



# SUMMER LONG WEEKEND DRIFT DIVING EVENTS

Whether you are a seasoned and experienced Drift Diver, had a Drift Dive as part of your AOW Course with FNF or have just completed your Drift Diver Certification, this document contains all the key information you'll need for a fun, safe and hassle free Holiday Monday Drift Diving event in the Niagara River with Float N' Flag! If you're new to the group, don't be offended if we ask you some questions about your diving history and experience. We want to make sure you're going to have a safe weekend and it helps us to pair up divers that are new to the Niagara River with those more familiar with it.

## THE NIAGARA RIVER SUMMER LONG WEEKEND DRIFT DIVES

The following important information is everything you need to know so you can have an amazing, safe and fun time drift diving the Niagara River with Float N' Flag Dive Centre.

The first important item is DIVE EQUIPMENT

If you are attending and need ANY rental equipment, you must reserve it in advance so we can have any equipment ready for pick on the Saturday of the Long Weekend. We have a large group of divers, so you don't want to be left out because there is no equipment for you.

Based on 2 Dives you will need the following scuba kit or parts thereof.

2 x Alum 80 Air + full Scuba Kit = \$150 +tax

2 x Alum 80 Nitrox + full Scuba Kit = \$170 +tax

2 x Steel 100/117 Nitrox + full Scuba kit = \$190 +tax

2 x Alum 80 Air Fill + Tank rentals on own = \$60 +tax

2 x Alum 80 Nitrox Fill + Tank rentals on own = \$80 +tax

2 x Steel 100/117 Nitrox Fill + Tank rentals on own = \$90 +tax





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Every Diver **MUST** have the following equipment. These are mandatory items.

- Dive buddy - If you don't have one, we will find one for you
- Wet Suit for warmth and protection against sharp or protruding obstacles. Recommend a 5-7mm as a minimum, depending on water temperature.
- Hood for warmth
- Gloves with protected or reinforced palms of some kind, as there are lots of zebra mussels, rocks, debris and fishing lures.
- Each 2-person buddy group **MUST** have a diver below surface FLOAT and FLAG. This is required as we are in a boat traffic area
- Each diver must have a separate Surface Marker Buoy with reel in the unlikely event they become separated from the main Diver Below Float N" Flag
- Each diver must have a Line Cutter, Knife or Shears of some kind.
- Each diver must have a Computer or watch that has a timer function. Timing is key to a successful exit of these dives or you will do the walk (swim) back and feel much shame.
- Water to stay hydrated, snacks, towel, change of clothes and other items you require for your diving safety and enjoyment

Scuba Diving is an outdoor activity and is therefore subject to dive and weather conditions. If dive conditions may put anyone at risk, the day or dives may be called off by the dive leaders. Please check your e-mail before leaving home as we will try to notify everyone as early in the morning as possible if we need to delay or cancel our diving activities.

Please ensure you have registered your participation on the FLOAT N' FLAG website or at the store, as this will allow quick notification if there are any changes to the event.



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We monitor the following sites to determine conditions for the day



Water Temperature off Buffalo at River Entrance

<https://www.weather.gov/buf/LakeTemp>



**The Weather  
Network**

<https://www.theweathernetwork.com/ca/weather/ontario/fort-erie>



**myradar™**

An excellent weather radar app available for Apple and Android devices



**Government  
of Canada**

**Gouvernement  
du Canada**

<https://wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/>

Real Time Water Level and Flow rates at Fort Erie. Monitor Station #02HA013



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## DIVE DAY INFORMATION

### DIVE #1 - The Train Bridge



The first dive of the day will start from Instinct Park next to the TRAIN BRIDGE at the bottom of Jarvis St. and Niagara

The GPS address:

601 Niagara Blvd, Fort Erie, ON L2A 3H1

Once everyone arrives will check the river conditions and if all is good, brief the dive, assign teams as necessary, get gear ready, buddy check, move cars and then into the water for about a 20ft 45min dive.

