Fifty years ago Lindbergh made his solo flight across the Atlantic and those of us who were boys at the time remember the thrill we felt over his accomplishment... how, for several years afterward, we wore "Lindy" leather helmets (with goggles on the forehead!) to school and wished for the same opportunity for glory and accomplishment.

Less than two years later our families were knocked to their knees by the Great Depression. Only the necessities of life took on any real value and everybody in the family earned his own way. If you wanted something, you earned the money to pay for it; if you didn't earn it, you went without.

A generation later, despite having what are now called "recessions," Americans have, in many ways and for one reason or another, turned around 180 degrees, determining that their children will never have to suffer the deprivations they endured. This is a tragic turnaround, in a number of ways. One-third of our state budget is dedicated to welfare and other giveaways. And, significant among the giveaways — it seems that every time someone thinks of giving something free, they think of fishing!

When the Fish Commission asked the General Assembly in early March for an increase in its license fee, the enlightened members of that body required that the bill include a juvenile license, one just as we had asked for in 1973. It is amazing how much negative reaction can be generated by this small request. The Game and Fisheries Committee of the House of Representatives amended the bill, requesting $1.50 for those youths over 14 years of age for sort of a "tempering period" of two years before they became full-fledged stockholders. From what we hear now, this is engendering more flak than it did four years ago! Speaking in all frankness, $1.50 will hardly pay the cost of administering such a license, but we still believe it's worth it!

There is a lot of difference between the "little kid" pictured by the defenders of our youths and the 14-year-old that anybody could probably trust with a power mower, and with an earning ability and opportunity that should dispel any doubts. It is much easier to discern a 14-year-old in a crowd of 12-year-olds and under. $1.50 for a year of fishing — when three of our hatchery trout exceed the cost of the license — isn't going to put anybody out of fishing. Although the income from such a license bill would be almost negligible to the Commission, it would provide a broader base for federal Dingell/Johnson monies.

We absolutely cannot understand the logic behind the arguments of those who call us "child haters" as they resist any attempt whatever to license juvenile fishermen. Anybody 12 years and over who wants to hunt must pay $5.25 and, very frankly, I am not much impressed by the explanations used to distinguish hunting from fishing when it comes to licensing age!

Twenty years ago, perhaps, $1.50 might have provided a youngster with a few rides at an amusement park. Certainly not ten years ago. Today, one of the super amusement parks not too far from Pennsylvania's capitol offers a 10-year-old (or older) a full day of rides for $8.00; kiddies between the ages of 5 and 9 can enjoy the same full day of rides for a paltry $7.00; under 5, the tots go free. Bless their hearts!

On the other side of the Susquehanna we checked the "registration" fees for some of the ball sports. It seems to matter little whether the ball is perfectly round or spherical, but registrations for unsponsored little leaguers run anywhere from $12.00 to $15.00 per year. Of course the kids get to use a uniform, bats, balls, etc. (they buy their own gloves — about the price of a fair quality fishing rod, reel and line!). And few there are who voice disapproval over the payment of a fee.

Anything one gets for nothing is respected in just about that degree!

I am certain that these words will bring down about my head a deluge of letters protesting my apparent "anti-youth" attitude. I am likewise convinced that the silent majority of anglers who, once in a while, say they favor licensing those under 16 will not come to our defense. And, I am almost convinced that we will never have a juvenile license for any cost, or for any reason, unless those who believe as we do speak up — to their legislators.

If that's the way it has to be — so be it! But I want our readers to know what I believe and where I stand — that much you can take to the bank!

Ralph W. Abele,
Executive Director
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Front Cover: Don't let that bull bluegill's innocent look deceive you—he'll be a holy terror on the end of a light rod!
A word of warning: only the cautious members of the bluegill clan reach such proportions. It will take skill to catch one.
Photo by George Harrison

Back Cover: Chester County's Struble Lake has amazed just about everyone who fished it in the first few years of its existence. Catches like that trio of largemouth bass are common.
Photo by George E. Dolnack, Jr.

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ANGLER'S NOTEBOOK .......................... 32
LEAKY BOOTS

“WAY TO GO!”

Charlie Zaimes’ article on bugging for bass brings to mind something that happened to me a few years back.

I was fishing a small Pennsylvania lake in the early evening using deer-hair bugs and getting strike after strike but not hooking a single fish. Since I rarely miss a strike on a bug, I was getting more and more exasperated, in fact, the air was getting a little blue.

Finally, I stripped the bug and took a close look at it. To my intense disgust, I found that the hook had rusted through and broken off just where the shank entered the deer hair. I had been fishing with a hookless lure! Now that’s true sportsmanship!

The moral of the tale is — if you are going fishing with last year’s bugs, test the hooks first!

CLIFTON W. RUSSELL
Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

HE’S PUTTIN’ US ON!

I would like to know if you have a recipe for strawberry doughball. If you do, please send me a copy.

ROBERT ECKENROD
R.D. 1, Box 84-A
Tarentum, Pa. 15084

RIVER RAINBOW

Here is another fish story for your magazine. On the opening day of bass season last year, my father, my cousin Louis, and I went shore fishing on the Susquehanna River. While my father and cousin were catching big rock and smallmouth bass, all I was catching were small ones. So, hoping to hook onto some nice fish, Louis and I returned late in the evening. We decided to fish under the Falls Bridge.

By 10:00 o’clock we weren’t getting anything but too-small rock bass. Blaming our lack of fish on the fly hatch that was taking place then, we were almost ready to leave.

While slowly reeling in my worm, I hooked onto a good fighting fish. I tossed the fish onto the steep bank and grabbed it, fearing that it would get away. I thought that it was a smallmouth and tried to pick it up by its lower lip. I felt a bunch of teeth in the fish’s mouth and on its tongue and realized that it wasn’t a bass. I looked closer and saw that it was a trout!

I yelled to my cousin that it was a trout, but he didn’t believe me. So he came over with a flashlight and saw that it was a rainbow trout. We measured it and it was 13 inches long. The fish had a gash about 2 inches long near its tail. I still can’t figure how the trout ever got there.

BIG FELLER!

I am sending this picture of a water dog that I have caught in Penns Creek while fishing for eels, using a piece of chub for bait. The size was 30 inches long, weight 5 pounds, girth was 13 inches. According to Waterways Patrolman Richard Fry, it is the biggest one he heard of being caught in Penns Creek near Millmont, Penna. Would like your comment please. Thank you.

LARRY LIBBY
Millmont

EMERGENCE TABLE

Dear Editor and Mr. Spang:

Try Art Flick’s “New Streamside Guide” (April 74 edition, Crown Publishers). In the rear of the book is a comparison table giving natural, artificial descriptions of the ten most prevalent hatches.

The table gives a description of the natural, the dry fly and nymph imitations, suggested hook sizes and the normal emergence times. This 175 page guide has proved its worth while fishing the trout streams in Cattaragus, Wyoming, and Allegheny County in New York State. This area is not much more than sixty miles from the Pennsylvania border and the terrain is much the same as you have.

Hope this has helped — tight lines, fellas!

I am also in agreement with Mr. Randon Baker of Hammondsport, N.Y. I’d like to be behind him in line for the optional, appreciation-type license. I really admire the work of your Fish Commission and wish New York State was in a better position to do the same.

Looking forward to this year’s vacation fishing Erie County in Pennsylvania.

ED MEDELERSKI, SR.
Buffalo, N.Y.

TRIBUTE

I must commend you on your salmon stocking program at Lake Erie. What you probably realize, of course, is that you are not only responsible for a quality salmon program but also for attracting “quality” fishermen to the lake. I had the good fortune to meet such a fisherman in late September while coho fishing at Erie.

My companion, Bill Magee, and I arrived early on a Saturday, with the intent of getting our 16-footer in the water before dawn. Although we were favored by a beautiful fall day, we were frowned upon by the spawning salmon. Even so, we decided to stay another day and to round out the afternoon fishing for northern in the lagoons. We were quite successful with this hefty predator and decided to return to the lagoons the next day and...
Well, I'll let you get back to work now. I know you fellows are busy. Keep up the good work, and I'll see that my two daughters learn the true meaning of being "Sportsmen," or is it "Sportsladies," or "Sportspersons"?

LANCE M. TITTLE
Souderton

P.S. You don't have to respond to this letter. Save your energy for the "Nonbelievers."

COMPLAINT —

I own a small sporting goods store in Forest County where the fishing is terrific, but I'd like to voice a complaint. I appreciate normal business, at normal hours, 7:00 a.m.—11:00 p.m. (even selling night crawlers to people who eat them), but when a guy knocks at the door at 5:00 a.m. to ask for a stocking list, it's preposterous!

Come on, fellas, show a little decency!

Yours for better fishing,

JOSEPH TORRE
Marienville

PFC GETS AROUND!

You guys will go to any length to call attention to the Fish Commission!

My wife and I spent two-plus months this past winter in the Argentine Andes, a thousand miles below Buenos Aires. In this day of time-space compression and affluence, that by itself is no big deal. But you'll have to admit it is one of the last places you'd expect to find a plastic litter bag printed in big red letters: "The Pennsylvania Fish Commission welcomes you to fishing fun . . .!"

Anyhow, that's what happened. The thing turned up in the yard outside the inn where we stayed. And my wife used it the rest of the trip to stash gear (there is no other way to protect it) and merely turned it over to me to show you what we're up against.

Anybody with a fish who wants the thing turned over to him can call 215-238-8009, and I'll forward it to you. If you multiply the number of people times the number of trips to a fishing spot "times 1" that would add up to quite a bit of trash.

I really can't understand why your Leaky Boots should get any negative letters. I mainly fish for bass, muskies and trout, but there is nothing wrong with carp, suckers or panfish. I wish you luck with your shad program.

This time I would not only like to renew my subscription, but also send a gift subscription to a dear friend of mine, Mr. John Flad. He is a true "Mountain Man" from Lycoming County. We stay at his place for deer and turkey hunting, and this year we will be there for trout fishing. Mr. Flad is long retired now, but he was practicing "Nature Conservation" before most people knew what it meant. I hope he enjoys your magazine as much as I do.

LITTERBAGGER —

I think that the Pennsylvania Fish Commission does a fabulous job and I let them know it every chance I get. I have adopted a policy of always taking at least one item of litter I have found in or near a stream home with me. I wish all other sportsmen would do the same whether they were fishing or hunting. If you multiplied the number of people times the number of trips to a fishing spot "times 1" that would add up to quite a bit of trash.

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SHOCKED!

I was really shocked the other day when I arrived at the Fish-For-Fun stretch of the Little Lehigh River. I noticed a few fishermen wading in the stream. I then approached the hatchery office and asked what the story was. They told me that wading was now permitted on the one-half mile Fish-For-Fun stretch. I've been fishing this beautiful and productive stretch for about eight years and I believe this new rule which allows wading really stinks. There is no better way to destroy the aquatic hatches and good fishing that is still left on this fine piece of water. Can you please explain to me what the reason for this is? Thank you.

