

Anglers take to waterways for Opening Day '98

Opening day (April 25) was a good one for local anglers who were greeted in early morning with partly sunny skies and balmy temperatures ranging from the 60s.

From trout anglers on Paint Creek and the Huron River to pike anglers on the many area inland lakes, season opener for pike and trout started right up there with the best.

"I've seen a lot of nice fish today, most of them in other people's pouches," said James Putman, who with his friend Jason Marks, made the trek from Elba to fish for brown trout on Paint Creek just below the Kern Road Bridge in Lake Orion. "I've caught five so far and a couple of them are 10 to 11 inches. This is the third year we've been coming here. We were supposed to go up north to fish, but I'm broke and this was affordable. It's a great atmosphere and the people around here are all real nice."

Steve Snively and his father

Keith fished Paint Creek all day, starting out near the Gunn Road crossing and moving up to the Kern Road Bridge later in the afternoon. They caught "several small ones" and one "nice fat 11-inch."

"I had a prom last night so we couldn't make it up north," said Steve, who attends high school in Sterling Heights. "This is a pretty stream, it's close to home and I always catch fish here. We've had real good luck here in the past. Right now the water is a little cold so they're hitting on worms and grubs real well. Later in the year, fish will work better. Right now they're not rising yet."

Enjoying the opportunity

Lake Orion's Bill Kruger and his children, five-year-old Ashlyn and four-year-old Benjamin, fished Paint Creek from daylight until well into the afternoon. "I hit the same holes every year and have pretty good luck,"

said Kruger, who landed a pair of 10-inchers right of the bat. "The water is kind of low right now so any deep hole you find you'll find fish."

Kruger fished Paint Creek throughout the year and appreciates the opportunity. He wishes others appreciated it as much. "This is absolutely incredible," said Kruger of the opportunity to catch trout within minutes of his home. "It's like a dream come true. I just wish other people would take care of the area better and take their trash out with them."

The Department of Natural Resources stocks four area streams with brown trout each spring to create a modest trout fishery in the southeastern part of the state. Paint Creek receives approximately 5,600 six- to eight-inch browns, the Huron River at the Proud Lake Recreation Area receives 3,000-5,000 12- to 16-inch browns and rainbows, roughly 4,000 six- to

eight-inch brown trout are stocked in Kearsley Creek near Ortonville, and the Johnson Draw in Washtenaw and western Wayne County receives 4,000 to 5,000 six- to eight-inch browns.

At Proud Lake, a two-mile section of the Huron is fenced off and a catch-and-release, flies-only season runs April 1 to opening day. After the opener, regular trout fishing rules apply with the exception of the daily bag limit, which is reduced to three per day to protect the resource from overharvest.

With limited access to trout fishing in the area all four of these stocked trout streams receives immense fishing pressure. Fighting the crowds is often tougher than fighting a fish.

Pike on Orchard Lake

One angler who didn't have to battle the crowds was Redford's Bob Mitchell, who was launch-

ing his boat on Orchard Lake at 6 a.m. There were four other boats on the lake by 8 a.m., but they each left by mid-morning and Mitchell had the lake to himself for the next few hours.

A local fishing guide, Mitchell was itching to get after some of the pike for which Orchard Lake is known and he wasn't disappointed. Just minutes after launching, Mitchell marked some big fish on his fish finder.

"I was really surprised," said Mitchell. "Most of the pike I found were in 25- to 38-feet of water. I pitched spinnerbaits and crank baits up in the weeds and along the edges, but most of the fish were pulled out from down deep."

Mitchell landed 18 pike over the course of the day ranging in size from 22 inches to 38.5 inches in length. He also hooked and released six bass including a huge female that measured better than 24 inches in length, and several nice sized crappie. "She

(bass) was a hog," said Mitchell. "I guesstimate she was well over seven pounds. I just wish I had a camera with me so I could have taken a picture."

Mitchell was also surprised that the pike he kept were empty.

"It was really weird," said Mitchell. "They must have had a late spawn because the fish I kept had empty bellies. They were all spawned out, in deep water, and they weren't feeding. It was a weird opener. Usually they're up in the weeds chasing baitfish right now, but I didn't catch one fish shallower than 15 feet."

(Anglers and hunters are urged to report your success. Questions and comments are also encouraged. Send information to: Outdoors, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Fax information to (248) 644-1314, send e-mail to opwkr@oe.homedomain.net or call Bill Parker evenings at (248) 901-2573.)

