



The Buzz

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Volume 29, Issue 3

March 30, 2016

C.T. Campbell To Discuss Shenandoah Valley Fishing

Upcoming Items

Membership Renewal Deadline

March 31, 2016

VA Fly Fishing & Wine Festival

April 9-10, 2016

PRSC Meeting

April 27, 2016

Kayak Demo Day

June 11, 2016

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C.T. Campbell of the Page Valley Fly Fishing Service will be our speaker on March 30th. C.T. is a native of Luray, Virginia and has over 30 years of fly fishing experience and over 15 years of experience as a fly fishing instructor and guide. He worked in the Shenandoah National Park for 35 years, so he knows it well.

C.T. (on the right) is a member of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited and a member of the Friends of the Shenandoah River. His love of fly fishing and knowledge of the local area and wildlife provides a well-rounded, enjoyable fly fishing experience for all levels of fly fishermen.



One satisfied customer declared: "C.T. Campbell is THE guide for native brook trout fishing in the Shenandoah National Park. He's enthusiastic, patient, knows the fish, plants, and animals of the National Park and, most importantly, he's an awfully nice guy who is excited to show others around his backyard. I have been fishing in the Blue Ridge Mountains for years, but one day of guided fishing with C.T. renewed my appreciation for Virginia's beautiful Piedmont and the spectacular native trout that call it home. C.T. will get you hooked."

Page Valley Fly Fishing Service offers personalized, guided catch-and-release fly fishing trips for people of all experience levels. C.T will also take you fishing for smallmouth bass on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, or fishing for mountain brook trout in select private brook trout water locations in the Shenandoah Valley. He provides all flies and leaders as well as instruction, as needed.

Trip options vary and can be customized based on client needs and preferences. Full-day packages go for \$200 for one person and \$300 for two; additional people would be \$50 each. But no more than four total. Half-day packages are \$150 for one person; \$200 for two; and additional individuals, up to four, \$50 each. Float trips cost \$340 for up to two people. C.T. can be reached at Page Valley Fly Fishing Service; 540-743-7952; www.pagevalleyflyfishing.com.

At the March meeting, C.T will discuss the fishing habitats of both trout and smallmouth bass, share some of his fly-fishing techniques, and comment on recent Shenandoah fish kills. This ought to prove an exciting evening for both fly- and spin-fishing enthusiasts.

Club Executive Board	<h1>Upcoming Items</h1>
President Steve Kimm president@prsc.org	
Vice-President Craig Bishop vp@prsc.org	
Secretary Dave Lockard (H) (301) 656-1964 secretary@prsc.org	<p>Reminder: PRSC Membership Renewal Deadline is March 31st. If you haven't paid your membership dues for 2016 and wish to remain a member, please do so immediately by contacting club treasurer Jamie Gold.</p>
Treasurer Jamie Gold C (571) 213-4699 treasure@prsc.org	<p>Join us Wednesday, April 27th for our monthly meeting. Our speaker will be Dean Naujoks of the Potomac Riverkeeper Network. 7:30-9:00 PM at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean, VA—Stedman Room.</p>
Trip Coordinator Kris Andersen trip_coordinator@prsc.org	
Program Chair Bill Amshey Programs@prsc.org	<p>The 2016 Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival will be held at the Meadow Event Park, just a few miles outside of Richmond, Virginia, on April 9-10, 2016.</p>
Conservation Chair Herschel Finch (H) (540) 635-7636 Conservation@prsc.org	<p>The festival — the largest event of its kind in the country, drawing fly anglers from as far away as New York and Georgia — appeals to anglers of all ages and stages.</p>
Librarian Herman Yam Librarian@prsc.org	<p>Festival attendees listen to lectures from various experts and practice hands-on skills at the two-day, family-friendly event. Several wineries from throughout the Old Dominion provide free wine tastings for those 21 and older.</p>
Additional Programs	
Fishing Contest Jack Cook H (703) 573-4403	<p>New this year is an expanded kayak demonstration area sponsored by Wild River Outfitters of Virginia Beach.</p>
The Buzz Rick Mrstik (C) (703) 380-7992 Buzz_Editor@prsc.org	<p>Those who have enjoyed the outdoor festival environment for years can rest easy: Although the new facility will enable all vendors to be under roof, the events center is surrounded by extensive grounds suitable for outdoor classes and wine tastings.</p>
Merchandise John Lipetz Merchandise@prsc.org	<p>For more information go to: http://www.vaflyfishingfestival.com/</p>
Past President Steve Moore	
Publicity Ernie Rojas H (703) 729-0128 Publicity@prsc.org	<p>Appomattox River Company will hold a “Demo Day” event on June 11th at its 614 North Main Street, Farmville, Virginia store location. If you are looking for a new kayak or canoe, this is a great opportunity to test paddle many of the models they carry. ARC also has store locations in Ashland, VA and Hampton, VA. Check out their website: http://www.paddleva.com/</p>

