

Fur, Fins and Feathers



April 2017

The Clubhouse is off Old Oliphant Road on Northacres road and off County Road 13 in Wiarton.
Next meeting, April 27th, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. Your participation is welcome and anticipated. For inquiries 519-534-2502 or e-mail bpsportsmen@gmail.com or mail to P.O. Box 548, Wiarton, Ontario N0H 2T0

“all about the fish” - Conservation Club



BPSA members work in two shifts to process thousands of rainbow trout weeks before they are stocked

March first was fin clipping day at the Bruce Peninsula Sportsmen's Association hatchery. Every year around this time, club members gather to clip the adipose fin on thousands of yearling rainbow trout, preparing them for stocking in the near future. For these folks it's a labour of love as it's "all about the fish". The clippers worked in long afternoon and evening shifts processing 30-thousand trout. Members of the Barrow Bay and District Sport Fishing Association helped out. This in return for BPSA providing thousands of yearling trout for Barrow Bay anglers.

Fin clipping helps identify if fish are natural or stocked. In the past when we took eggs for our hatchery from spawning fish, sixty-per cent of the trout had been fin clipped. This suggests a good survival rate and healthy return of our stocked fish.

BPSA Hatchery Manager Ray Marklevits reports our hatchery fish are in great shape and water flow and temperatures in our hatchery tanks, have been ideal this spring. When these fish are stocked, a new supply of rainbow trout eggs will arrive, starting the process over again.

BPSA boasts the longest running volunteer staffed community fish

stocking program in Ontario. Since the sixties we have stocked over 5-million rainbow and brown trout and salmon for the Grey-Bruce recreational fishery. Our stocking is licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and is operated for the Province by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters under the Community Hatchery Program.

Anglers from Ontario, other provinces and the US travel to Grey-Bruce every year to enjoy our beautiful scenery, our pollution free environment and sports fish they can eat. Our clubs efforts over the last 65-years have helped pump many millions of dollars into our regional economy.

Among our partners are the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resource and Forestry (MNRF), The Lake Huron Fishing Club, the Barrow Bay Sport Fishing Association, the Ontario



Close up - adipose fin being clipped for future identification

FIN CLIPPING CONT.

Steelheaders, the Sydenham Sportsmen's Association and the Ontario Community Hatchery Program.

BPSA recently hosted more than 300 guests at our Family Day open house. That successful event was a part of our club's community outreach effort. An effort that we hope will attract new members, young and old, as we try to expand our range of programs aimed at getting more people outdoors.

Our next major event is the annual BPSA SPRING FISHING DERBY for

members and guests. It runs from May 12-14 with the derby awards Sunday May 14 during our annual fish fry at the clubhouse.

Our BPSA KIDS FISHING DAY 2017 runs the morning of May 27th this year at our hatchery pond. Youngsters 12 and under are welcome to take part. There is no charge. The MNRF has donated 300 brook trout for this popular annual event which will be "catch and release" and once again will be lots of fun. *Submitted by: Stu Paterson*



BPSA Hatchery Manager Ray Marklevits and Fish Committee Member Murray Garniss handling yearling rainbow trout at the BPSA hatchery

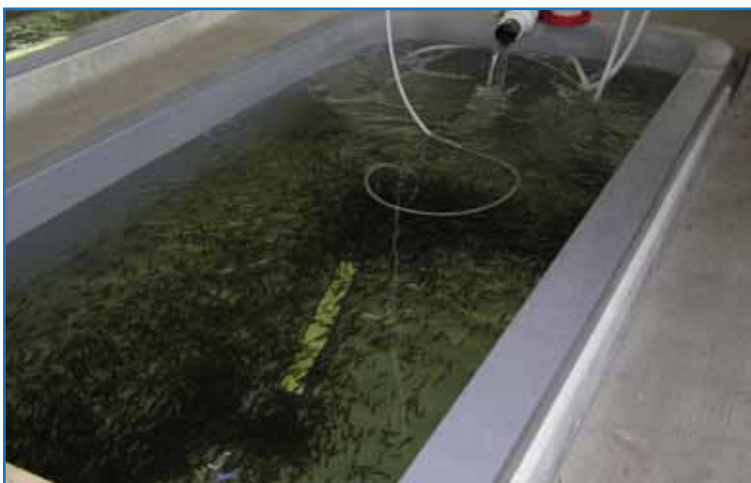
BPSA Hatchery Background

It's All About Healthy Fish

The hatchery program at the Bruce Peninsula Sportsmen's Association (BPSA) is the longest running volunteer program in Ontario and has the distinction of releasing over 5 million fish back into the wild. BPSA has been operating for 55 years. In 1962 a groups of energetic conservationists formed a club that focused on improving the habitat of fish and wildlife on the Bruce Peninsula. Conservation was the name of the game. They went on to charter the club in 1965 and built a clubhouse near Wiarton.

