

Recreation and Sports



Spring brings out anglers, warnings

by Tony Maraschiello
Special

Scientists from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment are baffled.

They know that chemical levels in some fish in western Lake Ontario are up, but they don't know why.

Alan Hayton, a ministry scientist, said recent tests conducted on fish in Lake Ontario waters off Oakville show that mirex levels have gone up over last year, particularly in chinook salmon.

Mirex is widely used as a pesticide in the southern United States, but was never registered for use in Canada. Scientists believe it found

its way into Lake Ontario via the Niagara River, which was a dumping ground for American chemical plants.

"There are all sorts of weird things going on in Lake Ontario right now," said Hayton, who is coordinator of the sports fishing contaminants monitoring program for the Environment Ministry.

For local anglers who have already begun wetting their lines this spring, Hayton advises then to refer to the 1993 Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish, which is put out by the ministries of the Environment and Natural Resources.

He said it should be out in early May and be widely available at all beer and liquor stores, as well as tackle shops.

Until then, anglers should follow these guidelines this coming season for eating fish out of Lake Ontario:

- Chinook salmon - there are specific eating restrictions for any fish more than 45 cm in length. Children under 15 and women of childbearing age should avoid eating fish over this size limit. There are no eating restrictions for fish under 45 cm.
- Rainbow smelt - no eating restrictions.
- Coho salmon - eating restrictions have been placed on fish
- Rainbow trout - there are no eating restrictions on this fish.
- Brown trout - eating restrictions have been placed on any fish more than 65 cm in length.

"There has been a little bit of an increase in mirex in some of the chinook salmon in western Lake Ontario, so the size restriction of unlimited (eating) will go down a little bit," said Hayton. "We have no idea why this is."

Hayton said he and other scientists can only speculate why there has been an increase in mirex, despite the long-term trend showing chemicals, especially PCBs, are gradually disappearing from Lake Ontario fish.

Each year, the Environment Ministry tests different species of fish in Ontario for nine different chemicals.

"It may be something as simple as the salmon changing from one prey item to another prey item, which vary greatly in their contaminant level," said Hayton.

"If a chinook salmon changed from (eating) alewife to smelt, smelts tend to have higher contaminant levels and therefore you end up with a higher contaminant level in chinook."

Despite all of this, Hayton says there is no reason for alarm among fishing enthusiasts.

"It's a complicated set of ecological factors that could be a short-term blip."

"If you look at the long-term trend, it (the level of contaminants in the lake) is still going down and that's what we're more interested in," he said.

"We'll always have some years that are higher than the previous year even though the long-term trend is a continuing decline in contaminants."

Credit "Bows" on the move

By Mike Leuenberger

Anglers from all over showed up on the banks of the mighty Credit River to try their luck as fishing season opened last weekend, and the old river didn't let her fans down.

Water conditions looked promising except for an occasional angler under foot.

The rainbows even made it for the event; many trout were caught in the 6 - 12 lb range. All different baits being used, the most productive baits roe bog, white or green yarn flies and worms.

Sunday, however, was not as good. Heavy rain Saturday night put a damper on things, the river level rose and became mud-colored.

Monday's conditions returned to fair. Many fish were caught, plus it was nice to see a lot of fishermen practicing catch-and-release because this practice is vital for the future of this historic river.

Georgetown's veteran angler, Dempsey Snow, caught and released many fish on his travels up and down the river this year.

Local angler Barry Stone's decision to travel north to Meaford's Big Head river paid off with a 6 lb steelhead, even though fishing was slow (possibly due to the hard winter this year; trout are still spawning and not interested in feeding).

Denny's Dam, Saugeen River, Southampton, showed a great number of steelhead trying to jump the dam, but as for fish caught, out of many fishermen on the big river, I only saw two fish caught.

Local angler Joe Richardson

had a good outing on the Upper Credit catching and releasing five Brook trout and a 10 pound male Rainbow. The brookies bit on a small Jim's Jig and the steelhead took a roe bog.