Maiden Voyage of the “Knot At Work”

By Jed Woodill

I took my new Pelican Catch 120 (now known as the “Knot At Work”) out to Roaches Run on Saturday, March 26th for sea trials. My wife, Joan, came along to take photos from the shore, probably hoping to get a photo of me climbing out of the water. I chose Roaches Run because it is shallow and sheltered. No worry about boat wakes, and if I fall out I can stand up almost anywhere in the pond. It is also free to launch there.

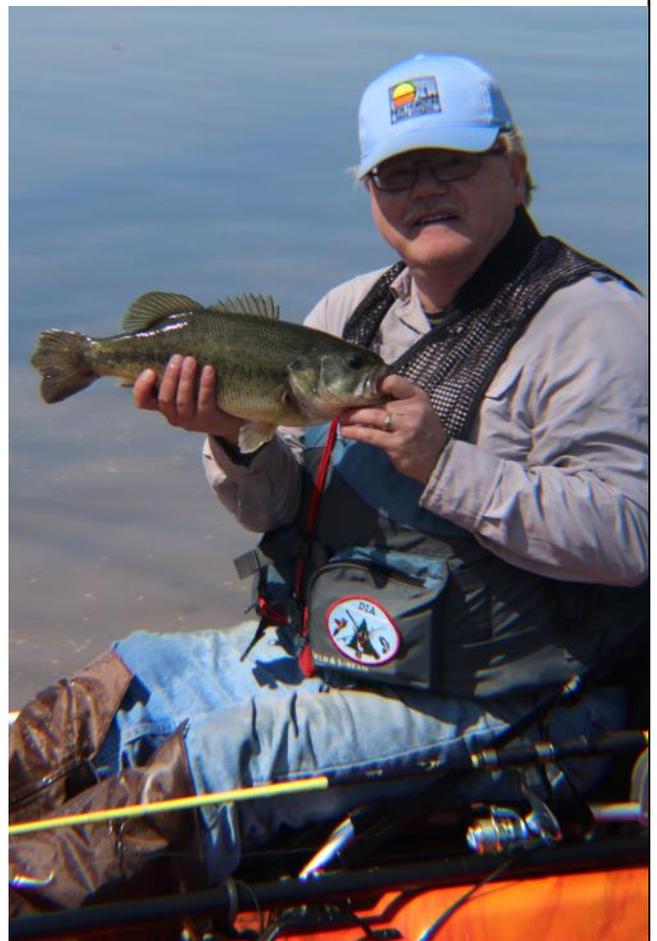
I had promised Joan I would not be long—I just wanted to get a feel for the boat. I took five rods with me. That is the most I can manage in the kayak. I did not take any additional tackle and in my eagerness to get out on the water I forgot my camera.

I launched and paddled around, then stood up and sat down to test the stability. Quite a bit less stable than my big boat (“Bos-Mon”) but enough so that I can get used to it.

I decided to try some casts. I paddled across to a promising tree laying in the water. Once I got there I realized that I had neglected to put my favorite bait on the shaky head rod and I would have to make due with what was on the other four. I chose a green pumpkin jig with a green pumpkin skirt on it and began casting. First tree, nothing, second tree, equally futile. Third tree—fish on!

I fought her into the boat and then realized I didn't have my camera. She threw the hook while in the boat and eventually ended up under my seat. I got her out from under there and re-hooked her securely through the lower jaw. I tossed her back in and paddled back across the pond to where Joan was taking pictures of ducks and such. Once close enough, I shouted to her that I had a fish. She got into better position as I paddled in and took the shot. A nice 17-inch bass on the Knot At Work's maiden voyage!

It's going to be a great summer!



Fishermen May Help Determine Snakehead's Future in Upper Potomac

By Roger Hamilton

Maryland DNR is urging fishermen to start targeting snakeheads in the C&O Canal and the upper Potomac in an effort to control their numbers and monitor their spread throughout the river system, according to John Mullican, fisheries biologist with Maryland's Department of Natural Resources.

The first hard proof that snakeheads have gained a foothold above Great Falls came last May when an electrofishing survey in the C&O Canal yielded a 7-inch juvenile. The fish was found in the same stretch of canal between Violette's and Pennyfield locks where several fishermen reportedly had caught adult snakeheads the year before.