In 1968, members worked with the Wiarton Golf Club and started raising young fish in a spring fed pond on the golf course. They further expanded the program by installing concrete raceways at the clubhouse property, using the natural springs that flow around the site. Unfortunately there were a few issues with the dissolved oxygen levels in the water, which the fish need to survive, and with the raceways being open to the environment.

But they didn't let this stop the program as they experimented with incubation boxes in Colpoy's and Gleason creeks. The fish eggs would be hatched in the incubation boxes and raised to the fry stage before being moved to the raceways. Here they would be raised to yearlings



before being released into the wild. These boxes had their own issues as they were out in the open and subject to uncontrolled conditions and vandalism.

With all these issues, it was decided to build an incubation system at the club property and install an aeration system for the spring waters to increase the dissolved oxygen content and improve the water quality for the fish. In 2002, club members build a new building for the hatchery providing better protection and new tanks for the fish. This was accomplished through club members volunteering labour and money as well as other financial help from community and provincial groups, including the Town of Wiarton, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, and the Wiarton Rotary Club. This is the building you see today. The hatchery operates under a yearly Licence from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) to raise 200 000 fish a year and hatches 135 000 Rainbow trout and 35 000 Brown trout as well as the ability to use the water to maintain the fish. As such, there are reporting requirements including the number of fish hatched, released and their location as well as the amount of water used.



Of the 135 000 Rainbow trout, they are released in two stages. The first 100 000 are released at the fingerling stage and the remaining 35 000 are kept to become yearlings. All the Rainbow are released in three areas, Colpoy's creek, Gleason Brook and Barrow Bay with the idea is that they will grow and imprint in the waterways before moving to the main waters of Colpoy's Bay or Georgian Bay where they grow until they are ready to spawn. They will then return



to the waterway they come from and lay their eggs, thus continuing the cycle naturally. When it comes time to put the young fish into the streams, they are moved by trailer and then transferred by the bucket load to the stream. Scores of volunteers arrive early in the day to perform a bucket brigade to gently and carefully transfer them from the trailer to the drop off spot. The Brown trout are released into Colpoy's bay directly as fry and will spend their time getting acclimated to the shallower waters of the bay. As the Brown trout have different feeding habits than Rainbow, they tend to stay in shallower water. They will stay closer to shore and will eventually spawn the next generation in the bay. With them staying in shallower water, this allows anglers the opportunity to catch trout from the shoreline.



All this great work that the club has been able to do would not have been possible without the great support of its members that volunteer to keep things running, be it feeding the fish, running the hatchery or carrying pails to place the young fish in their new home. The hatchery is also supported financially by the OFAH and MRNF Community Hatchery Program.

submitted by Nathan Smith



BPSA 2017 EVENTS

- March 18th Pot Luck Supper at 5 pm.
- April 20th Chamber Meet and Greet 5:00 to 7:00 pm.
- May 12, 13, & 14th Fishing Derby.
- May 14th Mothers Day Fish Fry at the club 4:00 pm.
- May 27th Kids fishing day at the club.
- June 4th Golf tournament Warton Golf Club.
- July 9th Beef and Pork B.Q.Q. at the club.
- Sept 17th Community Living fishing at the club 2:00 to 5:00 pm
- Nov 18th Pot luck supper at the club.

Ontario Community Hatchery Program in Sarnia



HATCHERY MEETING SARNIA MARCH 2017 – PATERSON

Five BPSA members including hatchery manager Ray Marklevitz, attended the annual Ontario Community Hatchery Program (CHP) meeting. This year it was in Sarnia.



The good news is this. Ken Lecroix Upper Great Lakes Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Manager, promised that all stakeholders will be consulted as the ministry tackles its fish stocking plan for our region. He reminded us the ministry has a legal obligation to consult with first nations on these types of matters.

