

TRIBUTARY FISHING



IT IS BURT DAM BROWN TROUT CAUGHT BY THE NOON BROTHERS OF WHICH THE OLDEST, LOGAN AT 13,. HE WILL BE DOING A SEMINAR ON FLOAT FISHING AT THE EXPO.

2024 TRIBUTARY EDUCATION GETS YOU “STREAMING” BY BILL HILTS, JR.

The tributary and inland stream fishing in Western New York offers some of the most prolific and diverse sport fisheries available in the world. The 2024 Greater Niagara Fishing Expo, set for Feb. 15-18, 2024, at the Niagara Falls Convention Center is the perfect educational angle to get you “streaming” like only the Niagara Frontier can!

THE LAKE ERIE TRIBUTARY FISHERY, MAINLY FOR STEELHEAD, REMAINS SOLID.



Overall salmonid catch rates during a recent Lake Erie tributary angler survey was 0.44 fish per hour, which is a decline from the previous survey in 2017-18 (0.56 fish per hour) but well above the Lake Erie Fisheries Research Unit's Management Plan goal of 0.33 fish per hour.





“Weather played a role in these results with Cattaraugus Creek effort very low compared to previous surveys due to excessive rain/runoff creating unfishable conditions for the majority of the season,” insists DEC’s Jim Markham. “One aspect of the fishery that has been evident in the last two surveys is a “tightening” of the catch rates between streams. There used to be a large variation in performance between streams in the early 2000s, but the streams are now performing at very similar levels. What this means to the anglers is that you can find good fishing quality regardless of the stream that you decide to fish that day.”

In case you were wondering where anglers come from that fish the Lake Erie tributaries in New York: “State residents consistently comprise about 89% of the anglers with the rest coming from out-of-state,” says Markham. “In this past survey, non-resident anglers came from 23 other states and 2 countries to fish the Lake Erie tributaries, which is indicative of the popularity and quality of our fishery on a national level.”

Over on Lake Ontario, the tributary action is every bit as good if not better because of the diversity being offered to shore-bound casters and waders. A YouTube video was posted in July 2023 giving an overview of the lake’s 2022-23 Tributary Creel Survey. This includes 21 streams and rivers from the Niagara River to the Black River. It was conducted from mid-September 2022 to mid-April 2023. Starting with that survey, it will be conducted every year.

OVER ON LAKE ONTARIO,

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ACCORDING TO SCOTT PRINDLE,

DEC Aquatic Biologist 2 who coordinates the creel survey, there were over 242,000 angler trips which resulted in over 1,200,000 angler hours. Sixty-three percent of all that effort was in the Salmon River, which totaled over 766,000 angler hours. Only two other tributaries had more than 50,000 angler hours - the Oak Orchard River and 18 Mile Creek at Olcott.

CHINOOK SALMON

were the most abundant fish caught, checking in at over 130,000 fish. Just over 53,000 kings were harvested. For the most part, salmon and trout species caught were down across the board. One local exception was Sandy Creek in Monroe and Orleans counties. Anglers enjoyed some excellent brown trout fishing, as well as some of the best Atlantic salmon fishing on the lake (even though Atlantic salmon are a relatively small stocking and catching component compared with other salmonid species).

It's important to note that this fall, tributary action has been good to very good for brown trout in several WNY streams - in part due to the Erie Canal water releases in 18 Mile Creek, the Oak Orchard River, Johnson Creek, and Sandy Creek. The Erie Canal Corporation will have a booth in the Expo if you would like to learn more about these releases and why they are beneficial to anglers. Avid angler Bill Sweitzer with the Erie Canal group will be available for questions. DEC will once again be holding an "Open House" during the Expo, set for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday. As part of this unique gathering, there will be fisheries biologists and resource managers for not only the Great Lakes, but for inland waters as well. If you want to find out more about the tributaries of lakes Erie and Ontario, this is one special source of information. The Niagara River is included in these Great Lakes discussions.

"TEACHING FISHING SHOW"

This is a perfect segue into the Expo's "Teaching Fishing Show" moniker. The February 2024 version of the show will feature over 14 speakers and over 30 seminars to educate novice and expert, young and old, to different aspects of tributary and stream fishing.

Brothers Marcus and Jacob Barnes will be tag-teaming to share their wealth of angling knowledge from the Pacific northwest and the northeast. Their focus will be on sustainable fishing techniques that ensure the long-term health of fish populations. They will make you a better angler, whether a novice or seasoned veteran.

DISCOVER THE WONDERS
OF WNY!



Gerald Brydalski of West Seneca is always willing to help people when it comes to fishing. He has been stream fishing for over 50 years, 36 years using his centerpin outfit to catch steelhead. "My seminar will be on jig fishing," says Brydalski. "I will also cover centerpinning and anything else that people are interested in. We can learn from one another." The use of soft beads is also one of his specialties.

Logan Culver will be coming to the Expo this year to showcase a new centerpin reel that he has designed (Tribs Reels), as well as a new removeable trout bead that does not need to be pegged (Tribs Bead). He began guiding salmon and trout at the age of 19. It's important to note that he also fishes the lower Niagara River from shore, one of the hottest fisheries on the planet in the fall and winter. Speaking of the lower Niagara River, Capt. Frank Campbell of Niagara Region Charters will also be giving seminars on how to catch bass, walleye, salmon, and trout in the lower section of river - capable from both boat and shore. He fishes from the shore when his boat breaks down.



Adam Palmer of Limestone Bait Company in Pennsylvania is a soft plastics bait maker who is a passionate multi-species angler. However, his obsession is with steelhead, and he will be giving attendees intimate knowledge of catching these popular fish. Fly fishing education is also an important component to the fishing show. Mark Signorino of Erie, Pa. will be giving instructions on fly casting. He is a certified instructor with Fly Fishers International. Also, attending will be Steven Wascher, expert fly tyer and fly fisherman of more than five decades. He has been guiding for 15 of those years and brings some unique perspectives to the 2024 show. Other fly tyers will also be attending the show.

The popular Hawg Trough is back, and it will be used to demonstrate different tributary fishing techniques, from float fishing to fly casting. This takes us right into the vendor side of the show and we can start with the top two fly fishing clubs in Western New York. The Western New York Chapter of Trout Unlimited and the Lake Erie Chapter of Fly Fishers International will have booths on the main floor. Many other exhibitors will have a focus on the tributaries and streams, a direct spin-off to many of the seminars that will be taking place. If a speaker enjoys using a certain product, he can point you in the right direction at the show to obtain it, at show-special pricing. Make sure you check out Capt. Bob's Outdoors, Death Roe Beads, Douglas Outdoors, Fish USA, Limestone Bait Company, Sanders Fishing Guide, Steelhead Stuff, TAAR Outdoors, Tribs Reels, and more.



One new exhibitor is the taxidermy magic man, Paul DeAngelo of Oswego. He is going to be opening a new shop called Great Lakes Fish Art Studios in the area, perfect for the tributary angler that practices only catch-and-release. His replicas are amazing! Be sure to mark Feb. 15-18, 2024 in your calendar - the perfect way to get you streaming!



Wrap Up

Free Parking!

If you plan on attending the Greater Niagara Fishing Expo, all the Niagara Falls lots will be FREE! Please know that street parking will still have a fee. So be aware!

Tickets!

Please click below to order your tickets in advance! This is a perfect gift for the fishing connoisseur in your life!



\$10.00 Stocking
Stuffer!

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