Shortly after the 2015 electrofishing survey Mullican received a photo from a kayaker showing a 30- to 36-inch snakehead in a shallow, detritus-filled embayment in the same part of the canal. Another C&O park visitor snapped a photo of adult snakeheads guarding a ball of fry.

Mullican says it's "virtually certain" that this Asian native is already in the upper river. Small snakeheads would have no problem passing through the cracks in the Violette's Lock inlet lock, giving them access to hundreds of miles of main stem and tributary habitat. In so doing they are reenacting the smallmouth's Potomac diaspora, which began 160 years ago after 20 fingerlings were dumped into the canal basin at Cumberland.



The author had to go to Mattawoman Creek for this snakehead. Now it looks like the fish are moving closer to home.



Small snakeheads can easily slip out of the Violette's Lock inlet lock and into the upper river.

Snakeheads are already well established in the lower and tidal Potomac. When they first appeared a decade ago, the media called them ruthless predators that will destroy "the ecology" and even walk on land (not true, although they do breathe air). But as fishermen got to know snakeheads, many found a lot to like in a fish that grows big, fights hard, and tastes good. Despite the headaches they are causing agencies charged with managing them, Mullican concedes that they are an "impressive fish."

How did they get here?

We'll probably never know how snakeheads got into the canal. Mostly likely they were put there by fishermen, although they also could have followed the waterway up from Georgetown. But we do know that their introduction was unplanned and unofficial, and their impact will be hard to predict.

In the future, the canal will continue to function as a snakehead nursery for the river, says Mullican. It's almost as if the canal was bioengineered with snakeheads in mind, with its slow current, mud bottom, and thick weed beds. Even when the water level drops to almost nothing—even in the dead of winter when the remaining puddles freeze hard—snakeheads survive buried in the mud, waiting to reemerge when conditions improve.

Snakehead's Future in Upper Potomac Continued

Where To Look for Them

For the moment, snakehead ground zero will remain the Violette's Lock-Pennyfield Lock stretch of canal, says Mullican. Snakeheads exiting the canal at Violette's Lock will find ideal low-gradient habitat in Seneca Pool and upstream past Edward's Ferry and White's Ferry. Mullican advises fishermen to look for them in shallow water over mud bottoms, preferably choked with weeds and detritus.

Catch data from fishermen will help biologists monitor the snakehead's spread and better determine its habitat preferences. Mullican asks that catches be reported to fishingreports.dnr@maryland.gov, including photos and specific location.

Impact on the Ecosystem

It's far too early to speculate on the impact snakeheads will have on the Potomac's smallmouth population. In the tidal Potomac, snakeheads appear to have had little effect on numbers of largemouth bass.

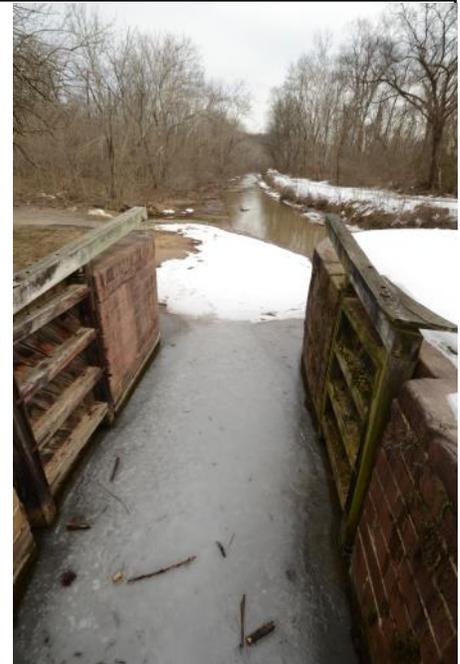
Most likely, snakeheads will largely keep to their sluggish, shallow, and muddy habitats, where they will strike at whatever comes their way. They will probably not venture much into the rock and eddy habitat preferred by smallmouth. A large share of the snakehead's prey species will be non-Potomac natives, since these comprise about a third of the upper Potomac's fish species, including nearly all that are of interest to fishermen.

The snakehead's reproductive strategy gives it an advantage over some river's established residents. For example, the smallmouth's 1-1/2 month springtime spawning window occurs when the river is particularly prone to flooding, which can result in spawning failures and low year classes. Snakeheads spawn later and throughout the summer, even into September, enabling them to reproduce up to five times annually. Both male and female snakeheads guard their nest and savagely attack any fish that threatens their fry.

"We're never going to eliminate snakeheads from the Potomac," Mullican says. His best hope is that fishing pressure, along with the upper river's less-than-ideal habitat, will keep the snakeheads in check. "We didn't want them here," he says, "but we have them anyway."