Ken also praised the 41 community hatcheries like ours and those run by the Sydenham Sportsmen, the Lake Huron



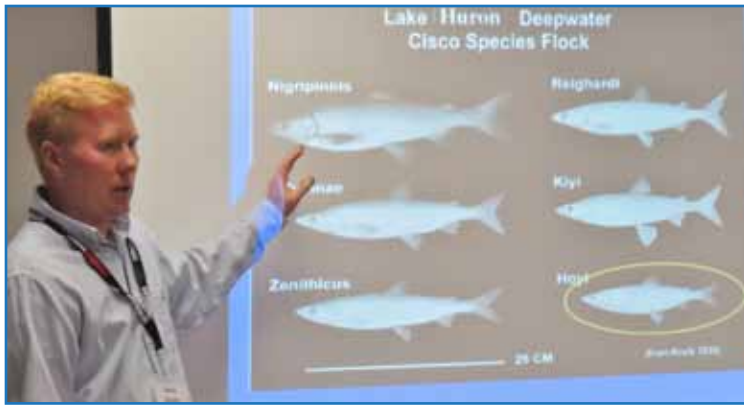
Cory McNeil, Ray Markevits and Jerry Beaver shown above.

Fishing Club and the Bluewater Anglers, all members of the Community Hatchery Program. Our clubs stock more than one million salmon and trout every year. The CHP budget for last year was 320-thousand dollars. Half of our BPSA hatchery costs are covered by the CHP.

Lecroix said of our community hatcheries “our role will not change for the next 20 years...you are doing a great job... your numbers of fish stocked are good.... (the Ministry) will continue to support the Community Hatchery Program”. He noted that the ministry is under pressure from First Nations groups that believe our rainbows and salmon are “invasive species”. He said “MNRF will find a strategy to please all”. The MNRF official said “First Nations feel they have had their rights taken away by all the stocking of rainbows and trout....it is a very complicated situation”.

He reminded us he is still working on getting the results of the SON fishery studies.

These are studies funded by Ontario taxpayers under the SON fishing agreement. These studies by University of Guelph researchers, have been going on since the SON agreement was signed. So far, results of these studies that we pay for, have been kept secret.



MNRF fish Biologist Dave Gonder gave us an in-depth report on the “state of our lakes”.

He talked a lot about climate change and invasives and how they are spreading and changing the food web, and how some fish are thriving and others not so much. For some fish like whitefish there has been a 50% reduction in food. Lakers are very thin due to a food shortage.

Chinook salmon are in decline. Walleye are increasing in numbers. Slime on the bottom of our lakes is increasing due to better clarity thanks to quagga and zebra mussels. Mussel excrement is causing botulism on spawning shoals. Plankton and zooplankton are declining (consumed by mussels) negatively affecting the food web. Quagga muscle populations have not peaked, Zebra mussels are

declining. His overview is: the lakes will likely never reach a stage where there is not change going on and the creatures in our lakes will adapt or face extinction. Gonder said Lake Huron is more productive than Lake Superior but not nearly as productive fish wise, compared to 20 years ago.

There were discussions about

- net pens
- hatchery lighting
- hatcheries in classrooms
- keeping fish for at least a year to improve survival rates-

We toured the large Bluewater Anglers Hatchery under the Blue Water Bridge where Lake Huron meets the St. Clair River. The club is marking its 35th anniversary. 8 of the clubs tanks are filled with fish...75-hundred salmon, 38-thousand rainbow trout and 15-thousand brown trout. Many of these fish will be stocked over the coming weeks.

The hatchery features an outdoor pond filled with rainbow fish that visitors can feed. This is a money making effort as well as a positive public relations feature for their club.

Hatchery manager Jake Van Rooyen reminded us the Great Lakes recreational fishery is worth 7-billion dollars a year. He noted salmon and rainbow trout are the favored target fish for most Great Lakes anglers.



BPSA News & Views

We had 35 people attend the social awards night. Ray made his famous clam chowder. Lots of storytelling and sharing of hunting and fishing experiences.

Bill Nafziger was present to receive his plaques for largest pike. Don Elliott was a very gracious host and did a splendid job of organizing event.

We offered members an opportunity to name our newsletter and several suggestions were received .

The membership chairman director Jerry Beaver offered a new t shirt for all new members as a membership promotion. Martha MARTELL won the draw prize of a solar motion light. Good fun,fellowship and food.



BPSA member Marje Beaver unveils the new BPSA Donor Board. This is one of the ways we recognize people and organizations that donate money and prizes to support BPSA, its events and projects. This sturdy new board was crafted by Wayne Musselman and Gerry Beaver.



Hunter Maisonneuve largest buck harvested by a junior member.



Marty Maisonneuve with the largest Gobbler harvested by a member



Archery
Program runs every Tuesday. Youth practice 6-7 pm adults practice 7-9 pm. You can contact Donna and Paul Maginnis at deerviewranch@amtelecom.net.

