

Dedicated to the Memory of

Commissioner Enoch S. "Inky" Moore Jr.



PLAY

Pennsylvania • League • of • Angling • Youth

FALL
2004

FISHING & HISTORY

fishing spearhead and bone hook circa 1550-1575, from Lancaster County



Today

we think of fishing as a fun outdoor activity. But it wasn't always like that. Fishing was much different long ago. Humans fished because they had to for food. And the ways they fished were different.

Ancient cultures used spears, nets, bows and arrows, baskets and simple fishing poles. The Egyptians used casting nets tossed from a boat or shore. Some Native American cultures stalked large fish with spears or used a birch-bark basket to catch smaller fish.

Humans also learned that fish could be attracted to bait. One early fishing tool was a gorge made from wood, bone or stone.

It had sharp points at each end, and it was tied to a line and then covered with bait. A quick pull wedged the gorge in the fish's gullet, and it could be pulled in.

Some cultures even got fancy. The Chinese used line made of silk, hooks made of needles, bamboo rods, and rice as bait.

Humans even learned that fishing could be good sport—*it could provide food and be fun at the same time!*

This issue looks at the history of fishing, tackle changes over the years and even the gadgets we use today. *You'll even get a chance to invent your own lure.*

www.fish.state.pa.us

The artwork above was extracted from a painting by Jack Paluh. To order a print of this artwork, contact Wilderness Editions at 1-800-355-7645 or email at www.wildernesseeditions.com.

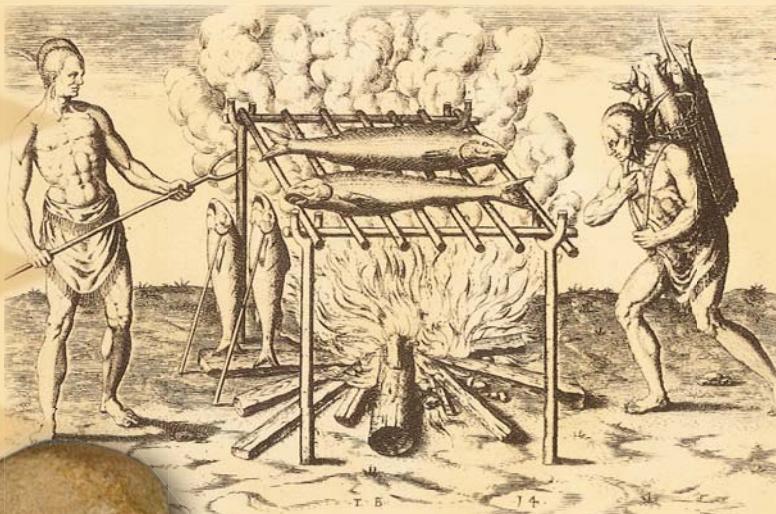
FISHING THE NORTH AMERICAN WAY

Native Americans had many different ways of catching fish. The Delaware Indians in the Chesapeake Bay area shot fish with a bow and arrow from a dugout canoe. They trapped fish behind dams and caught them with their bare hands. Sometimes they constructed weirs (wooden fencelike enclosures across a stream) to funnel fish into a woven trap basket. Nets (seines) were made with spun grass and stone sinkers. They even made hand lines with twisted plant fibers and hooks of bone or dried bird claws.

Tribes from the Great Lakes area, like the Menominee, went out at night in birch-bark canoes. Then they attracted fish with torchlights and speared them.



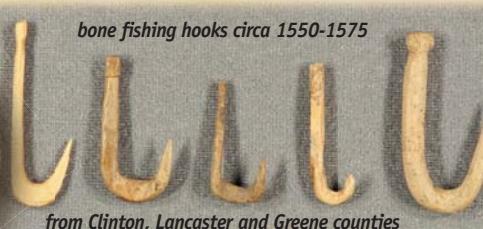
stone
sinkers
circa
1550-1575



Eskimos

along the Arctic Coast made spears with prongs, called "leisters." They constructed two dams across a stream and left one with a small opening. Char (a salmonlike fish) swam through the opening and became trapped. The Eskimos then speared the fish with their leisters.

