peninsula of Michigan. I stopped at a small "Mom and Pop" hardware store and spoke to the owner who actually gave me his fishing spot that he frequents on the flats of Lake Michigan. He told me that since we were on our honeymoon and from Virginia, it wasn't likely that we would be blowing up his spot, so he gave me the directions and landmarks to follow. First question he asked me was, "Do you have waders?...cause if you don't have waders, you are out of luck." Good thing I did pack them, because, his directions took me through about two miles of muck, swamp, and thick woods that would have stopped anyone from going any further.

I followed his directions to the "T" which included landmarks like a crashed helicopter, a right at the funny looking pine tree (seriously), and "where the rocks get bigger, make a left." After a long hike, it opened up to the most gorgeous flats I've ever seen. I got my rod setup and off I went into the thigh high pools of stone and grass beds. Immediately I saw Carp the size of Labrador Retrievers finning and splashing all over the place and shadows of Smallmouth Bass swimming around. I stood on the tallest rock in my vicinity and stared into the crystal clear water and just grinned like a total idiot. That was the moment of realization that I was about to truly sight fish for Smallies in the flats of Lake Michigan.

I threw my Case Plastics tube into the water and had the time of my life. At one point, I caught six Smallmouth in minutes. It was just one after another. After a little time it started to calm down, but, calmed down was a 14-16 inch Smallmouth every 10-15 minutes. While walking out of the flats after losing my tube bait, I decided to tie on a 4" fluke and toss it into the last pool on my way out. Immediately it was ambushed just on the edge of a grass bed. I could feel the fish and saw the line move from one side of the pool to the other. I waited a good amount of time before I set the hook because I was finding that the larger fish were only grabbing the back end of baits and swimming with them before fully swallowing. I slowly lowered the rod...reeled in the majority of the slack, and WHAM! I set the hook on this fish harder than I ever set a hook before. My reel could hardly handle this fish, honestly, I initially thought it was one of the big carp I was seeing. Turns out it was the biggest Smallmouth Bass of my life! I fought this thing for a good five minutes before landing it. I held him up to my rod while he was struggling so I could get a point of nose to tail measurement on the rod to measure when I got back to the car. In the struggle of unhooking the fish, holding the rod, getting my phone out to take a picture, and trying not to fall...I lost the fish back to the flats. I went back to measure the rod where I knew the nose and tail were placed and came to the conclusion that it was my first 20"+ fish. The fish in the picture was about the average I was catching throughout the fishing experience. They were chubby Smallies!



So, we are now back in Virginia, but still, my mind is dreaming of my next Michigan fishing trip. Who's with me?

# You Can Make A Difference

From Ernie Rojas

It's easy!! If you agree with the below letter, just email e-mail the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Senior Naturalist, John Page Williams (jpwilliams@cbf.org) with the subject line:

Anglers for Clean Water.

Include your name and home town.

Thank you for your help!

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July XX, 2015

Governor Terry McAuliffe Chairman, Executive Council Patrick Henry Building 1111 East Broad Street, 3rd Floor  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor McAuliffe and Members of the Chesapeake Executive Council:

As you approach the 2017 mid-point assessment for the Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint, we the following Bay anglers write to express our concerns about disappointing overall progress toward the Blueprint's pollution-reduction targets. Clean water and healthy fish habitat are what we live and breathe.

As members of the Chesapeake Executive Council, you have accepted responsibility for the progress--or lack of it--made toward the Blueprint goals. When the Council's members signed the new Bay Watershed Agreement in 2014, you reaffirmed your commitment to the Blueprint's water quality goals, including having programs and practices in place to achieve 60 percent of the nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment reductions by 2017 and 100 percent in place by 2025.

We celebrate the success of some states in some sectors to reduce polluted runoff; however, at our current pace, Bay-wide efforts to reduce total nitrogen will miss the 2017 target by more than 50 percent. We can and must accelerate our efforts in order to achieve a truly healthy Chesapeake.

Only your leadership can get the Blueprint back on track. If not, this latest attempt to restore water quality throughout the watershed will be relegated by history to the already too-long list of missed deadlines and cleanup failures.

We applaud the magnificent conservation efforts that many farmers have made over the past thirty years, but more of the Chesapeake watershed's acreage is now in agricultural production (25 per cent) than any other land use. To reduce the impacts of intense food production, more farmers must participate in these clean water programs.