JOHN J. COYLE
Philadelphia

In a stream the size of the Little Lehigh River, wading is not harmful to the invertebrate life or the fish life. Wading adds another aspect or dimension to the fishing. The only drawback to wading is the thoughtless fisherman who wades into the area where others are fishing, resulting in "putting down" the trout. Fishermen are going to have to be considerate of others fishing the same water.

The Pennsylvania Fish Commission has done some research into the effects of wading. Burns Run in Centre and Clinton Counties was literally trampled, yet no significant effect was found on the invertebrates or the fish life.

Many conventional angling areas, such as Monocacy Creek and Bushkill Creek, have excellent trout populations and invertebrate life. Members of the Little Lehigh Trout Unlimited Chapter have stated that they find the quality of fishing on the Little Lehigh River just as good outside the Fish-For-Fun area where wading of course is permitted.

Craig W. Billingsley
Area Fisheries Manager

NO TROPHY —

I had an interesting experience this past summer. My grandfather, Alex Fustos, and I were fishing in a beaver dam just outside Smethport, Pa., in McKean County. The dam is loaded with largemouth bass and we were using large chubs as bait. The bass were hitting off the bottom so I cast a chub out with no bobber and began retrieving it in short, sharp jerks. I had already landed two small bass when at last I thought I had hung onto a good-sized fish. My rod was bent double and I had a smile a mile wide. My line started to angle upwards and I knew the fish was going to jump. Staring excitedly at the calm surface I awaited the magnificent leap and was shocked to see a straight wood duck with my minnow in its beak explode from beneath the surface! I stared in amazement as my line streaked skyward... finally the buzzing of my drag brought me around and I managed to bring the duck in and release it unharmed.

I was wondering if this would be a legal...
WHAT'S IN A (SCIENTIFIC) NAME?

Spend a few minutes talking shop to a sophisticated fly fisherman and you can bet your best graphite that he'll drop some words you won't understand. Most likely an Ephemerella dorothea or a Baetis levitans will creep into the conversation and if you're not up on the Latin language (who is?) the communication soon gets out of hand.

Though the two species of mayflies mentioned above — the "Big Sulphur" and the "Little Olive" respectively — will be learned soon enough if you're an avid purist, few articles about specific animals are written without at least a casual mention of the creature's scientific name. By familiarizing yourself with the basics of these "foreign names" (as the kids called them during my school teaching days), one soon gets to understand a bit more about their use and importance.

Let's take a closer look at how some of Pennsylvania's fish, reptiles and amphibians got their scientific names.

First off, a scientific name is a universal one. The name Salmo gairdneri, for example, is the formal name of the Rainbow Trout wherever it exists. There will be no confusion when two anglers or scientists are speaking about gairdneri — whether they are referring to the common rainbow or the migratory steelhead. Biologists have long realized that common names are unreliable and confusing. The well-known "crappie basses" — both the black and the white — have a total of 55 different common names between them. To Pennsylvanians, the Crappie might either be a "calico" or "goggle-eye," while in the South it might be called "strawberry bass" or "papermouth." It has also been called "white perch." Unfortunately, there is another fish called the white perch which is actually not a Perch but a member of the "true" Bass family. Furthermore, our common Basses, the Largemouth and the Smallmouth, are not in the Bass clan but are part of the Sunfish family!

Confused?

Imagine how confused biologists and serious anglers would be considering that there are some 800 freshwater fish swimming in North America's waters. Then there are also the hundreds of other cold-blooded animals, namely the amphibians and reptiles, for which the Pennsylvania Fish Commission is responsible.

Wouldn't it be much more simple to assign each animal only one name? That's exactly what scientists did. But it is a mouthful for a youngster to announce his catch of a Lepomis macrochirus when it's easier to say "Bluegill." (Of course down South he'd be catching a "bream" or "copperhead" or "blue perch" or "dollardee" or ... you get the point!)

The scientific name is composed of two words: the Genus and the species.

The Genus name, the one that is always capitalized, is often shared by similar species. For example, Esox lucius, Esox masquinongy and Esox niger are the Northern Pike, Muskellunge and Chain Pickerel, respectively. Physically, they are closely related and may even interbreed as the pike and the musky have. The hybrid offspring, in this case the Tiger Musky, is sometimes sterile and does not create a new species but instead is called a "cross." It has no specific scientific name.

The species is the second part of the scientific name and is usually descriptive in one of the following ways. It may be taken from a person's name (muhlenbergii — Bog Turtle), a geographical location (arcticus — grayling), a habitat (terrestris — common Toad), a behavioral feature (constrictor — Black Racer), or a physical characteristic (glutinosis — Slimy Salamander).

The problem with getting to know all of the creatures one might come across while traveling Pennsylvania's lakes, rivers and streams is that it would take a solid background in the Latin language. Yet, there is still hope, for many words in our everyday language were derived from Latin and with a bit of imagination it's easy to figure out some of the more obvious scientific names.

Take, for example, the Stinkpot Turtle that often samples the offerings on the end of a worm fish-
The snapping turtle's name of "serpentina" is descriptive of its ability to strike like a snake although they feed on snakes as well.

ermans's hook. If you've ever handled the stinkpot you'll know where its name was acquired and will probably never forget it. This reptile's inelegant species name of odoratus comes from its habit of secreting a smelly liquid onto the hands of anyone handling it.

The Wood Turtle's species name of insculpta aptly describes the sculptured appearance of the back of its shell. The Painted Turtle is known scientifically as Chrysemys picta — the species name suggesting a picture or painting and describing the colorful markings on this turtle's shell, neck and legs.

Staying with the turtle clan we also find serpentina — the Snapping Turtle. What other animal's quick striking abilities more closely resembles that of a snake or serpent?

And what could be more apt than Crotalus horridus? To many people, even the thought of a Timber Rattler is indeed "horrible."

One cold-blooded creature always welcome in my garden is the land-loving Bufo terrestris or common Toad. His terrestrial habitat is abandoned for water only at mating time.

The handsome painted turtle — "Chrysemys picta."
Although tournament rules require the wearing of life preservers only while running, many bassers have acquired the habit of wearing theirs at all times while afloat. Here, Kurt Graybill and Joe Kline fish Kinzua, a first-class smallmouth bass reservoir.

BASS CLUBS . . . fishermen or fanatics?

by Howard A. Bach

However, there are thousands of members of the bass clubs who have neither the jumpsuits nor the bass boats, and they are just as avid about learning more about catching their favorite fish.

With our curiosity aroused, it might be well to learn something about bass clubs. B.A.S.S. was started in 1968, when Ray Scott, a Montgomery, Ala. insurance salesman, decided that thousands of avid bass fishermen would welcome an organization that would help them become more effective bass fishermen. Ray was told it couldn’t be done when he quit his job to devote full time to building the society. In fact, it did go slow for the first couple years. Then it took off rapidly as the story spread, until today, when B.A.S.S. counts a quarter million members on its rolls. Many of these are individual members. Others are members of local chapters, and there are now 23 of these chapters in Pennsylvania.

Each state has its own federation and conducts its own state activities.

In the early years of the bass clubs, centered mostly in the southern states, their philosophies did not appeal to the average angler, who sees fishing as a contemplative pastime, and was thus turned off by the circus-like tournaments and commercial promotions of the society. Many of us winced at the shotgun starts, with scores of overpowered bass boats roaring at full throttle to be first at their preferred fishing spot. Nearly all of us were displeased at the sight of huge stringers of bass, with the implication that a tournament would fish out a good reservoir. Over all was the commercial promotion of memberships, subscriptions, patches, clothing and tackle, giving the distinct impression that financial gain was the motive behind the society—not dedication to preservation and conservation of the bass.

The commercial promotion re-
Emmett Chiles, an Arkansas farmer, caught this 11-pound, 11-ounce largemouth in a southern tournament and it's still alive — those are the rules!

mains today, but the objectives of the bass clubs have greatly changed over the past five years. Noteworthy among these is the “DON'T KILL YOUR CATCH” program which has been most successful in reducing the number of bass killed by bass club members. Though rigidly enforced in the tournaments, the program has also been brought to the individual members with a widespread acceptance.

During a tournament, a member must have an aerated livewell, in which he keeps his catch until weigh-in time. After weigh-in, the bass are placed in large holding tanks, treated with antibiotics to insure their safe return to the lake water. From livewell to holding tank, the fish are transported in perforated, wet plastic bags, from tank to tank, until weighed. There are no exceptions to the rule, and stringering of bass is expressly forbidden.

The live release rule is rigidly policed. Recently when a Pennsylvania bass club tried to hold a local tournament without live release provisions, the state federation stepped in. This indiscretion, together with other breaches of good judgment, was sufficient to have the club thrown out of the federation. The Pennsylvania federation is a no-nonsense group, and very much concerned about maintaining their public image.

Another area of noteworthy progress is in the realm of boating safety. Although no participant has ever been killed in a tournament, there have been some close shaves, and a number of bass fishermen have been killed on private fishing trips. The bass clubs took the initiative in reducing the danger in fishing boats by drastically changing the rules applying to tournaments.

Every tournament participant must have a “kill switch” type device to cut off the engine if the driver should be thrown from his seat. Additionally, oversize engines are forbidden, and no participant may use more horsepower than the maximum stated on the capacity plate of the boat.

Another safety rule is the requirement that participants wear a life preserver at all times that they are running in the boat. This rule had special significance for William Overton, a Harrisburg attorney, who recently took part in a national bass tournament. A nonswimmer, he was wearing a life preserver as they pulled away from the starting boat, because tournament rules required it. Minutes later he was struggling for his life in the waters of Lake Marion, saved by the required life preserver. Their boat had been swamped and sank from under them in a matter of ten seconds or less.

Bill was fishing with Clifford Craft of Buford, Ga. in an early model bass boat. Flotation requirements in later bass boats have been improved and, hopefully, this could not happen with a recently built model. Overton and Craft were en route to their fishing spot when the motor suddenly stopped. They were engulfed by a following wave, which pulled the stern under, followed by the rest of the boat. There would have been no time to put on life preservers and both men credit the wearing requirement with having saved their lives. The hour they spent in the water before being rescued made them both believers in wearing their life preservers at all times when afloat.

A whole new industry, “bass boats,” has thrived because of the bass clubs. Here too, the safety consideration has had a strong effect on boat design, promoting the development of better flotation provisions and more seaworthy hull designs.

Perhaps the most important, and least known, of the bass club activities is their contribution to conservation. Not only do they contribute large sums of money to studies of the bass and bass propagation, but they also take an active part
The author’s bass boat is equipped with deep trollers for salmon and pike. Being a member of a bass club does not preclude the enjoyment of fishing for other fishes.

in legislation affecting our fishing waters. On the national level, they were instrumental in defeating a move by the Corps of Engineers to charge recreation use fees on its reservoirs. The fees would have applied to day use areas, including picnic tables, launching ramps, restrooms, playgrounds, and beaches. H.R. 6717, with Senate amendments, has effectively taken the Corps of Engineers out of the fee collecting business.