The illusive Brown trout, one of the most challenging of all trout, made it out in full force.

Bernie Stoyles and friends on their annual trip, caught many fish in the one-to-four pound range, north of Terra Cotta, using worms.

Georgetown angler, Rod Deforest, had a day to remember by catching a hard-fighting 25 inch Credit River Brown trout. This fish was released unharmed. Way to go, Rod!

Something to note: Atlantic Salmon have been reintroduced to the Credit after being absent for many years. Your support is needed to help this project survive.

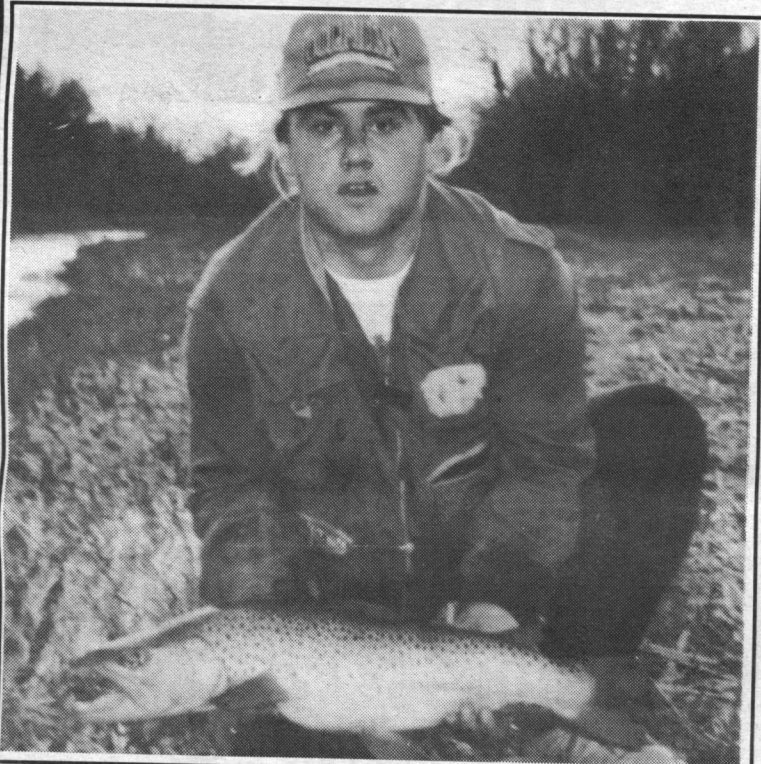
Atlantic Salmon are closed to fishing all year. You should take care when handling these fish and return them to water as quickly as possible. See fishing regulations book, found at your local bait and tackle shop for the correct method of release.

There seems to be a lot of garbage bottles, chip bags, worm containers, etc. polluting the river banks. If you can carry it in, carry it out!

Thursday morning, some Norval fishermen observed one angler's inappropriate tactics. Snagging and trampling spawning beds and treating the fish he caught brutally, which is totally unacceptable. Wake up, Dave!!

If you need more fishing information, call me at 873-8144.

Happy fishing!