For the Chesapeake and its tributary creeks, streams, and rivers to regain true health, the region needs the Executive Council as a whole to exert its leadership. Thus we respectfully urge you, the Council's members, to take strong action in support of the Blueprint, including investing more federal resources, particularly through USDA, to help Pennsylvania accelerate reductions. We ask not only for ourselves but for our children and all that will follow us onto the great waters of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. We want them to know the joys that we have known through fishing in this National Treasure.

Tight lines,

[John Doe, Williamsburg, VA]

# Conservation Corner

By Herschel Finch

Now, before I tell you the title of this month's Conservation Corner, I want you all to take a deep breath, get yourself centered. Now go to your "happy place" and relax.

Feeling calm?

Relaxed?

Okay here goes:

There are Snakeheads in the Upper Potomac. (insert cricket sounds here)

I don't know about you, but I first heard of a Snakehead catch near Point of Rocks three years ago. I got corroboration from a very good source that this indeed happened and the fish weighed approx. 7 lbs. It was 'harvested' and eaten. But a singleton fish does not constitute proof of a breeding population. That was as far as this source was willing to go in that regard.

One fish could easily be a lone male that was introduced into the water locally, just to be caught almost immediately. Or indeed, it could have actually been a Bowfin or an outright hoax of a piscatorial nature. But the Fisheries managers in MD says fishermen have documented catching two Snakeheads "several miles" above Great Falls last fall. And Maryland DNR Biologists have shocked up a small juvenile, and adult fish, and a school of fry have been seen since then. So now it's official, we have Snakeheads in the Upper Potomac. We all knew they were coming at some point and indeed, probably suspected they have been there for some time. Just not in numbers large enough to verify their presence by anglers with any frequency.

As for when they will show up in the Shenandoah, who knows. They won't be able to get past the dam at Millville naturally. So if they show up in the main stem above there, someone will have to have purposely introduced them illegally, as they were in that pond in Maryland some twelve years ago now. But personally speaking, I don't see them doing very well in the Shenandoah. The conditions they prefer, shallow, dingy water with lots of standing vegetation, don't really exist on the Shenandoah. And getting up above the Virginia Staircase is going to be problematic I would think. But fish have propagated themselves all over the world into areas you would think they shouldn't be...so who knows.

I for one don't plan to panic. I suspect they'll do exactly what they have done in other places and backwaters along the Potomac. They will find their niche and they will thrive in those areas that are most favorable for them and their numbers will stabilize. They are already fast becoming a game fish targeted by a lot of serious anglers, not to mention "foodie" types as well.

You certainly won't hear me complain about having another toothy critter to chase here in Virginia, especially one that seems to go well with butter, onion, a little lemon juice and a nice Chardonnay.

**PRSC**  
**P.O. Box 1240**  
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This is my favorite picture for July. Please see the article by Ernie Rojas in this issue of *The Buzz* for his fishing trip to Puerto Rico. They estimate that this fish weighed about 35 lbs. Tarpon are a difficult fish to land because they jump a lot and tend to throw the hook. So congratulations to Ernie for landing this magnificent fish. Now, can you hook and land one on a fly rod?



# 2015 Contest Results

July 2015 Report By Jack Cook

There has been very little action in the contest this month. I realize that the river has been blown out up until this week. However, the river is now clear and at a good level, so reports should be forthcoming. The only new reports have been in the fly fishing category. Wayne Tate reports a very nice 19.5" smallmouth. And Herman Yam reported a 37" total on the fly rod. Let's get out there.

One of our members called his doctor and says, "Doc, its an emergency, my baby swallowed a fish hook." The doctor says, "Bring him in, I'll meet you at my office." But before the doctor could get out the door, our member calls back and says, "Never mind Doctor, I found another fish hook."

## 2015 Results

**Section 1, Biggest Fish:**

**Section 1, Best 5 Fish:**

**Section 2, Biggest Fish:** Randy Chandler, 20"

**Section 2, Best 5 Fish:** Randy Chandler, 74"

**Section 3, Biggest Fish:** Wayne Tate, 19.5"

**Section 3, Best 5 Fish:** Bill Pearl, 87.5"

**Largest on Fly:** Wayne Tate, 19.5"

**Best 5 Fish on Fly:** Herman Yam, 37"

**New Member:**

**Grover Cleveland Contest:**

**William Shriver Award:**

For contest rules and information, visit <http://www.prsc.org/fishing-contest/>

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 \$40/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.