On the state level, the bass clubs have successfully campaigned against strip mine problems and pesticide misuse in Alabama, undesirable drainage of wetlands in Florida, dams that would have ended fish migration in Virginia, and a major polluter in Tennessee.

Financially, the bass clubs have been most generous in contributing funds for bass studies at a number of universities, as well as to the National Bass Symposium and the Bass Research Foundation. Contributions have approached the six figure mark over the past few years.

On the local scene, bass clubs and individual memberships have reached a new high. We are beginning to see bass tournaments on our larger reservoirs. They are being run in accordance with national tournament rules, including the live release and safety rules. There are very few bass removed from a reservoir as a result of these tournaments. During the practice days, a contestant returns the fish he catches, hoping to catch them again during the tournament. And, of course, the tournament catch is returned live to the reservoir.

Do bass club members really catch more fish? Yes and no. A study has shown that tournament fishermen do not have a much better average per hour of fishing than the average dedicated fisherman. However, they do produce better because they fish more intently, keeping their lures in the water and applying all the knowledge they have acquired.

Being a bass club member will definitely make one a better fisherman, especially if he is affiliated with a local club. The magazines published by the three largest bass clubs, Bassmaster, American Bass Fisherman, and The Lunker Hole, are outstanding publications, loaded with bass catching savvy. Bass chapter members freely exchange information and ideas on bass fishing.

We are becoming aware of the bass clubs, spawned in the South, but are they becoming aware of us? You bet! At a major tournament at Clark Hill Reservoir in South Carolina, five of the high eight scorers were Yankees, with the largest bass being taken by a Pennsylvania angler, Hoss Bostick of Bethlehem, Pa.
Keeping Minnows . . .

it's not as difficult as you think!

by Kenneth W. Hassler

It was a sultry day in mid-July and the finicky smallmouths were hitting only one thing: live minnows, fished with a single split shot on the line and drifted free in the current.

But, alas, someone had seined my favorite minnow holes, all three of them! It took me almost two sweaty hours to get a handful of bait. By the time I was done the smallmouths were no longer hitting. I resolved then and there never again to be without my favorite bait.

I solved the problem with a tropical fish tank. Now I simply go and collect minnows whenever I have an hour to spare, and I store all I need—up to the legal limit of fifty. Thus, I have a steady, year-round supply of one of the world's best natural baits. You can do the same. The process starts with collecting your bait by using one of the popular seines, or a minnow trap.

You will find that, next to your fish tank, a good aerator, or air pump, is one of the best investments you can make to keep minnows alive and healthy. They run on a flashlight battery and cost only a couple of dollars. You'll need the aerator when you take the minnows home. I seldom lose a fish. I put the control on the seat beside me in the car and run the tube down into the minnow bucket on the floor. I give it about a minute of air every twelve or fifteen minutes as I drive along.

Only a couple dozen minnows are necessary. With this system there is practically no loss of bait, therefore you need fewer minnows. I usually figure on about four minnows per fishing hour; or, a dozen minnows for three hours' fishing.

Once home, I simply transfer the minnows into a common tropical fish tank. There they stay fresh and healthy till I take a small net and dip out as many as needed.

An aquarium can assure the angler a year-round supply of minnows.

It is quite likely your minnows will last an indefinite period of time. Quite frankly, I've never found out. I'm constantly using minnows up and putting fresh ones back in the tank.

You can feed your minnows regular tropical fish food, the same as your tropical fish. You only have to feed them about every third day. Feed small amounts and make sure the food is consumed; the tank kept clean.

You will find your aerator, or air pump, a definite aid to get your minnows fresh and healthy from the tank to the lake or stream. If the fish are properly handled your losses will be almost zero.

As an added bonus, any leftover minnows at the end of the day can simply be brought home, put back in the tank and used all over again.

An aquarium can assure the angler a year-round supply of minnows.

Pay particular attention to Pennsylvania Fishing Regulations and Laws for special information pertaining to the taking and storage of baitfish.
Try hand-fishing for TURTLES
an exciting challenge!

by Samuel Petrill

I would like to share with you one of the most exciting sports found in this great state of ours. One that combines fun, danger, excitement and conservation — and can be enjoyed by all: young or old, rich or poor. You don’t need fancy equipment and you don’t have to travel very far from home to find it. Are you interested so far? This love of mine is hand-fishing for snapping turtles!

Snappers are predators; they eat bugs, fish, crayfish and any small animal they can catch. They are very adept at coming up under ducks, grabbing the duck’s feet with their powerful parrot-like beaks, then dragging them under water. With their hard shells and leathery skin, they have very little to fear from other animals, except of course, man. It is a shame how many turtles we find with holes in their shells from .22 rifles after some unthinking person has used them for target practice as they float down a stream or lake. Sure these animals have a place in our ecology.

Turtles hibernate during the winter by digging a hole in the mud at the bottom of the river or lake. In the spring, the female comes up on land to lay her eggs. She then covers them with 3” of dirt and returns to the water, her maternal duties over. The heat from the sun hatches the eggs. This is the most vulnerable time in a turtle’s life, as skunks and raccoons find quite a few nests and eat the eggs. As soon as the small turtles are hatched, they head for the water and must hide from other fish, animals, and even other turtles until they are big enough to take care of themselves.

Snappers are mainly nocturnal, coming out from their hiding places at dusk and returning in the morning. I normally hunt them from about 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. while they lay in holes under banks, roots and underbrush resting. Before or after these hours, the turtles are on the move and hard to find. Usually, they crawl into these holes head first and rest with their tails facing out. However, and this is what makes the sport so exciting, they don’t always do this. When you reach into a hole, you’re never quite sure whether you will grab a tail, or their powerful, razor-sharp mouth will grab you! They can inflict serious cuts or even amputate part of a finger. Any experienced turtle fisherman can attest to this fact, including myself. Likewise, you may find other interesting objects like snakes and muskrats, and I must say their sense of humor is poor! Imagine grabbing something cold and slimy, and not being sure what it is! This happened to me the first time I grabbed a frog underwater. (By the way, when they are in season, you can catch quite a few frogs by hand.)

I was introduced to the sport by two fellow workers, Alvin Clemens and Ernie Miscik. Between the three of us, we usually get over 200 turtles a season, ranging from five to thirty pounds each. Our average daily catch is anywhere from one to ten each. Al Clemens had the highest daily total of thirty-four in one day. We go whenever we get the chance, starting in late May and stopping around Labor Day. Any slow-moving stream with mud banks and a good supply of minnows and crayfish is a good place to look. We fish streams like the Juniata, French Creek, Allegheny River and Ten Mile Creek. I dislike creeks where the water is more than hip deep, for there are too many places you can’t reach into entirely, thereby missing most of the turtles. Also, avoid stormy days when the rain makes the water muddy, and danger from lightning is great.

For clothing, you should wear a long-sleeved shirt which protects your arms from cuts and scratches. I wear heavy jeans or other durable pants with legs in them, never shorts or swimming trunks, because frequently I need to lay flat on my belly to reach into some deep holes. I wear high-top tennis shoes which tie above the ankles to keep stones and dirt from getting in. The only equipment needed is
one or two strong burlap sacks to carry your quarry, and a lot of courage. If you've had the luck to find one or two friends to act as sackmen, it is a good idea for one of them to carry a fishing creel in addition to the sack. In it, in a plastic bag, he can carry cigarettes, snacks, or other items that should be kept dry. Don't forget your camera! I wish I had a picture of the "one-that-got-away", who pulled me off a log and into the water before he finally got away.

Now, to catch a turtle: Walk upstream so the mud you kick up doesn't obscure your vision of the bank, or alarm any turtles. Start looking for overhanging roots and holes going under the bank. One word of caution: never put your hand into a dry hole, or if you go under the bank and it is dry, get your hand out, or you may be bitten by a muskrat or even a coon. It has happened! When you find a good hole, the safest thing for a beginner to do, is to make a fist, tucking your thumb inside, thus protecting your fingers from the turtle. Slowly run your fist along the bottom of the hole until you feel a shell. If you do this slowly and lightly, you won't disturb the turtle if he is sleeping. Open your hand gently and feel around until you find the "points" located on the shell at the rear or tail end. Once you find the points, slide your hand on top of the shell and push down, immobilizing him, while you reach under with your other hand to grab his tail or one of his hind legs. If you have gone this far, you are in little danger of being bitten by him. With your free hand you can feel around the rest of the hole, as sometimes there is more than one turtle in a hole. All that is left now is to pull the turtle out and get him into the sack. Snappers are amazingly strong and will hold onto roots with their mouth and claws. It may take a good deal of effort to pull one loose once you find him.

One nice thing about hand-fishing, as opposed to using hooks, is you do not hurt your catch at all. You can release them or take them home for some fine eating. If you decide to take them home, the easiest way to clean a turtle is to cut off his head, then hang him neck down for a few hours to bleed. The next step is to scalpel the turtle. If you want to save the shell to make a nice trophy or conversation piece, cut away the shell and set it aside. If not, dunk the turtle shell and all, into a pot of boiling water for five seconds, then into cold water for five seconds. This loosens the skin and makes it peel off easily. Remove the shell, and the meat can be cut up and used by boiling, frying, baking or using it in turtle soup. After I was bitten by a big turtle, I took great delight in making soup of him — cooking him very slowly!

To finish the shell, scrape away as much flesh as you can, salt the inside, then let it dry in a warm, dry place for a few days. After it has dried, remove any remaining meat and clean both sides gently with soap and water. Apply two or three coats of clear shellac and you will have a very fine, well-deserved trophy.

My advice on the best way to learn hand-fishing is to find an experienced hand-fisherman, and offer to go along as the bag man. This way you can observe firsthand the techniques and thrills of the sport. Hand-fishing is a very absorbing sport, and excellent exercise, forcing you to leave all the care and pressure of life behind. I can't think of a more enjoyable way to spend a hot summer day. I think you'll feel the same. Good Luck!

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KREBFEST

by Frederic Doyle

Lying flat on my belly and looking down from the undercut grassy bank, I lowered the hook baited with a twist of red yarn above the bulging eyes of the bull frog. It stared unblinkingly. Dragonflies hovered like miniature iridescent helicopters above the lily pads. As the yarn dangled within an inch of the frog’s nose it struck. Its tongue snapped out and grabbed the bait. The slender willow pole with a short piece of linen line twisted of red yarn above the bulging bank, I lowered the hook baited with a twist of red yarn above the bulging eyes of the bull frog. It stared unblinkingly. Dragonflies hovered like miniature iridescent helicopters above the lily pads. As the yarn dangled within an inch of the frog’s nose it struck. Its tongue snapped out and grabbed the bait. The slender willow pole with a short piece of linen line

The demand for crayfish has spawned the propagation of crayfish as the supply of their saltwater cousins, lobsters and shrimp, continue to dwindle and prices rise. In some southern states, crayfish farming has already become an annual ten million dollar industry.

Looking like a lobster in miniature, the crayfish is considered only as fishbait by most folks; properly prepared, however, they are a delicacy.