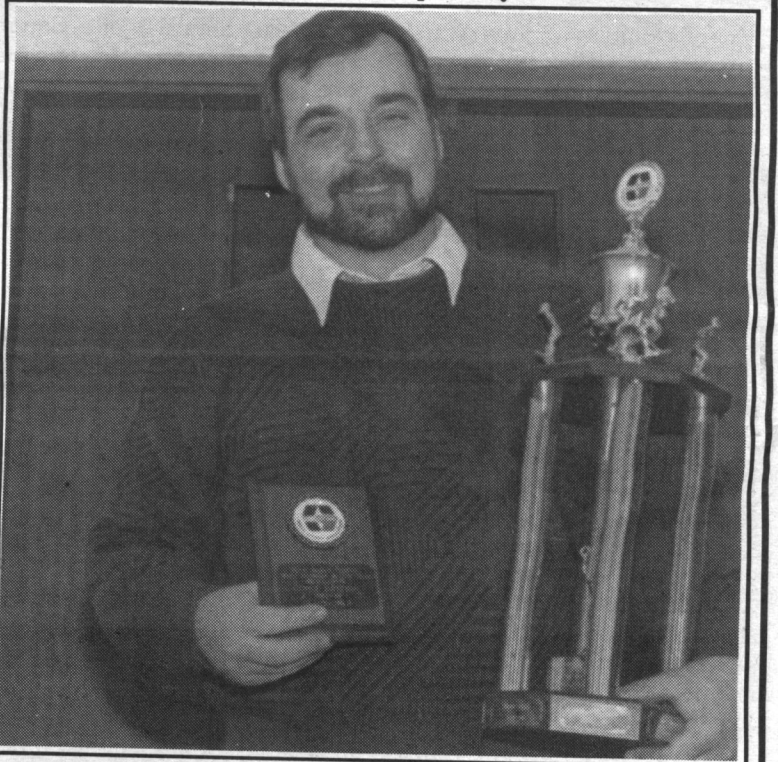
Rod Deforest welcomed fishing season by landing this 25" Brown trout.

Minor Hockey Awards



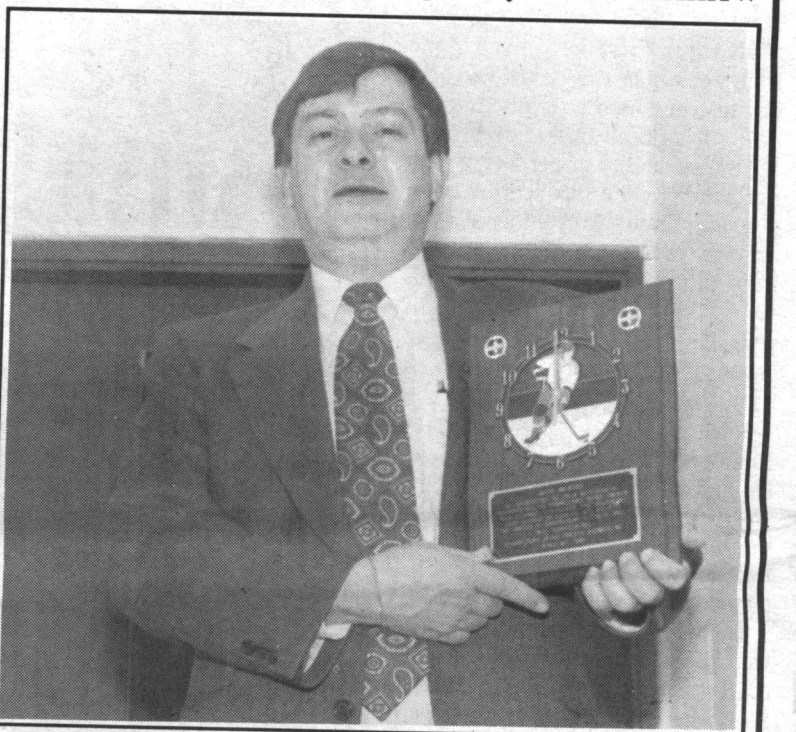
Dan Curtis received the Pearce Family Trophy as Sr. Rep. Coach of The Year for his work with the Bantam team at the Georgetown Minor Hockey Association Manager, Coach and Trainer Appreciation Dance held Saturday night.

photo by Colin Gibson/HHTW



Chris Goodhew received the Hume Family Trophy as Jr. Rep. Manager of The Year for his work with the Pee Wee team at the Georgetown Minor Hockey Association Manager, Coach and Trainer Appreciation Dance held Saturday night.

photo by Colin Gibson/HHTW



Dave Martin has devoted countless hours and a considerable amount of energy to Georgetown Minor Hockey Association activities. Saturday night at the Georgetown Minor Hockey Association annual Manager, Coach and Trainer Appreciation Dance he received a Special Award for services to the GMHA.