Colville Indians along the Columbia River in Oregon let the fish do all the work for them. They built big baskets and hung them off the edge of cliffs near waterfalls. Migrating salmon jumped into the air to get over the falls and sometimes flopped into a basket.



bone fishing hooks circa 1550-1575

from Clinton, Lancaster and Greene counties

PLAY

ENOUGH FISH FOR EVERYONE

PENNSYLVANIA'S ANCESTRAL TRIBES

This list* includes Native American groups that lived in what is today Pennsylvania. Some are listed in other areas because those groups have relocated elsewhere.

- Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Cayuga Nation
- Delaware Nation, Oklahoma
- Delaware Tribe of Indians, Oklahoma
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Oneida Indian Nation
- Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin
- Onondaga Indian Nation
- Seneca Nation of Indians
- Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma
- St. Regis Mohawk Tribe
- Stockbridge-Munsee Community of Mohican Indians of Wisconsin
- Tonawanda Seneca Nation
- Tuscarora Nation



The first visitors to America were amazed with the rich, clean aquatic habitats. And they took advantage of all the fish in those habitats. They first caught fish on a small scale—just enough to feed their families. Settlers soon learned to focus on migratory fish. It was the best way to catch a bunch of food at once. America's population grew, and that's when commercial fishing became important.

American shad, shortnose and Atlantic sturgeon, American eels and paddlefish were plentiful. They were also easy to net or capture on their migration journeys to spawning areas.

Sturgeon migrated up the Delaware River and

were prized for their meat and caviar (eggs). American shad migrated up the Susquehanna and Delaware rivers.

Fisheries were set up in the 1800s to net the shad. Dried and salted shad were an important food source at that time.

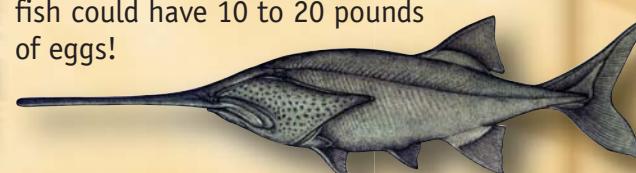


Even odd fish like eels and paddlefish were commercially harvested.

Eels were a delicacy when smoked.



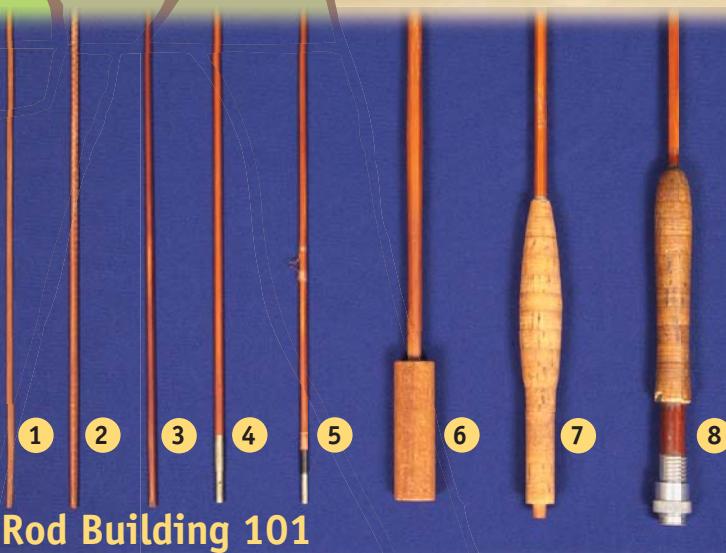
And their skins were used to wrap the handles of buggy whips. Paddlefish live in the Mississippi River up to the Ohio and Allegheny rivers in Pennsylvania. Their eggs made a great substitute for sturgeon caviar once the East Coast fisheries declined. One female paddlefish could have 10 to 20 pounds of eggs!