Kipling’s sixty tribal lays, all of which were right, crayfish recipes also are all right; except, like old wines, some are better than others. Gleaned from old cookbooks; Soak crayfish in cold water for thirty minutes, wash carefully. Place in soup kettle with water, onions, carrots, parsley, celery, thyme. Bring to boil and cook thirty minutes. Again: Place crayfish in boiling water to which salt and caraway seeds have been added. Boil five minutes. Allow to cool in liquid. Drain, chill, and serve. Other recipes call for dill or commercial seafood spices. Steering a course midway among these recipes I have chosen my own. Wash crayfish in clean water. Drop in boiling salt water for either or ten minutes. Remove from kettle and place on platter of cracked ice. Serve with favorite seafood sauce.

While there is no closed season nor size limit on crayfish in Pennsylvania as some states now have, a Pennsylvania fishing license is required to take or have in your possession no more than fifty in any one day. Nor are crayfish available (except for fish bait by licensed bait dealers) in Pennsylvania market places, in contrast to some states where ten million pounds of these ten-legged crustaceans are harvested and sold annually, many of which are exported.

Crayfish recipes are legion. Like Dan-
Quietly, I poled the johnboat into the cove. An angler who passed me on his way out was glowering.

"Any luck?" I asked.

"Only bluegills," he muttered.

*Only bluegills?*

Admittedly, the bluegill is not a glamor fish. None of the major tackle companies produce a line of lures designed especially for the species alone, nor are their rods designed with "bluegill action." No special type of boat has been created with the bluegill in mind, nor are there "Bluegillmaster" clubs across the United States, with their own magazine and member benefits. Yet, of all the fish actively sought by anglers, the bluegill is one of the most prolific, one of the most satisfying, and probably the first fish on which most anglers cut their teeth — generally at a very early age.

Why, then, did the disgruntled angler mutter "only bluegills"? The reason was that the bass should have been biting; and, armed for fish of over five pounds, he had winched a few six-inch sunnies to the boat on heavy tackle and moved off in disgust. I could sympathize with him. I had been trying to wake up the bass for five hours, and failed as miserably as had he. But there was one difference between us. He was a bass fisherman — I am a fisherman, pure and simple (well, simple, anyway).

At his words, something inside of me started to quiver. I snipped the 3/8 oz. popper off my ultralight rig, put the other rods in the bottom of the boat, and tied on a float and number 10 hook which I proceeded to bait with half an earthworm. Before the bassin' man was out of sight, I had flipped the bait within six inches of shore, lighted my pipe, and prepared to play the waiting game.

I didn't have long to wait!
The bobber twitched . . . once . . . twice. Suddenly, the end dipped and the other end flashed into the air, and then fell. Slowly the bobber started to move across the surface toward a thicket of lily pads. I resisted the temptation to strike, and the bobber stopped at the edge of the bed. Again it twitched, and again it started to move off, this time toward deeper water. Again it stopped. Suddenly the white end of the bobber stuck straight up into the air and plummeted into the water. I raised the rod, and felt the throb of the fish on the other end of the line.

The bluegill fought a typical fight. In the middle of fast runs, it turned its body broadside to the boat, making the little rod fight the side of its body. When I applied pressure the sunfish generally ran, but twice it broke the line. At the edge of the bed. Again it stopped. Suddenly the throb of the fish on the other end of the line.

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In habitat such as this, bluegill action is almost guaranteed.
He who says, "ONLY bluegills," has never done battle with these sassy panfish; nor has he tasted them fried golden brown!

two-pound-test category, and a dependable reel of either the spinning or spincast variety. The lighter the rod the more effortless it will be to cast the small hooks and baits necessary for successful bluegill fishing. These tiny pieces of terminal tackle also require the use of extremely light line in order to cast any distance with any accuracy; and since the larger bluegills are just as wary as other species of gamefish, accurate and silent casting are prerequisites of taking the fish you want.

The only real stipulation in regard to the reel is that the drag be reliable and effective on such light line. You won't be needing tremendous capacity, so a small reel will turn the trick quite nicely if the drag is efficient. However, if you already have a good reel in the bass size range, with a smooth drag, simply obtain another spool for it, preferably with an arbor (a medium sized spool for one of the larger reels can eat up 500 to 1000 yards of 1 to 2 pound test mono quicker than you can say "Strike". Ninety percent of that line you will never see, and that can get pretty expensive.) Have the spool filled and ready, and when the big fish aren't hitting, simply switch spools. Bass fishing is expensive enough as it is without having to buy a separate reel for bluegills, and most of the bassing reels do have excellent drag systems — but check them against the light line before using them. There are many reels on the market that will perform flawlessly with line of six-pound-test and up, but which don't have the delicacy of touch to ease out threadline against the drag without snapping it.

Terminal tackle is simple — a folder of small hooks, a balsa or plastic panfish bobber, and some live bait. Hooks should be no larger than # 8, and I personally use # 10's most of the time. The larger hooks will lose too many bluegills, which are among the most accomplished bait stealers in fresh water.

The panfish bobber is not the common round bobber found in everything from tackle shops to grocery stores; rather, it is the elongated bobber made of plastic, balsa wood, or even porcupine quill, with two very thin "arms" and a slight swelling amidships. These come in all sizes, but the ones which should be used are those which are just buoyant enough to hold the hook and bait off the bottom while lying flat on the surface of the water. Not much casting weight is necessary with the light line, and you want the fish to feel the least resistance possible. Due to the light and streamlined nature of these bobbers, they cut through the water when the fish is running with the bait and virtually unnoticed, and even when the fish pulls them completely under the surface, it is done with an almost effortless tug. The less resistance the fish feels, the more likely he is to hang onto the bait long enough to get the hook in his mouth, since most bluegills, especially the large smart bulls, will gently lip the dangling part of the bait and hold it for up to a minute while they run before taking it fully into their mouths. Remember, they are in no hurry, and if you are you'll just keep pulling the hook and part of the bait away from the fish.

Bait can be almost anything that will cover the barb and shank of the hook without too much hanging free. Give a bluegill a chance to latch onto a piece of bait that isn't hiding steel and the bait will be long gone. While small pieces of earthworm are perhaps the most popular bait, small crickets and grasshoppers are generally much more effective when available. Perhaps this is because the fish are used to seeing these insects on the water, so are less wary; possibly because insects can escape from the fish if they take too long in striking, causing the bluegills to hit harder and with greater abandon.

In the spring, when the big bluegills are spawning in eight to ten feet of water (the big ones don't come as close to shore as do the 8"- to 10"-bluegills), even small (1" to 1 ½") minnows are highly effective, although not commonly regarded as bluegill bait. An added incentive to using minnows in the spring is that, although you won't catch as many bluegills as with other types of bait, the crappies, if present, will more than take up the slack, as will occasional bass and when a 3-pound bass tied into a minnow on a limber rod fitted with two-pound line, you'll find out how good an angler you really are!

Although live bait is the best attraction for bluegills, they can readily be taken with the fly rod, especially in the spring when they are in the shallows on their beds. One master of the long rod, Carl Bracken, took over thirty bluegills from a single hole on the flyrod in the space of a few hours, and even after he had released all the smaller ones he still had enough for a marvelous shore dinner. Carl's preference runs to a # 8 or # 10 yellow fly-rod popper with white rubber legs, although he admits that at times, even though the legs attract the fish by their squirming in the surface tension, the legs are what the bluegills grab.
rather than the body, resulting in a few missed fish until you realize what they are doing, and start waiting for a solid hit.

And there's that magic word again: wait. Successful bluegill fishing is a waiting game, and the people who say that all the fish must have been small since they wouldn't take the hook — just the bait — haven't been playing it right.

Live bait or fly, the bluegill, especially once it gets some age and size on it, is going to toy with whatever you offer him. He's smart, and he's a bait stealer; but, if he thinks the bait is free for the taking he'll eventually take it all the way.

It's easy to tell with a fly rod, because the popper disappears. But all too many bait anglers strike the instant the bobber dips. Don't! Bluegills will hit the bait lightly at first, not hard enough to engulf the hook, but hard enough to dip the sensitive panfish bobbers. When they feel no resistance, they'll carry the bait off, dragging the bobber through the water. Then they'll stop and take the bait in. At this point the bobber will either plunge beneath the surface or start off again. Then and only then is the time to strike. For bass anglers who get tired of a slump, just pretend you're fishing for largemouths with a plastic worm, and the first dip of the bobber is the tap of the bass . . . it's the same thing.

That recipe for Bluegill Tempura that I promised earlier? Well, here it is. And once you try bluegills this way, I doubt you'll ever go back to pan frying them.

You will need about twenty boneless bluegill fillets, more or less, depending upon the size of the fish and the number of people. These are dipped into a batter consisting of two eggs, 1 cup of flour, salt to taste, and enough water to make the batter smooth. Then they are immediately dropped into a deep fat fryer, such as used for making french fries, and cooked for between 1½ and 3 minutes. During this time they will puff up tremendously and change from batter color to light golden brown, at which point they are ready to be served, piping hot, with rice and broccoli or asparagus as an accompaniment.

So stop fretting when the bass have lockjaw; even the national tournament winners with their sophisticated electronic gadgetry still hit days when they can't find a fish. When that happens, find a quiet cove away from the speedboaters, switch your tackle, lean back against the gunwale, relax and play the waiting game. But enjoy relaxing while you can. The chances are, you won't be waiting long.

Using a fly rod and associated tackle is excellent practice for both trout and bass fishing.
Invest a little time . . .

Keep a Fishing Log

for handsome dividends!

by John Crowe

illustration:
John D. Voytko

A
fter more than 40 years of fishing Pennsylvania waters from Lake Erie and the major rivers to small lakes, creeks and trout streams, my only regret in retrospect is that I did not keep a better record of it all: Fishing for bass, and muskies, and walleyes; perch, bluegills, and suckers; and trout, my favorite in the rich variety of species available to Pennsylvania anglers.

The most obvious and usual reason for keeping a fishing log is to improve future opportunity. If stream X has a pronounced hatch of mayfly Y in the first week of June this year, chances are that it will repeat next year with the same fly at very much the same time. You can prepare for the event. This is elementary.

I'd like to recommend not only such a log but also one going beyond a mere when-what-where record; one to include occasional extracurricular items, things which make fishing what it is: "No life so happy," as Izaak Walton put it.

I'd like to recommend not only such a log but also one going beyond a mere when-what-where record: one to include occasional extracurricular items, things which make fishing what it is: "No life so happy," as Izaak Walton put it.

When you return from a day of fishing, it may seem superfluous to make any record, or any beyond the when-what-where. The incidents of the day are fresh in mind: the big musky that took your bass fly; the gray squirrel that fell out of a streamside tree and landed on your shoulder; the kingfisher that flashed by so close you could feel the air from his wingbeat! How can you forget such experiences? Why bother to record them? Simply because we do forget them; gradually, imperceptibly they fade into a pleasant cloud of recollections of all our yesterdays. The individual occurrences lose their identity unless we have specific reminders of them.