This dive can start with an exciting 6ft giant drive of the pier wall or a gentle step in off a 2ft wall in the small bay. This is a fast-exciting start to the day with quick moving water. You and your dive buddy must both ready to go before jumping in





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the river otherwise you will get separated. Once in the water and you are ready to dive, be sure to start your timer for about a 30-40min dive at depths of around 15-25ft.

During this dive you can see several sunken cars at around the 15ft depth at the start, lots or large fish of several varieties, an old dock, piers, moorings and remains of a barge. Keep an eye out for huge rocks that seem to pop up suddenly and fast.

At around the 30min mark we recommend you surface and look for the exit. The exit is next to a small pump house. When climbing out, watch for exposed concrete and rebar, slippery rocks, and tree roots.

There will be a 1-hour surface interval before the next dive.

## Dive #2 - Frenchman's Creek







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The second dive of the day will start from the Pump House located near Frenchman's Creek Historic site.

The GPS address:

1237 Niagara Parkway, Fort Erie, ON L2A 3H1

As this is the second scheduled dive, we will change tanks, have a surface interval of at least 1 hour, move cars to the next exit and then start the second dive.

This dive starts with an easy entrance near the pumphouse. When going down to the water, watch out for exposed tree roots, slippery rocks, concrete, and rebar.

This will be a slower dive and lasts about 45-50mins dive time with a depth of around 20th.

During this dive, you can see variety in the bottom terrain from wide beds of shells that look like sandy beaches to exposed clay terraces that house 100's of small Gobies in the holes and overhangs. Keep an eye out for big fish hanging around in the valleys and pits of the constantly changing bottom terrain.

At around the 40-45min mark surface and look for the exit. To the left side of the exit, there is a large steel culvert. The exit is about 50ft along to the right of the culvert and is a small gravel beach with a stone ledge. When climbing out watch for slippery loose rock and roots, get assistance with heavy gear.

This concludes the diving for the day. Please make sure to properly break down your equipment. If you have rented equipment, make sure dust caps are on your regulators, BCD's are drained, wet suits are cleaned and rinsed in clean fresh water and returned promptly to FLOAT N' FLAG.



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## FISHY THINGS TO SEE UNDERWATER

Drift diving in the Niagara River is a great place to see several species of freshwater fish that call Ontario lakes and rivers home. As always, remember you are a guest in their home, so don't molest or annoy them.

### Lake Sturgeon



Considered a threatened species, this living fossil has been making a comeback on the local front. These fish are easily identifiable by the sharp bony plates along their back and sides, and by their long pointed snout. Lake sturgeon can grow to lengths of over six feet, weigh in excess of 200 pounds and live to be more than 100 years old.

Your best bet at seeing one of these fish is in the Niagara River. It is illegal to possess these fish.

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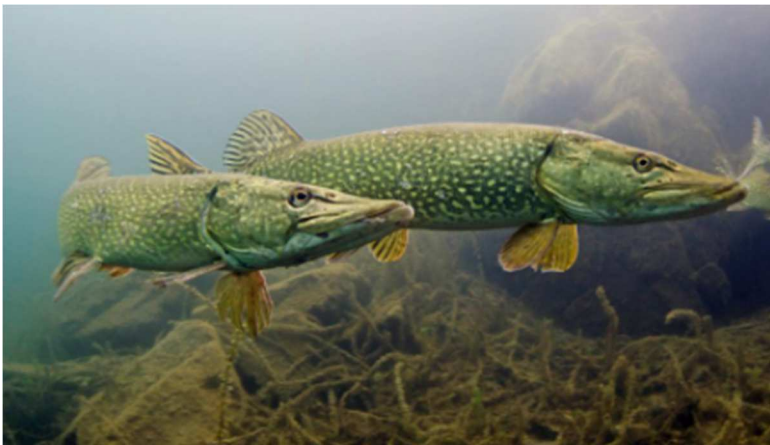
## Fresh Water Drum / Sheepshead



The sheepshead, or freshwater drum, is the only member of the drum family that lives entirely in freshwater in North America. They are quite common throughout the Great Lakes. The ear bones in the head of the fish have long been considered "lucky stones." Average size is only about 15 inches long, but

they do get much bigger. Their teeth look like human teeth.