Fishing Rod History



In the 1600s, anglers began using wood for their rods. Many rods were 19 feet or longer in length! Wooden rods were carved to a point to get just the right amount of flexibility for angling.



Some historians

believe that the ancient Egyptians were the first to use fishing rods. Their rods were very long cane poles with some type of string line attached to the end to catch the fish.



1940-50s fly rod

Rod builders in the late 1800s began using metal to make fishing rods.

In 1845, Samuel Phillippe, a violinmaker from right here in Pennsylvania, built the first split-cane rod. He split cane into small strips and glued them together, making a rod that today is called a split-bamboo rod. Phillippe used three to four strips when building his rods. Several years later, rods were improved by making them with six strips, which is how they are still made today.



Wooden fishing rods like the ones shown on the left are built in steps. **Steps 1 through 5** show how rod sections go from one split piece to six pieces glued and sanded to finishing with hardware. **Steps 6 through 8** show how sections of the grip start and finish.

1934



1938



1944



*Commissioner Deibler congratulates David Shuey
for landing the largest trout of the day.*

During the 1900s, rod builders made the greatest improvements in rod construction. Fiberglass was the first great improvement. By the end of the 20th century, rods were made with graphite (a lightweight, manmade material). Our rods today are much lighter and more flexible because of the variety of manmade materials.



1957



**Who knows
what the
future
will hold?**

Maybe you will build
the next great fishing rod!

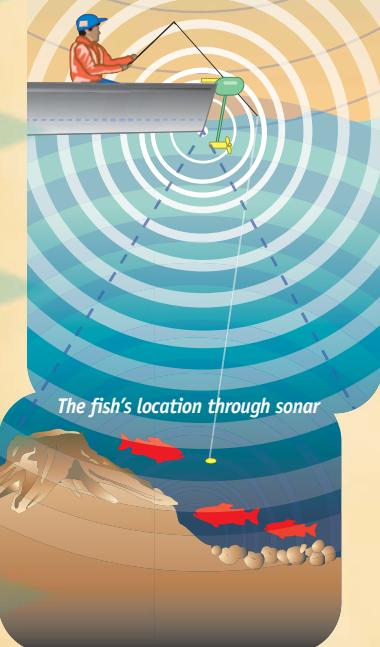


Fishing High Tech



*Your boat...
...it's the hub
of location.*

Your location through G.P.S.



Fishing gear has seen many changes in the last 100 years.

Many changes happened just after World War II. Sonar was first invented for use in the Navy. Anglers then adapted it for use in "fish finders." They check the depth of the water. They can also see if fish are below your boat. New types of plastics were also invented. One type was the fishing line used by almost every angler today. Other lures were made of new hard and soft plastics. Today, some new inventions stretch the imagination. Just think of using a video camera to look underwater. Now you can. You might even see if the fish are biting!

Global Positioning Systems (G.P.S.) are also available. They provide mapping and show your boat's location.



Some of these models combine both fish finder and G.P.S. as one unit.

pre-1920s antique lures

The Future of Fishing

From plain wooden plugs to neon paints and glitter,

lures have come a long way. What used to simply float or dive now buzzes, rattles, spins, glows and even stinks!

Fishing has changed a lot over the years. There are more types of tackle available today than ever before.

Anglers have many options for the types of lures available. How do you think lures will change in the future?

Design a lure that could be the next **hot-selling item**. Consider these things as you plan your design:

1. Which characteristics seem to attract fish?
2. Which characteristics will your lure use to attract fish?
3. When your lure is fished, what will it do? How will it act?
4. Why will fish be attracted to it?
5. Which materials will your lure be made of?
6. Which fish will your lure be designed to catch?
7. Will you use any of the "tricks" that ancient cultures or Native Americans used?

Draw your lure above and use the space below to explain all about it.