It's something like a photograph. Who doesn't like to look at a photo of the big bass he caught long ago? However, a photo alone is not enough; the details of weight and length, lure, place, weather, and season add much, and that's where a fishing log comes in. As a record, it is more comprehensive than a photograph. Besides, it is more evocative, or it can be, by inclusion of details that cannot be photographed.

I don't mean a write-up, an article about our fishing experience of the day. Writing such a diary would be time consuming, even burdensome, although it might be of great eventual interest. Instead, I mean a log to contain in very brief form a few details of special interest, yet something that could be recorded in a minute or two.

For example, my records of trout fishing are made on ordinary sheets of 8 1/2 x 11 ruled paper, marked into seven vertical columns, as follows: 1. date; 2. stream; 3. number of trout killed; 4. fly; 5. water temperature; 6. water condition; and 7. remarks. Column 7 "remarks," occupies about half the space. Even though it may often be left blank if nothing remarkable occurs on a certain date, it is likely to provide, years later, an item of memorable interest such as the catching of an outsize fish or something else to enjoy in retrospect. Citing two examples from my trout log of 1946:

First this entry:

There are seven items which must have taken less than a minute to record. The one of significance is the seventh and last, under "remarks" in the log. "Snakes; one came against leg."

A hundred times, at least, since that day on the Driftwood Branch of the Sinnemahoning have I thought about that snake. Of all the snakes I have encountered while trout fishing, it was the only one to act as it did. Nor have I heard of a similar experience by other fishermen.

Standing thigh deep in the middle of the stream, I was minding my own business of casting a fly when I saw a snake swimming toward me. In the wilds of Cameron County there are a few copperheads and rattlesnakes. When fishing there I always felt that I should be somewhat cautious. The snakes, too, were usually cautious, disappearing into the water or sliding off to cover when I approached. But this one wasn't cautious; it swam right to me, anchoring itself in a half curl against my boot (waders? I don't remember). Seeing that it was a harmless watersnake (Natrix), I stood still, waiting to see what it would do.

Whether it took me for a convenient snag in the stream, or what, I'll never know, but it promptly began to entwine itself in my landing net,
dangling from a loop over my shoulder. There it rested, a well-colored, apparently healthy water-snake about three feet long!

After two or three minutes I moved. I didn’t mind the snake particularly, but I wasn’t sure that I wanted it as a hitchhiker in my landing net. But the snake didn’t leave; apparently it was comfortable, with no intention of launching itself back into the high water of the Sinnemahoning.

Finally I had to shake it loose. As it swam away, I imagined it gave me a look to say “What makes you so hard to get along with? After all, I belong here; you don’t.”

Second, this entry:
“6/4. Spring Creek. 10. Adams dry. 56°-59°. Fish very active. Saw a wildcat — 20 feet.”

The Spring Creek referred to is a tributary of the Brokenstraw in Warren County. Although the water was high, the fishing was good as I vaguely remember it. Perhaps I should apologize for killing 10 fish; perhaps that was the limit take at the time.

But what is not vague in my recollection relates to the second part of the item under “Remarks.”

“Saw a wildcat — 20 feet.”

Again I was wading, concentrating on casting an Adams dry, when something prompted me to look up to the bank beside me. I do not recall seeing a movement, but there, in bright sunlight, crouched on the end of a big log, watching me was a wildcat!

It was so close I could see the slit-like pupils of his yellow eyes; the whiskers; the velvety texture of the hair on his face. I felt as if I could reach out with my rod and touch him. For what must have been nearly a minute we looked at each other. Then something distracted my gaze for a moment. When I looked back, the wildcat was gone, noiseless as a shadow.

Was that a thrill!
It was then, and it has been ever since, recurring whenever I look at that part of my fishing log of many years ago.

Your log will bring back many thrills. When you look at it long after you’ll remember the big fish you caught — or the big one that got away. I’ll guarantee that aside from the slight nuisance of making entries, you’ll never regret investing the time to do so.

Try it. As the advertisers these days say, “You’ll be glad you did.”
The Fish Commission’s recent announcement concerning proposed registration of non-powered boats has created much discussion, both pro and con. The following correspondence might shed a little light on the subject:

Pennsylvania Fish Commission

Dear Sir:

“For the 2nd time I have read articles that the Fish Commission is seeking legislation to license non-powered craft. Would you be kind enough to take a few minutes to listen to some remarks on a side of this scheme that many of us believe is unfair.

“Let me say at the outset that, since boyhood, I have loved the outdoors and fishing, and have been a subscriber to the Pennsylvania Angler and Game News for longer than I can remember. I have always thought the Pennsylvania Fish Commission was the best in the country, but I feel you are now slipping. I can’t believe that you do not know of the many, many, people who have property along Pennsylvania streams who have a small rowboat, besides other larger craft or canoes. But, about the rowboats, except in Spring, (when the water is so high and swift you dare not go on it), there are pools, then riffles, — pools and more riffles, which are too shallow to row over. So we put our rowboat into the pool and are content rowing out a few feet, anchor and sit? My access and launching area is a step in the mud bank and I have no need for the 136 patrol craft. And as for cost of safety information you mention, I bought enough life preservers to comply with your demands. The patrol craft are not needed to board our rowboats for safety inspection.

“You say you will eliminate users fees. Why? Because you will be getting the money from people like us to make up the loss plus many times over the eliminated fees and because you figure there are thousands of rowboats on creeks throughout the state so to drop the user fees and nab the rowboats you will be far ahead and, because all you have to do after getting us nailed is to mail the application out once a year and we either buy it or break our boat up for firewood.

“I live (my cabin) close to many lakes: Wilhelm, Tamarack, Sugar, Shenango, Pymatuning, Arthur, and the Allegheny River. I have fished them all and would have paid any launching mooring or any other fee if asked, because that is the way it should be. I have always said a fishing license is a bargain at any price and I mean it; also, I never turn anyone down to use my property for access to the creek. I do not need your explaining how much it costs to run the Fish Commission. Anything that costs money has to be paid for, so let’s put the cost on the persons who use the facilities whether it’s a rowboat or a yacht. It must have a registration sticker, but don’t go in the back door and jab those who do very little or nothing to increase your costs or time.

“My cabin is on Lower French Creek where there are hundreds of cabins, just like dozens of other creeks in Pennsylvania. Can you honestly say that we are running your costs up, and demanding more services? Not from patrol craft, because the creek is too shallow. Most property is private and, by Pennsylvania Fish Commission rules, we do not expect stocking. It is possible that an automobile patrol car may pass once in a while. Licensing a rowboat on a creek with no motor of any kind! It may not be long before we have to have a sticker on our hip boots and rod and reels. Don’t laugh. You’re getting pretty close to it now. If this despicable all-boat registration fee is forced on us rowboaters, I shall, after 40 odd years of subscribing to the Pennsylvania Angler and Game News cancel both immediately and use the money to pay you because I’ll be damned if I’ll give up my few hours once in a while on my pool in the creek to sit and listen.

“Now I have had my say but don’t think it will have much bearing on the outcome of your new scheme. I’ll pay my way anytime, but when I see I’m going to be shafted I’ll holler. The new phrase for this deal is ‘Let’s zap ‘em.

“I don’t expect to see this letter in print because it will just stir up more high blood pressure and who needs that, with all the other rip-offs coming out of Harrisburg. License rowboats on creeks! Shame on you all.”

(signed)

Russell M. Simpson
Canonsburg

Dear Mr. Simpson:

“This proposal has been given open study and consideration by all the staff, the Boating Advisory Board, and the Pennsylvania Fish Commission for about two years because of the increased activity on all of our lakes and streams by people who prefer to do their boating in canoes, rowboats, rafts and sailboats. These boaters have increased the traffic at our access areas as well as the need for safety enforcement patrols on all of our waters. With this growth of boating in nonpowered craft, has grown the realization that the Commission must do something to meet its responsibility to all of the boating public in the Commonwealth in an attempt to lessen the needless loss of life being experienced in this activity. We were pleased last year that our boating fatalities have been reduced to 21 but were disturbed by the fact
that 13 of those were from non-powered craft. The previous year saw 21 of our 39 fatalities resulting from nonpowered craft. Already this year we have lost five lives and all of them from canoes—the most tragic being the four youths drowned on the Perkiomen Creek last month in one accident. This combination of circumstances convinced the Commission that some positive action was necessary—and soon.

"You may know, but many people do not, that the boating program in Pennsylvania is funded by revenue generated almost exclusively by the operation of powerboats. The fees collected for registration and the refund from PennDOT for taxes paid on marine fuel by the boaters together constitutes about 95% of all monies available for our boating program. This Boat Fund is administered by the Fish Commission separately from the Fish Fund with an attempt to see that each Fund supports the boating and fishing activities in an amount as closely proportionate to the benefits derived by each group of users. The general taxpayer is not assessed in any way—quite different in this respect from a number of other states, New York for instance, where the funding is from the general revenue of the state. So we have a situation in which the powerboats have been paying the cost of a program enjoyed increasingly by the nonpowered boaters and in which the latter group is causing a disproportionate share of the problems and needs for new programs. The solution seems rather obvious: those who have not been contributing their share to the program should be allowed to do so.

"I find no argument with your reasoning; the problem is in its implementation. We gave very serious consideration and much discussion on whether or not we could somehow make the new registration requirements affect only those who used state-improved facilities. We did consider exempting those who did not put in or take out at a state-owned facility but had to dismiss this as being impractical from an enforcement standpoint. Further, it would not allow us to reach many of the boating public most in need of some kind of safety instruction nor would it allow those who benefit from our marking of hazards and safety patrol work an opportunity to contribute a share of these costs. In what some might consider to be the "ideal world" each person would pay for only benefits he, himself, realizes. But, as you know, this is not the way a democracy must operate. It is the responsibility of the state to do what it perceives to be in the best interest of public safety all those necessary things which individuals cannot do alone for themselves.

"The most recent incident we had on French Creek involved a near tragedy at the dam near Saegertown where we have now made arrangements to install a warning sign. This particular part of French Creek is undoubtedly above where your cabin is, but it is an example of a new type of problem we encounter with the growing popularity of nonpowered craft. It is the elimination of user fees. It seems to me that (the way) to have this new legislation accepted with the least objection by the mass is to implement it with the current funds status quo, because immediately upon reading about the eliminations it is normal to react with, 'Why eliminate if more money is needed.' If the user fees were needed when they were installed, they certainly are needed now; and, if the Commission reply is that the fees would be a double burden to the user, then we are right back at the beginning, meaning that the person using the state-owned facilities should be willing to pay these reasonable fees for this convenience.

"Then another thing, concerning safety. Anyone working for a large organization whether it be state, industry, or government knows that there is a point at which any individual must use the knowledge taught him and a point where instruction lessens, to be followed by enforcement to an extent. For an instructor to continue repeating where the individual ignores is a folly. In all aspects, despite instructions we will always have the ones who ignore. Witness: The Pennsylvania Game Commission, gun safety school, the Pennsylvania driver's test, all industries, all have them. So we cannot spend ourselves into a 100% safety program. In some cases, preventative measures after an accident can help, after asking how
could this accident have been prevented, but we don’t want to al­ways say, we told you so nor can we always say it was our fault.

