

Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

Topic: : 2013: Sudden boom in northern snakehead catches - Delaware River

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If you wish to try your hand at catching northern snakeheads on a fly, they are particularly aggressive when spawning. They are an invasive species now getting a foot-hold in the Delaware. They are nest guarders and fairly easily caught from the nests, which appear in shallow, weedy or not-so-weedy back-waters, calm pools in braided channels, etc, at least that is what we know so far. They have been caught from the Delaware with surprising regularity from Scudders Falls area (I-95 crossing) downstream to about 10 miles below Trenton NJ/Morrisville PA area this year. Morrisville has been particularly productive. Additionally, some scattered catches have come from Tohickon Creek, Bucks Co, about a mile upstream from its mouth at Point Pleasant on the Delaware, and from the Delaware River on the NJ side across from Martins Creek, Northampton Co, which is north of Easton, Pa. So, as you search for smallmouth you may run into snakeheads as you wade through back-water areas behind islands or shallow, dead water areas near shore. Note, that you should know the difference between bowfins and snakeheads before deciding to kill a snakehead, as the bowfin is a native species that is a candidate for threatened or endangered status in Pa. The PFBC will soon be coming out with a very good poster that explains the differences among similar species so that anglers will be able to readily separate snakeheads from the rest. Meanwhile, you can find a similar description on Virginia's fisheries agency's web site. Snakeheads may not be possessed alive in Pa, so either release them or kill them right away. By all accounts, they are good eating. Additionally, there has been a bow fishery developing on the Delaware that is including snakeheads as one of the target species.