



Angler's Notebook

by Jerry Bush



photo-Jerry Bush

Canoes and kayaks provide paddling anglers several advantages. Most are surprisingly stable and move through water efficiently. They are capable of maneuvering through shallower water than motor and sail boats, and anglers report there's an added thrill to battling fish while sitting level or barely above the water's surface. Paddle vessels provide access to fish in weed beds, where they would be off limits to most boating anglers.

It's time to fish for Pennsylvania's top predators—muskellunge, northern pike and pickerel. All will attack the same basic lures. Spoons and skirted spinners work best. Generally, lures of the largest sizes are used by anglers targeting muskellunge, and smaller, mid-size lures are used when fishing for pike and pickerel.

Muskies and northern pike inhabit shallow water with significant weed growth. They hide in the shadows while waiting to ambush baitfish. In the case of muskellunge, nearly any species of fish can be considered baitfish. Stories

abound of anglers reeling in game fish, only to have their prize attacked by a waiting musky.

Practice paddling skills for a short time and learn to move kayaks and canoes slowly and quietly. Specifically, learn to avoid banging paddles against the sides of the vessels. Outdoor enthusiasts who perfect the tactic of stealthy movement discover that paddling provides a great means of viewing and photographing wildlife.

A wire leader is a necessity when fishing for toothy critters, such as pike and muskies. The protective wire is placed between the fishing line and the lure, because the wide mouth of these fish often engulfs the entire lure, and most fishing lines are susceptible to abrasions from the needle-like teeth. It is a lucky angler who lands one of these fighters when the bait is merely attached to monofilament line.

Fishin' from the Kitchen

Panfish Skewers

by Wayne Phillips

Welcome the summer with grilled panfish skewers.

Ingredients for eight skewers:

- 1-1 ½ pounds panfish
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 16 cherry tomatoes
- 16 small mushrooms
- 1 large red onion, cut into 1-inch pieces
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Canola oil for grilling

Procedure

Cut boneless, skinless panfish fillets into 1-inch square pieces. Place in a ziplock plastic bag with extra virgin olive oil, garlic and thyme. Marinate in fridge for thirty minutes. Soak wooden skewers in water. Thread tomatoes, onions, fish pieces and mushrooms onto skewers. Brush fish and vegetables with canola oil and season with salt and black pepper. Grill until fish is cooked through.



photo-Wayne Phillips

Serve

A selection of salads including green, potato and coleslaw. Grilled ciabatta bread rubbed with garlic and drizzled with extra virgin olive oil is also very good with fish skewers.

Hints

Keep all skewer ingredients about the same size. Do not pack ingredients too close together on the skewer or the heat cannot penetrate.

Select your family's favorite vegetables for fish skewers. Besides cherry tomatoes, red onions and mushrooms, try other vegetables like cubes of zucchini, par boiled potatoes or blanched squash. Cubes of fruits like pineapple, mango or peach are also good on fish skewers.