“No doubt your book Pennsylvania Basic Boating has helped, but, as noted in the article which stated 50% of boating fatalities involved non-powered boats, there is another 50% that must have involved to prevent some of the accidents. Thus, I repeat, spending for safety is necessary to a point—after which the expenditures could be more wisely used elsewhere.

“I thank you, sir, for your reply and for reading this lengthy note.”

(signed)
Russell M. Simpson

Captain Leising replies:
To save space, I have not drafted a formal reply to Mr. Simpson’s second letter, but will touch briefly on three points raised.

On the question of retaining user fees, it is not a matter of adding or eliminating fees; more, the registration plan will ensure that funds derived from boaters will be placed in the Fish Commission’s Boat Fund and specifically earmarked for boating programs. Under the present DER permit system, revenues derived from boating permits are put in the Commonwealth General Fund and not specifically returned to State Parks for boating-related activities.

With references to the second point, it should be emphasized that the Fish Commission has a strong law enforcement program supplementing our education program. The Game Commission, PennDOT, etc. all have safety instruction programs tied to compulsory licensing of the “operator” — something we are trying to avoid.

On the third point, we know our safety program is reaching a very small part of the boaters. We have plans which should assure our reaching the great majority in a manner that will be more cost-effective. On that subject we’ll be writing more later.

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Take a good look! That bowfin Edward Peters, Jr., holds, above, was a 28-incher which weighed 9 pounds! Although not considered table fare, a bowfin is quite a battler. Edward caught his bowfin at Lake Erie on a sucker.

Bruce Haight, above, caught that 41-inch muskellunge, above, from Erie County’s Eaton Reservoir, using a sucker for bait.

In the shadows of that cap is Joseph Gates with a 32-inch walleye taken from the mighty Susquehanna River on a jig. The fish weighed 11 lbs. 14 oz.

A 15-inch crappie, like that one Daniel DePaolo holds, above, doesn’t come along too often. Dan caught it at the Pymatuning Spillway on a lively minnow last year.

A 22-1/4-inch largemouth bass is a fine catch anytime and Fred Lenz, below, caught his in the Conowingo Reservoir on a spinner. Weight: 7-1/2 lbs.
More
Leaky Boots...
(continued from page 3.)

method of taking ducks in season or could
it possibly be the start of a new sport... 
bird fishing?

TIM STAFFORD
Sharpsville

"This could be the start of some­thing..." goes the familiar tune. But in this
case it better not be! No way, Tim, no
way would it be legal—nor sport! Ed.

FOR THE RECORD:
I know from time to time you like to get
interesting notes from the sportsmen so I
thought I'd send you a little history about
one of my past fishing seasons. I made up
my mind to keep record of my catches, so
here it is:

Total Hours Fished — 142
Catches:
Walleye........................................... 20
Smallmouth Bass ............................ 78
Largemouth Bass ......................... 2
Bullhead ......................................... 32
Channel Catfish .............................. 5
Perch ........................................... 9
Rainbow Trout ............................... 1
Brook Trout ................................... 2
Carp ........................................... 2
Crappie ...................................... 5
Muskies ...................................... 1
Rock Bass .................................... 56
Fallfish, Suckers, Chubs, etc .. 31
Mud Puppy ................................... 1
Sunfish — Bluegills ...................... 47
Sock (size 10) .............................. 1

These figures include all fish I caught
including those out-of-season, too small,
inedible, all of which were released.
This was the most I've ever fished in my
life and was a real "great" year for me.
Two firsts for me were: a prize-winning
walleye and my first musky ever.
With the great facilities available in our
state, a person could never say he couldn't
get his money's worth out of his license
fee. Your Commission is a boon to con-
servation. The work you do is fantastic.

A very pleased sportsman
RICHARD C. ECKMAN, JR.
Johnstown

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS —

There are two questions that I will
address to the Angler.

#1 — Is there a specific reason for always
opening trout season in the middle of
April and not the first of the month?

#2 — Would the Fish Commission
agree that a year-round open trout season
would result in a more evenly spread out
pressure system on trout waters? It seems
to work on Fish-For-Fun projects. Possibly
a reduced limit or creel size (9"
maybe) would help. I honestly feel a better
quality fishing situation would result.
Thank you.

JOHN C. SKUTA
New Castle

Dear Mr. Skuta:
Your recent letter to the editor of the
Pennsylvania Angler has been referred to
me for reply. In response to your first ques-
tion, the mid-April opening for trout season
seems to have been largely determined by
tradition. The opening day in mid-April has
been a long-established part of angling in
Pennsylvania and the reasons for choosing
this time were probably many, including
weather. If we continue with our present
catchable trout format, I wouldn't want to
see the season open any earlier because we
would be forced to stock earlier, thus get-
ting into bad weather and very unfavorable
stream conditions for stocked trout. I
would single out stocking problems as one
very practical reason for not opening the
first day of April; other than that it seems
to be largely a matter of weather and trad-
tion.

The matter of a year-round trout season
has been kicked around for a long time.
Some states, including our neighbor, West
Virginia, have a year-round season and it
has been quite successful. Pennsylvania
chooses not to have a year-round season (al-
though we do have ample trout fishing op-
portunity as the season starts in mid-April
and runs until Labor Day, then the extended season runs to the end of October,
and the winter season on lakes and ponds
runs from December through late Feb-
ruary). The "First Day" in Pennsylvania is
largely a recreational tradition. I think
many people enjoy the anticipation and the
whole "First-Day" atmosphere.

There are many arguments for and
against an opening day. The biggest argu-
ment against it is the unsportsmanlike and
downright disgraceful behavior of an increas-
ing segment of the people who choose to "fish" on the first day. If any
single factor ever eliminates opening day
of trout season in Pennsylvania, it will be the
conduct of the "First-Day Angler." I sin-
cere hope that anglers' attitudes and self-
discipline will prevent this from happening
and that we can look forward to a return to
respect for the environment and respect for
private landowners' rights.

The answer to your specific question about a year-round season "evening-out"
pressure is: it probably would not. We
would do away with the initial surge on
opening day and perhaps (and that's a big
perhaps) eliminate some of the slabs who
are giving all fishermen a bad image, but I
doubt if it would have an overall effect on
patterns of angling. One of the distressing
things we see as fishery managers is that
fishing pressure for trout is influenced
by the big white truck. In other words,

Sincerely yours,
Delano R. Graff, Chief
Division of Fisheries
LOOKS HOPEFUL —

I recently watched a huge hawk-like bird soaring over the Susquehanna River. It took me a few minutes with the binoculars to determine that it was an immature Bald Eagle. Several times this beautiful bird climbed to incredible heights, and then “stopped,” by folding its wings in tight, then dived at high speed toward the river. Whatever he was after avoided him, because he would abort his dives and climb again. This young eagle is the third that I have seen in the same vicinity. I hope that it signals a trend, and soon many Pennsylvanians may be treated to the sight of our magnificent national symbol.

Ospreys, once in very short supply in my district, are making a strong comeback. Almost any patrol on the Susquehanna River will reveal one or more of these large fish hawks. These sightings speak well of the water quality of our greatest river system, as ospreys feed almost exclusively on fish.

When pesticides and heavy metals were at their highest concentrations, some years back, Osprey reproduction, and sightings were at an all-time low. Now, the common occurrence of these huge fishing birds indicates that the river is in better condition than at any time during my lifetime.

Harry H. Redline
Waterways Patrolman
S/Lancaster County

DECOY FOR TRUCK FOLLOWERS —

Recently, while heading to the South Fork of Pine Creek for an inseason stocking of trout, Anthony Discavage, recently retired waterways patrolman of Armstrong County, met the truck along with other Deputy Waterways Patrolmen in Kittanning. As the fish truck, with Patrolman Jim Smith, proceeded past the Post Office (the meeting place) toward the stream, some of the fishermen recognized Mr. Discavage, and began to follow him.

Little did they know that Tony was going fishing, that is, not until he stopped his vehicle, about five miles away from where the fish truck was, and began to put on his hip boots. The vehicle count following Tony was 22 cars, trucks and campers. This caused quite a traffic jam, as everyone was attempting to turn around on a muddy, narrow back road, and go in search of the fish truck!

Jim Smith
Waterways Patrolman
Armstrong County

BRIEFLY SPEAKING . . .

My wife, Gerry, who teaches second grade at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School in Zelienople, asked her class to write about what they thought was, “The Biggest Problem in the World.” The following are some of the subjects written by the children:

CLYDE EICHER — “The biggest problem in the world is energy. Energy is the biggest problem because we don’t have enough and we use too much. We can solve it by giving each house so much heat and if that house runs out it’s their fault.”

RODNEY RICHARD — “The biggest problem in the world is how many fishing worms there are in the world. I think we should dig up all the soil and find out.”

DARYL TIMMS — “The biggest problem in the world I think is pollution in the air. It can be stopped if we stop the big businesses that give off pollution. We could die if we don’t stop.”

JANET ENNIS — “I think the biggest problem in the world is pollution. I bet nobody in the world can stop that. Pollution comes from factories, trucks, forest fires, smoke and other things.”

KIMBERLY KEITON — “I think the problem is pollution. I think I can stop it by picking up papers in the streets.”

Eugene Scobel
Waterways Patrolman
Butler County

SLOW DOWN, RALPH!

On April 17, 1977, I picked up Deputy Ralph Turner for a day of patrolling the area streams. Mr. Turner, who is in his first year as a Deputy Waterways Patrolman, must learn to take things a little slower. By this I mean he shouldn’t jump into things so fast. I pulled up the bridge over Six Mile Creek and Deputy Turner was out of the car and when I got to the back of the car I saw the arms and legs of Deputy Turner going over the side of the bridge and into the stream. There were three very surprised fishermen and a Waterways Patrolman looking at a very wet deputy.

James R Carter
Waterways Patrolman
Erie County

ROUTINE —

How was my opening day? Nothing unusual, I fished three minutes at starting time after checking boats for two hours on F. E. Walter Dam. Then I checked a few licenses, helped a nine-year-old find his fishing rod that he had left on his excitement over his first trout ever, sold a magazine subscription and some “Pennsylvania Angler” arm patches. Made an arrest for over the limit, and littering, then showed a fellow from New Jersey and his buy a few little techniques for catching trout . . . then I ate lunch at noon.

Robert L. Steiner
Waterways Patrolman
S/Luzerne County

NO THINKER!

April 25, 1977, at 1:00 a.m., my phone woke me to a very excited fisherman who informed me that he had just caught a large fish and he would like to know how to preserve it until morning so that he could get a picture taken and enter the vital statistics for an award.

Needless to say, I could not share this man’s enthusiasm at 1:00 a.m. Although I did give him the needed piece of technical and complicated advice of placing the fish in the refrigerator until morning, I did have a few other choice hints that I did not pass on!

Claude M. Neifert
Waterways Patrolman
Luzerne County

TOO OLD? NEVER!