Shiny new signs call on fishermen to help monitor the snakehead's spread.



Snakehead hatchery: The C&O Canal downstream from Violette's Lock.

Fishing Derby To Focus on Snakeheads

A "Stop the Snakehead" Fishing Derby set for May 21 will lure anglers to the C&O Canal's Pennyfield Lock with raffles and prizes. The aim of the derby is to raise awareness about snakeheads while providing biologists with information about this non-native's impact on existing fish populations. For more information, go to

<http://dnr2.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/snakehead-derby.aspx>.

PRSC Speakers Share Fishing Tips

By Bill Amshey

Way back on October 30, 2002, Shawn Hash spoke to the Club about fishing the New River in the Eggleston and Pembroke areas. Shawn has been working on the New since 1988. He owns and operates Tangent Outfitters in Pembroke, Virginia, where Sinking Creek runs into the New River along a cliff-edged river bend. It is just north of Blacksburg.

Writing in the April/May 2009 edition of *Garden & Gun* (now that's a puzzling combination) magazine, T. Edward Nickens described Tangent Outfitters as "part river-sports base camp, part local community center, it's a funky blend of bluegrass and nouveau-local culture run by a couple of guide/entrepreneurs who are as extreme in personality as the New River itself. Wiry, bearded, sunburned, and intense." Sure makes me want to visit!

Nickens also reported that Shawn "guided National Public Radio's Noah Adams on the New River for Adams's book *Far Appalachia: Following the New River North*." Sounds like a book worth buying.

Back in 2002 Shawn described himself as a "hardcore jig fisherman." He also "dead drifts" flukes and fishes tubes and the pig & jig. He floats some runs above Claytor Lake, but said that the bigger fish are below the lake. Checking his picture gallery on the Tangent Website, they catch some monster smallies and muskies.

Tangent Outfitters offers an array of trips. For more information check them out at <http://tangentoutfitters.com>. Or call 540-626-4567.

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My meeting notes pick up at the March 26, 2003 meeting, during which Captain Jack West spoke, also about fishing the New River. Captain Jack operates Cap'n Jack's James and New River Experience. He can be reached at 209 Boyd Street, Johnson City, TN 37604. Phone: 423-926-8539. I could not find him on the Internet, which hopefully means my search skills are pathetic.

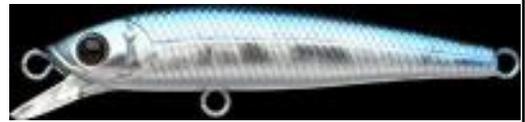


PRSC Speakers Share Fishing Tips Continued



Jack's favorite float on the New River was the Eggleston to Pembroke run. He said that he fishes the South Holston tail waters where he catches some great trout. And the Glasgow to Snowden run on the James River, where he said he catches big smallies. However, he warned about the Balcony Falls on this run, which he described as "bad, bad, bad." After that description, I pledged never to try it.

Captain Jack said his favorite lures are the Luck Craft Pointer, T.D. Minnow, and Flash Minnow. He added that he also likes Bandit, Yozuri, and Rapala lures. Other lures that he likes include Charlie Case natural-color worms and minnows, Snoozer tubes, and Buzz Baits, among others. He said that he applies the "BDS" principal; that is, bigger, deeper, slower.



Never having heard of Snoozer's, I looked them up and found the following comments by Dave Stewart on fishin.com: "Snoozer's was made by Mizmo under contract . . . they were hand-dipped in Mexico, and shipped to Snoozer's where the garlic and crawfish were cooked into them. When Todd Miller (Snoozer) left "Snoozer's," he formed another company named "Hooked Up Baits" . . . his tubes then were made by another source (not Mizmo and not hand-dipped), but the same colors and same scent cooked into them. He since sold out "Hooked Up Baits" a couple of years back. This company is still in business and selling the tubes."

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I used to fish the New River a lot when my oldest son was in Virginia Tech and my daughter was in Radford University. My sons and I used to do a lot of wade fishing, and it was great. Several years back, Dewaun Gilkerson spoke to the Club, and my sons and I have fished just above the New River Gorge with Dewaun several times. Dewaun does two floats: one from Sandstone and the other from Terry, where he has a camp. Both are 8- to 10-hour floats. And the fishing is phenomenal. Dewaun can be contacted at New River Outfitters, 304-255-4769, dewaungilkerson@yahoo.com.

Conservation Corner

By Herschel Finch

Well the hits just keep on coming with the coal ash situations both here and in North Carolina.