OUTDOOR CALENDAR

ARCHERY

LEAGUES FORMING
Several archery leagues are forming at the Oakland County Sportsman Club in Clarkston. There will be a MAA target league on Monday mornings (beginning May 4), 3D leagues on Tuesday mornings and Tuesday nights (beginning May 5), and Wednesday nights (beginning May 6) and field & hunter leagues Thursday mornings and evenings (starting April 30). All leagues are 12 weeks long. Call (248) 623-0444 for more information.

JUNIOR OLYMPICS
The Oakland County Sportsman Club in Clarkston offers a Junior Olympic Archery Development Program beginning at 1 p.m. on Sundays. Call (248) 623-0444 for more information.

JUNIOR ARCHERS
A weekly program for junior archers begins at 9 a.m. Saturdays at Detroit Archers in West Bloomfield. Call (248) 681-9610 or (313) 835-2110 for more information.

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BANQUETS

DUCKS UNLIMITED
The Birmingham-Bloomfield-Troy Chapter of Ducks Unlimited will hold its 21st Annual Sportsman's Dinner on Wednesday, May 13, at the San Marino Club in Troy. The fun-filled evening includes door prizes, raffles, and silent auctions. The event begins with an open bar at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m., and a live auction at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$60 each and \$95 per couple. Call Paul Montgomery at (248) 608-2949 for tickets and more information.

CLASSES

FLY FISHING
The Michigan Fly Fishing Club will present Fly Fishing For the Beginner on Saturday-Sunday, May 23-24. Both day-long sessions run 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will be held at the Dryden Plains Nature Center. Cost is

\$80 per student. Call Rick Sak at (734) 464-3271 for more information and to register.

MORE HUNTER EDUCATION
Wayne County Sportsman's Club will hold several hunter education classes in the upcoming months at its clubhouse and grounds in Romulus. These classes will be taught by certified instructors. Students must be present for both days of their respective class. All equipment will be provided. Classes will be offered Aug. 29-30, Oct. 3-4, Oct. 17-18 and Nov. 7-8. Cost is \$10.50 and includes lunch both days. To pre-register call (313) 592-0285.

CLUBS

SOLAR
The School for Outdoor Leadership, Adventure and Recreation (SOLAR), a non-profit organization interested in promoting the appreciation of outdoor activities, meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the Colony Hall in Southfield.

Call (248) 988-6658 for more information.

METRO-WEST STEELHEADERS
Metro-West Steelheaders meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month in the cafeteria at Garden City High School. Call Dominic Liparoto at (248) 476-5027 for more information.

MICHIGAN FLY FISHING
The Michigan Fly Fishing Club meets at 7 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Livonia Clarenceville Junior High School. Call (810) 478-1494 for more information.

FOUR SEASONS
The Four Seasons Fishing Club meets at 7:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Senior Citizens' Center in the Livonia Civic Center. Call Jim Kudej at (313) 591-0843 for more information.

FISHING BUDDYS
Fishing Buddys Fishing Club meets monthly in Rochester Hills. The meetings are open to all anglers. Call (248) 656-0556 for more information.

CLINTON VALLEY BASS
Clinton Valley Bass Anglers club is seeking new members (boaters and non-boaters are welcome.)

The club meets monthly at Gander Mountain in Waterford. Call Mike Daly at (248) 666-8910 for more information.

MEETINGS

NRC
The monthly meeting of the state Natural Resource Commission will be Wednesday, Thursday, May 13-14 in Lansing. Persons who wish to address the commission or persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation should contact Teresa Golden at (517) 373-2352 a week in advance.

SEASON/DATES

SPEARS/BOWS
Spearing, hand netting and bow season for suckers, carp, gar and bowfin runs through May 31 on non-trout waters south of M-46.

PIKE
Pike season opened April 25 on inland lakes in the Lower Peninsula.

SMELT
Smelt netting season on non-trout streams runs through May

31 south of M-72 and May 1-31 north of M-72. Bow and spear fishing on non-trout inland waters is open for gar, carp and bowfin May 1-Aug. 15. Check the 1998 Michigan Fishing Guide for exceptions and closures.

TURKEY
The spring turkey season runs through May 31 by special permit in designated areas only.

TROUT
Trout season opened Saturday, April 25.

WALLEYE
Walleye and sauger season opened Saturday, April 25, on inland waters in the Lower Peninsula.

MUSKIE
Muskie season opened Saturday, April 25, on inland waters in the Lower Peninsula.

SHOOTING RANGE

ORTONVILLE RECREATION
Ortonville Recreation Area in Ortonville has rifle, pistol and shotgun shooting facilities. The Ortonville Recreation Area is located at 5779 Hadley Rd. Call (248) 693-6767 for more information.



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