While talking to an 86-year-old fisherman who was bank fishing and having some trouble getting a nightcrawler on his hook when he stopped and said, “I’m getting too darn old to fish I guess. I can’t use the boat or do anything like I used to!” I told him, “Don’t ever regret growing old. It’s a privilege denied to many a boater that left his life jacket at home!” He smiled and said, “You know what? I feel better already.”

Owen F. Querles
Deputy Waterways Patrolman
W/Warren County
**ANOTHER WHAT?**

On a recent stocking of Elton Sportman's Dam, I was conducting a routine patrol when I observed a youngster catch a bluegill. I thought it was a bluegill until I heard the youngster call out to his father, "Hey, dad, I caught another bluebird." This is one time I wish I had a Fish Identification Book on hand!

Robert L. Kish  
Waterways Patrolman  
Cambria County

**STILL THERE — STILL GROWING!**

A northern pike caught recently in Pinchot Lake still bore a tag from the Atlantic Refining Company's fishing contest of the late 1960's. Although the contest entry deadlines have long since passed, it is interesting to note that this fish measured 28.1 inches when tagged by Fish Commission biologists in March of 1967; when caught, 42 inches!

A lake survey by the staff of the Fisheries Management Section in March of 1977 netted two other old Atlantic Contest tagged fish: two brown bullheads measuring 14.9 and 15.4 inches. These had tags dated March, 1968 and March, 1967 and had measured 11.1 and 13.0 inches, respectively, when tagged.

Lawrence L. Jackson  
Area Fisheries Manager

**CONTENT —**

Deputies Gary Smith, Jack McMillan and I were patrolling Hereford Manor Lake one evening when a man came trudging slowly up the bank. "How many?" I asked. "None," the man replied. "That's a shame," I offered. With a big smile on his face the fellow beamed, "No, that's OK, I'll just try harder next time!" We all agreed more people should have this man's attitude.

Don Parrish  
Waterways Patrolman  
Beaver County

**STRANGE SIGHT!**

On opening day last year, I came across a fisherman who was having some kind of a problem and was letting out some ugly words. I asked him if I could be of any help. "Yes," he said, "you can get rid of these raccoons and porcupines you have here in Warren County if you expect me back up here!" I tried to explain to him that when you are in the woods and along the streams you have to learn to live with the wildlife. He said, "It wasn't enough for the raccoons to eat all my nightcrawlers and cheese baits at camp last night, but now, while I was lying along the stream taking my usual noontday nap, a porcupine ate the cork handle off my fly rod and the fence off one of my boots I had hung up to dry!" I loaned him my knife to finish cutting off the boot.

He did look sort of funny when I saw him later that day fishing with one boot hip-high and one knee-high!

Owen F. Quarles  
Deputy Waterways Patrolman  
W/Warren County

Ricky Stanley's 24-inch, 7-1/2 pound largemouth from the Delaware River had to be the surprise of all surprises! Rivers and smallmouth bass go together; largemouth bass? Well, here it is!

The Juniata River, near McVeytown, produced this catch of nice smallmouth bass for Paul Roberts, left, and Tom Wilkinson. Ranging in size from 17 to 18 inches, heaviest was 3-1/4 pounds.

MOVING?

Send us both your old and new addresses with both zipcodes.
FLY TYING —
Take a look at an old reliable pattern:

The Blue-Winged Olive Dun
by Charles R. Meek

Just about every fly tier and fly fisherman I've ever known is constantly searching for that perfect combination of feathers and fur which will produce the ultimate artificial. They're looking for the pattern which will catch feeding as well as resting trout; that fly which will prove productive whether fishing in the spring, summer, or fall; that selection which does equally well in the morning; afternoon, and evening. In seeking that ultimate pattern we have overlooked, or at least temporarily neglected, some old but effective artificial. One of these often-overlooked imitations is the Blue-Winged Olive Dun.

Indeed, the Blue-Winged Olive is an old pattern. Records suggest that the fly was first tied in England in the fifteenth century. Although the pattern has been in use in the United States for a much shorter period of time, it is an extremely productive pattern here. Its effectiveness in the New World is probably enhanced because the artificial closely imitates several rather common olive-bodied mayflies (most of these are in the genus Ephemerella). These mayflies, which the pattern copies, begin emerging as early as May, and some species continue to appear in June, July, August, and September. The majority of these naturals appear in the morning and afternoon. Therefore, the pattern imitating these mayfly duns, the Blue-Winged Olive Dun, should be — and is, an effective daytime dry fly which can be used most of the summer.

I can still remember vividly the first time I used the Blue-Winged Olive Dun. It occurred on a morning trip to Mehoopany Creek in Wyoming County in early June. Several fly fishing friends had accompanied me, and we experienced little success casting the Light Cahill, Royal Coachman, and anything else we had which we thought might catch trout. Just as we prepared to leave the stream and head back to the car, we noted a few olive-bodied mayflies emerging and resting on the surface of a large pool. Soon the few duns became dozens, and a respectable hatch was underway. In unison with the hatch we observed nearly a dozen trout rising to the emerging duns. All this action occurred in a pool that just ten minutes earlier seemed void of trout. I searched through my meager selection of Blue-Winged Olives and chose a size 14 imitation to match the hatch. As poor as that artificial looked to me, it still caught trout that were surfacing to the naturals that morning.

But, there are many other Pennsylvania streams which have excellent hatches of olive-colored mayflies; consequently, the Blue-Winged Olive Dun is an effective pattern on these waters also. The imitation is effective on central Pennsylvania streams like Penns and Big Fishing Creeks. It's also a good imitation on Cedar Run, Six Mile Run, Bald Eagle Creek, and many, many others because all these streams contain good populations of olive-bodied Ephemerella duns.

The Blue-Winged Olive Dun, whether fished wet or dry, is one of my top choices for daytime, summer fly fishing. If you plan to fish one of Pennsylvania's productive trout streams, make certain that you have plenty of Blue-Winged Olives on hand.

TYING THE IMITATION

The Blue-Winged Olive Dun is an easy artificial to tie if you follow a few simple rules which we'll discuss later. Until a few years ago I always used olive spun fur for the body of the imitation — now I use only olive polypropylene. Although I find that polypropylene is more difficult to dub than is the spun fur, it is much more buoyant than the fur and therefore much better for floating flies.

I've seen many materials used for the wings of this artificial. Dark gray calf tail, gray hackle tips, and gray polypropylene make suitable substitutes for mallard quill sections. However, I still prefer the quill sections. Many fly tiers loathe using these quill sections because: (1) they often split or separate; and (2) the quills are difficult to secure correctly to the body of the hook when tying. To overcome the first problem I apply a drop of Pliobond adhesive to each wing to prevent them from splitting. To alleviate the second problem I use a six-inch piece of fly tying thread. The photos describe these and other tying techniques in detail.

COMPONENTS:

Hook — Size 14 or 16 Mustad 94840 (dry fly hook).
Wing — Dark gray mallard quill sections.
Body — Yellowish-olive to olive polypropylene (tie in several shades to imitate the various hatches).
Legs — Grayish- or tannish-olive hackle.
Tail — Grayish-olive hackle fibers.
Tying the Imitation

Position two quill sections, shiny sides together, on a #14 hook. Sections should be as long as the shank. Make one loose turn of the thread, then a tight turn, pulling down tightly on thread and making several more turns. Tie the wings onto the shank about 1/3 to 1/4 of its length back from the eye.

Pull the wings back toward the tail and wind tying thread directly in front of the wings. This process makes the wings stand erect.

Take a piece of loose tying thread and loop it under the hook and in front of the erect wings. Thread should now look like the letter "U".

Now take the loose ends of the thread and bring both back between the wings. Tighten or loosen the tension on the thread to set the wings correctly. Tie over the loose thread with the bobbin thread.

Add a drop of Pliobond to each quill section, then tie on the tail and dub in the olive polypropylene, beginning in the center, working forward then backward. Winding in this manner produces a tapered look to the body.

Tie on two grayish-olive hackles and clip the butt sections. Then, wind several turns of hackle behind and in front of the wings. Clip the hackle tips, use the whip finish and apply lacquer. Opposite page: the finished fly.
Do you have a fly reel that has been abandoned because it has lost its "click" — or its ratchet function?

If you do, don't give it the old heave-ho yet, because there's a good chance that you can repair it in a few minutes with very little effort and no outlay of funds. I put two of mine back into commission last year and, besides saving me a few dollars, it added to the life of old companions that have shared many fishing adventures with me.

Most "click" problems are caused by a loose ratchet gear which is simple to repair. It can be accomplished with the aid of a hammer, a small cold chisel, and a twelve-inch crescent wrench. Considering this formidable array of tools, it doesn't seem as though we're going to repair a delicate fly reel, but have faith, read on.

First, strip the line from the reel, then remove the spool from the reel frame. This can be easily done on most reels by pressing a spring-loaded release button or latch on the side opposite the handle that will free the spool for removal. On other reels, the spool can be removed by taking out a screw located in the center of the side plate — on the handle side.

After removal, inspect the spool. On the side opposite the handle, you'll find a gear that is press-fitted to a flange on the end of the spool shaft. Grasp the gear with your fingers and try to turn it. If it rotates around the flange, this is the problem. The solution is to secure the gear to the flange.

Open the jaws of the crescent wrench and slide them between the spool's side plates — they will act as an anvil. Close the jaws until they touch the spool shaft. If you have some other device that can be used as an anvil, fine. I used a crescent wrench because it happened to be handy.

Place the crescent wrench and spool on the edge of a workbench or any other solid support. Make sure that the latching device, spool cap and handle are just over the edge of the bench so neither isn't damaged during the next step.

With another person holding the crescent wrench firmly, place the blade of the chisel across the center of the gear and flange. Being careful not to damage the gear, rap the chisel sharply with the hammer. This will score the gear and flange with a "V" indentation in two places, thus securing the two to each other. Now try turning the gear with your fingers again. If it still rotates, score again with the chisel until it is secure.

Your reel is now repaired and ready for action. Reassemble and go catch a big one.
Most dedicated anglers are well aware of the value of pork rind teasers on “regular” lures; or, as lures in their own rights. However, there are a few tips that make these seductive baits even more effective, and in some instances can save the angler money in the way of replacement costs.

After pork baits have been used a while, especially in muddy, algae-ridden, or tannin-stained waters, the porous surface picks up dirt and stains that simply will not wash off. In dark waters they then lose some of their effectiveness, since they can not be seen as easily by the fish. Dip the stained lures in chlorine bleach for ten minutes, and then dip them in a baking soda solution to neutralize the caustic effects of the bleach. On such baits as the pork frogs the bleach will remove what is left of the colored dye, but it will turn the pork nice and white again.

After several strikes the chisel cut in the pork rind often becomes enlarged, and the bait slips off on the cast. Check the hole periodically. If you can back the barb of the hook back out through the hole without a struggle, use a rug maker’s needle and a pair of pliers to make a new small hole in the bait.

Use the same needle, threaded with red yarn, and force it through the sides of a plain pork chunk to give it added color and attraction.