As you recall, the Power Station down at Possum Point was found to have dumped almost 30 million gallons of untreated coal ash water from containment ponds into the streams that feed the Potomac River. If you read last month's column you recall I said at the time:

"Seems to me there is awfully cozy relationship between the Virginia DEQ and Dominion Power. You can't just dump 30 million gallons of heavy-metal laden coal-ash water just on a whim. That's an awful lot of water and someone knew it was being done with no public notice somewhere."

And wrapping up with: "Something about that whole situation just doesn't pass the smell test to me."

And now we learned two weeks ago from WAMU that Dominion Power paid for Virginia DEQ Director, David Paylor to attend Masters Tournament and paid a \$1200 bar tab for him. To date there has been no comment from the director but I suspect lawyers on both side have told their clients to stop talking to the media.

There's a part of me that really hates that my instincts were right on this one. I like to think that Virginia is above the sleaze usually found in movies about the Deep South or some industrialized eastern seaboard states. But I can take comfort in the fact that we're not North Carolina I guess . . .

Down in the Tarheel state, Gov. McCrory has quietly disbanded their Coal Ash Management Commission that oversaw the cleanup of unlined coal ash pits at NC coal-fired power plants. He transferred that responsibility to the NC Dept. of Environmental Quality . . . an agency that the Governor made answerable directly to his office last year. It seems the NC Supreme Court apparently ruled that the Coal Ash Management Commission was an unconstitutional trespass against the executive branch powers under the NC state constitution. Given McCrory's past history as a high-ranking executive of Duke Energy all I can say is: How convenient.

And in another development in the state of my birth, several hundred residents of the state that live near coal ash ponds have received letters that have lifted the state-imposed warnings about their wells being contaminated. Several residents have tried to get an explanation for the warning being lifted. Having had their wells tested and finding them still contaminated with all the usual suspects found in water that's been contaminated by coal ash (i.e. arsenic, lead, hexavalent chromium, etc.) They're looking for what has prompted the state to change its mind and overrule county-level Departments of Health.

The answers they're getting, or lack thereof, is rather disturbing. And one can pretty much guess the reason . . . money. Duke Energy will be on the hook for cleaning up that pollution and providing clean drinking water to those whose wells are found to be contaminated. Need I remind you who runs the state right now? Oh right . . . I already did. Needless to say . . . my "spidey-sense" is tingling again.

But finally . . . some good news for a change.

President Obama has reversed his position concerning oil and gas drilling along the Atlantic coast after massive opposition from coastal towns and cities from Georgia to Virginia after some heavy-duty lobbying by environmental groups in hundreds of coastal towns and cities. Personally speaking I take not a small amount of comfort in knowing that a Deepwater Horizon event is a whole lot less likely to happen now out along Chincoteague and Assateague Islands, not to mention Virginia Beach and the Outer Banks.

PRSC
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Sin City Smallmouth

I found myself in Las Vegas last week wishing I was fishing. Captain Jessie of Las Vegas Fishing Tours had just the right medicine. Our day began with a 5:30 pick up at my hotel, Jessie with his boat in tow. We drove out to Willow Beach on the Colorado River and after launching motored south for 20 minutes.

The fishing trip followed three days of extremely windy, unsettled weather, so I didn't have high expectations. I told Jessie he'd get "extra credit" if I caught a smallmouth. We spotted many bass in the crystal-clear water but they just wouldn't bite. Toward the end of the day, we motored into a very fishy looking cove where this 15-incher hammered a white crank bait. It was the only fish of the day, but it was a nice smallmouth!

I recommend looking Jessie up next time you're in Vegas.

<http://www.lasvegasfishingtours.com/LasVegasFishing.html>



2016 Fishing Contest

Report by Jack Cook

Bill Pearl and I fished at Pennyfield Lock on Tuesday, March 15th. We had a good day. Bill had an 85.5" total with a 19.5" big fish. I had a 20" big fish. For those less familiar, Pennyfield is in section III.

After the outing Bill had a few choice words for Randy Chandler. He said, "Randy thinks he's so cute winning both the *Gover Cleveland* and *William Shriver* awards last year. He's in for a real butt-kicking this year." There is no love lost between Randy and Bill.

The fish are starting to bite. Get out there!

If you have entries to report for the 2016 contest, please contact Jack Cook.

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

Entries Thus Far

Section 1, Biggest Fish:

Section 1, Best 5 Fish:

Section 2, Biggest Fish:

Section 2, Best 5 Fish:

Section 3, Biggest Fish: Jack Cook 20"

Section 3, Best 5 Fish: Bill Pearl 85.5"

Largest on Fly:

Best 5 Fish 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 \$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.