

Pat John
Southeast District Fisheries Technician
Fisheries Division
North Dakota Game and Fish Department



Greetings fellow anglers. My name is Pat John, fisheries technician stationed at the Jamestown field office. I was born and raised right here in Jamestown where I grew up spending much of my formative years either on, in, or around the James River and Jamestown Reservoir. Some things never change as I now spend a great deal of time either in, on, or around area lakes and rivers. I graduated from Jamestown High School in '79, after which I figured I'd need money over more book-learnin' so I went into the concrete construction business and after breaking my back for thirteen years, I came to realize that I figured wrong. I enrolled at Valley City State in '89 and managed to graduate with honors in '93 with a B.A. in Biology/Environmental Science. I gained my first experience in the natural resources world as a part-time park ranger for the Corps of Engineers at Pipestem Dam, just north of Jamestown. I am also a US Army veteran and retiree from the ND National Guard with over 26 years of service.

I began my career with ND Game and Fish in 1994 as fisheries technician at the Devils Lake field office. Unlike most other technicians, I had no previous fisheries experience, but with the patience and tutelage of Hiltner, Schlueter and Miller, I started to catch on. In fact I'm still catching on. As a fisheries technician, there are always new challenges. Seldom does one day resemble the previous or the following. One day could involve collecting pike eggs on Lake Ashtabula in near-blizzard conditions while the next may be in short sleeves assisting with a new boat ramp at Crystal Springs, or anything in between. During any given open-water season, I'll get to about fifty "active" district lakes where we may be moving fish from lake to lake, spawning pike, removing bullheads, test netting, monitoring water quality, installing artificial habitat ... the list is endless. Another aspect of my work involves maintenance of equipment which takes a lot of time. Our boats, trailers and outboards really take a beating throughout the course the year and constant repairs and maintenance are the norm. Keeping breakdowns at bay requires considerable experience with outboard motors, wheel bearings, lights, wiring, welding, fabrication ... this list also goes on and on.

One of the coolest parts of my job is knowing where the fish are, not necessarily where they will bite. I'm usually willing to share this info (!) so stop in on your way by and get the low-down. I'll gladly take any tips on hot bites you may know of too!!!