Ever had the lid loosen on the jar, and all the preservative come out in the bottom of the tackle box? If the baits are still flexible, fill the bottle with hot water and dissolve two tablespoons full of salt in the water — then put the baits back. It works fine. Vinegar also works in a pinch, as does any form of alcohol that you might be carrying for medicinal purposes.

Want more action from those black pork rind eels? Here are two ways to get it: Sew (with monofilament) one of the new ripple type pork rinds to the end of the eel; or, pound the last inch of the pork eel flat and as thin as possible with a hammer. The thinned pork rind doesn’t last as long, but it is much more sensitive in the water, and when the fish are being persnickety it can mean the difference between a fishless day or a nice battle with a lunker.

You can also use two of the ripple rinds, in contrasting colors, back-to-back, so that at rest they curve in opposite directions, on the single hook of a weedless spoon. I can’t tell you what it looks like, but it sure drives largemouth bass crazy.

At the end of the day, drop both the rind and the lure into a glass of water. The rind will eventually soften and spoil, but it can be kept for two or three days’ fishing without ruining the hole by tearing the hook out.

Don’t stop there, however. Experiment! Pork rind is one of the most versatile of all lures, and with a little ingenuity it can be made even more so.
suppose this month’s column might aptly be called the second installment of the “bigger boat syndrome.” It not only picks up where last month’s column left off, but installment is a word with which you will become very familiar by the time you finish paying off your bigger boat!

There is one subject I failed to cover last month in my haste to proudly tell you how quickly and easily I got the 26-foot Mel-Ann II’s ownership papers in hand. That was the boat’s marine survey. Since vessels are normally on land for a survey, it cost $53.50 to haul the boat, launch after completed survey, and return to slip and secure. The surveyor’s charge was $52.00; or, two dollars per foot of boat length. (Remember, almost all boat charges are based on length so get all the beam (width) you can for your buying dollar; it’s a free ride on most charges.) My surveyor’s charge was at the low end for such services; perhaps that’s the reason the survey report was later found to be somewhat incomplete. By the way, don’t be alarmed if the surveyor doesn’t even fire up the engine; many don’t. Years of experience let their trained eyes search for oil and gasket leaks, warped parts and fittings, corrosion, etc. They can pretty well tell by keen observation not only how an engine has been maintained but how it has been run. Remember, even if you don’t want a survey, chances are the financing institution and/or insurance carrier will insist upon one. (Some insurers will pay part, if not all, of the surveyor’s charge but usually you have to ask; they don’t often offer on their own.)

The first times out with the Mel-Ann II were frustrating, to say the least. We took her out twice the first day; we were towed back in both times. Disappointed and dejected, we left word with the marina to get her running by the following weekend. We returned a week later, filled with excitement and anticipation. The marina had replaced a drive belt and rebuilt the carburetor — charge: $93.25. We headed down the river for another try, full of confidence. One hour after the marina mechanics finished work at noon (a Saturday), we had to be towed again. The marina found out during the following week the new drive belt had not been tightened. They also found a hairline crack in the distributor cap — cost: $23.77 for the cap, no charge for labor (were they already feeling sorry for us?). This time, our third weekend at the wheel, all went well. She not only went out under her own power but came back in the same way. Since then, two wonderful, full-filled summers with the Mel-Ann II, a couple dozen bills varying from “not bud” to “unbelievable” in amounts, and thirty installment payments. (See how familiar that word gets?)

Maintaining and running a larger boat is where the wallet really begins to thin out. Our 20-footer could be winter-stored at home free or in covered, rented space for five dollars a month. Winter storage for the 26-footer runs $135 annually. The smaller boat could either be trailered when desired or stored on the trailer at a marine for just thirty dollars per summer season (with unlimited ramp use) while the bigger boat costs $350 yearly for a summer slip. The smaller boat used 3–4 gallons of gas per hour at 15 knots: the Mel-Ann II guzzles 7–8 gph.

The conveniences of home offered by the 26-footer are much appreciated; but, the trade-off is fewer waters in which she can be run. It is too wide to trail without a special permit and too big and heavy except for a professional boat mover’s rig. No matter how big the body of water on which she floats, there are only so many hours in a weekend and, just like the Sunday drive, sooner or later time alone will make you retrace the same paths.

The Mel-Ann II was in the upper Chesapeake Bay when we discovered her; there she remains to this day — for reasons just given. Chances are if you find yourself a victim of the “bigger boat syndrome,” you’ll find the malady in a body of water like Lake Erie, Chesapeake Bay, Delaware Bay or along the Atlantic coastline. Since this takes in at least five areas and boats are registered in “the state of principal use,” you could, Pennsylvanians, wind up with a “foreign” registration. In this case, chances are you will be largely out of touch with that state’s proposed rule and regulation changes, etc. You will have little or no “input” into decisions that might affect you as a boater. In fact, you might not even be aware of such changes until a waterways pa-
trolman (or his counterpart in that state) hails you down.

Another upsetting situation will develop — sooner or later — when a spring flood, severe summer squall or even a hurricane roars by or over your marina. Suddenly you will realize how far you really are from your boat (no wonder you’ve been buying so much gas for the car lately!). While you know marinas do all they can under such conditions, you realize they may have too few personnel to handle all the boats and lines involved. Meanwhile, you are torn apart trying to decide whether or not to stay home to protect property or race to the marina to nursemaid your boat!

Most marinas stipulate in the lease that all work below the waterline must be performed by yard personnel. This usually includes motors, shafts and propellers. In practice, however, many marinas do not enforce this condition. They do get more than a little uptight, however, if they see you drive up with the mechanic from the corner service station back home. Especially if they have a crew of well-paid mechanics standing around twiddling their thumbs for lack of work. If they catch you using outside professional help, they may estimate the work performed and bill you at their rates (and collect) even though they didn’t touch your boat. At the least, they will probably politely but sternly ask you to take your business (and your boat) elsewhere!

Many boaters who move up in size move down in model years, due to economics. While trading to an older boat may get you more boat per dollar, it will usually mean higher upkeep and maintenance cost. Those who move from relatively maintenance-free fiberglass boats to one made of wood will never again fail to appreciate the love and devotion a boatowner must feel for his craft. You can save some labor costs if you are a do-it-yourselfer. Most marinas will let you, for example, sand, chip and paint away to your heart’s content. But expect your pocketbook to still feel the pinch from the gallons of special marine paints and varnish, thinners and cleaners, etc. If the marina lets you do most of your own work, the only decent thing to do would be to give them your paint business, etc. Keep in mind, however, unless you can live with “maintaining a boat is half the fun,” a wood boat may not be for you.

Give in to the “bigger boat syndrome”? Maybe you should; maybe you shouldn’t. Just remember, great as more space may be, appreciated though conveniences of home may be, there is that trade-off and it usually involves money and expense. Big isn’t always beautiful; sometimes small is sensible. Only you can make the final decision. I wrestled mentally for months before I succumbed only to find out the final answer never comes, if ever, until after you make the plunge. About the middle of each winter (and especially this past winter!) I am ready, come spring, to have the marina put the “For Sale” sign back on her. But, each time the weather warms and the sun shines more, I decide to keep the Mel-Ann II around for another season. Course it helps to know that, sitting proudly on its trailer behind the garage, the good old 14-footer stands ready, willing and able to go where and when I ask her.

Let’s see, do I want to spend a couple of hours driving to the marina and stretch out on the big boat? (Looks like it’s going to rain!) Maybe I’ll grab the little one for an hour or two of fishing in the Swatara Creek . . . I can be there and in the water in twenty minutes. Decisions! Decisions!

For some, big is beautiful; for others, small is sensible: for you?
A hot spot in any lake or pond is an area in which dead trees still stand. Dead branches and brush usually lie under the surface of the water. These provide excellent cover for bass, pike, pickerel and panfish as well as natural food in the form of minnows, nymphs and insects. The water usually is shallow, so surface lures are effective. Weedless sinking lures can also be used successfully.

Point the rod tip directly at the lure when fishing on the surface for bass, and keep the line taut. With slack line or with the rod tip held high or off to one side, a fast strike on the surface lure is easily missed.

In fly-fishing a stream with a rocky shoreline at your back, check the fly after every cast. On a back cast, the fly can strike a stone so lightly that you will not feel the impact, yet hard enough to snap the delicate point off the hook.

Don't dump unused minnows into any body of water you fish. The minnows could be of a species that would propagate and crowd gamefish and panfish.

Leader length is very important. Under normal water conditions, a leader 7 1/4 feet long will work well, but when a stream looks as though it were going dry, nine feet is an absolute minimum length; there are anglers who use leaders 12- or 15-feet long under July conditions.

Tiny jigs are good lures for large trout in big water, if they are fished on the bottom, as in bass fishing. They imitate a variety of natural foods. Good colors for both the jig and the dressing are brown and black.

Small and delicate trout flies call for tackle that matches them. Heavy rods, lines and leaders will offset all the advantages of use of small flies; overweight tackle will defeat the efforts of the angler to offer trout tiny lures in as natural a manner as possible.

When a lure lands on a broad leaf in a lily bed which harbors bass, you are lucky. Jiggle the lure a very little bit while it lies on the leaf, then gently twitch it into the water and make it swim a foot or two. If there is a bass around, it usually will go into action.

If you are using an outboard motor, wash your hands thoroughly if you get gasoline or oil on them. If your hands are not clean, the odor will cling to a bait or lure, and the fish will refuse it. That's right, fish DO have a keen sense of smell.

Good plugs, spoons and other lures are sure to inspire imitations at cut prices. Ignore them. The original is always better than the imitation; in fact, the imitation is often worthless. It's better to pay the price for a good lure than to spend half the money on lures that too often are useless.

A fly and spinner combination is not often successful at night. Light is needed to make the spinner flash and attract fish.

Jigs come not only in a variety of weights and sizes but also shapes. Four popular patterns are the walleye, round head, banana and bullet. Choice of the shape of the jig, as well as its size and weight, depends on the water to be fished. The banana jig, for example, is the least likely to snag on bottom rocks.

Pools below a waterfall or a small stream dam are productive areas to fish. The water moves rapidly over the falls or dam and contains a maximum amount of oxygen, and it also carries food into the quiet water below. These two factors attract fish to such areas.

Many lures the fisherman carries will serve admirably for trolling. The list includes large spinners, spoons of all types, jointed or wobbling plugs, slim plugs that imitate minnows and even a cast of big wet flies.

Big streams are the most productive for fishermen seeking big trout, bass or other species. In big streams pools are deeper, riffles and runs are bigger and contain more pocket water; and, of course, there is more abundant natural food.

Perch do most of their feeding in early morning, at dusk and at night, and angling for them during those periods is more productive than during the hours of full daylight.

Go on the alert the second a spoon touches the surface of the water and begins its fluttering descent to the depth at which it will be fished. A strike can come during this sinking period, before the angler makes the first turn of the reel handle.

Wet flies usually are very effective when cast diagonally upstream and allowed to drift in the current without any action imparted by the angler. When this method fails, however, it is a good tactic to move the fly smoothly a foot or two through the water by a gentle lifting of the rod tip.
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Largemouth Bass from Struble Lake

And, more just like these await you!