



FISHING REPORT

ALEX AMEIKA • SEPTEMBER 2023



September was a month of harsh conditions for the recreational angler. From the start of the month to mid-September, water levels were extremely low, making some spots unfishable. At the end of the month, there were days of persistent rain.

On a couple of the hotter days, I went to Burke Lake to try catching snakehead. I fished in the late morning until the early afternoon, while the sun was shining, and the shallow water was warm. While I usually prefer using topwater frogs rigged weedless for snakehead in most places, at Burke Lake, it appeared that the bait didn't matter. I tried a variety of lures I had brought with me, but I couldn't get one to hold on long enough for a hookset.

I fished another easy-to-access spot on the Shenandoah River, but the water level was very low. There were more exposed rocks than I'd ever seen, but the water was clear. Throwing a small plastic crawfish imitation on a 1/16-ounce jighead with a fluorocarbon leader, I managed to land a few smallmouth bass, mostly under one pound.

My roommate and I decided to go to Burke Lake for some kayak fishing late one evening. The water level was low and the hydrilla had grown thicker than I had ever witnessed before. I had hoped to target the pockets between the hydrilla patches by casting large baits for bass. Unfortunately, these usually easy-to-locate pockets were completely covered by the invasive plant. Nevertheless, we managed to land a few bass in the 2-pound range using topwater walking baits later in the night.

Finally, I fished a spot close to the Occoquan reservoir on the river below. There was a lot of small bait around, but I didn't have any luck with panfish or bass that day.



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