## Northern Pike



This first cousin to the musky can be found with frequency throughout the Greater Niagara area. They can be found in weedy areas around the Niagara River, as well as some of the harbors off Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. Fish over 20 pounds have been

recorded from local waters. This is a territorial fish with sharp teeth, so go around them, they will not move for you.



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## Muskie



Muskellunge closely resembles the **Northern Pike** in both appearance and behavior. Like the pike, this is an aggressive ambush predator with an elongated body, flat head, and dorsal, pelvic, and anal **fins** set far back on the body.

Muskellunge are typically 28–48 in (71–122 cm) long and weigh

15–36 lb. This is a territorial fish with sharp teeth, so go around them, they will not move for you.

## Blue Gill / Pumpkinseed



**Pumpkinseeds** are very similar to the **Bluegill**, and are often found in the same habitats. One difference between the two species is their opercular flap. The flap is black in both species, but the **pumpkinseed** has a crimson spot in the shape of a halfmoon on the back portion of its opercular flap.

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## Round Goby



These small exotic invaders spell bad news for the local fish communities. Introduced into the Great Lakes through illegal ship ballast exchanges in the past decade, population levels have exploded and they are starting to displace native species of fish. Look for the Goby condo

complex in the clay terraces near the end of Dive #2.

## Zebra Mussels



The zebra mussel is a small freshwater mussel that was originally native to the lakes of southern Russia and Ukraine, but have become an invasive species in many countries worldwide. Since the 1980s, the species has invaded the Great Lakes. Zebra mussels are filter-feeding organisms; they remove particles from the water column and process up to one liter of water per day, per mussel. Some particles are consumed as food.



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Since the zebra mussel has become established in [Lake Erie](#), water clarity has increased from 6 inches to up to three feet in some areas. This increased water clarity allows sunlight to penetrate deeper, enabling growth of submerged plants that when decay, wash up on shorelines, fouling beaches and causing water-quality problems. The shells are very sharp and will cut through skin and gloves if not careful

## Largemouth Bass

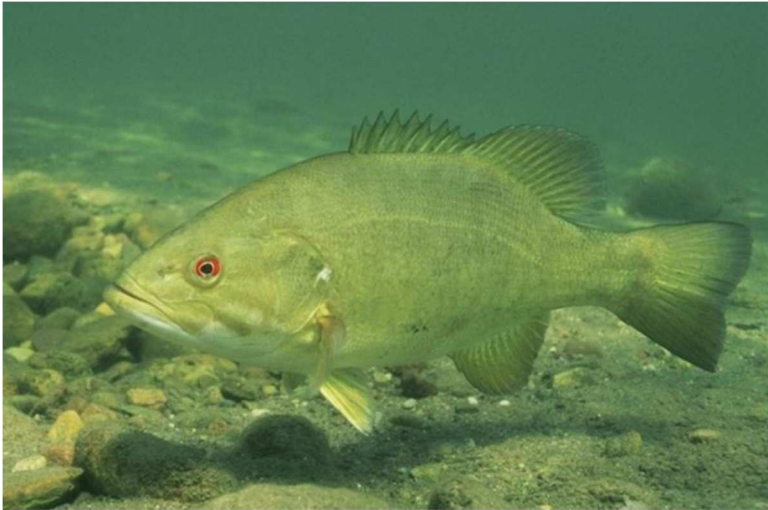


Largemouth bass have made a tremendous comeback to the Niagara Region. The presence of the zebra mussel, along with stringent pollution controls, has contributed to very clear water conditions throughout the Great Lakes. This has resulted in significant weed growth, giving the largemouth a place to grow and prosper. A big largemouth over eight pounds was caught in

the summer of 2002. Largemouths are found in shallow, weedy areas of the Niagara River, as well as in bays and harbors lining the shores of both Lake Ontario and Lake Erie.

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## Smallmouth Bass



The **smallmouth bass** is a species of freshwater fish in the sunfish family. It is a popular game fish sought by anglers throughout the temperate zones of North America, and has been spread by stocking—as well as illegal introductions—to many

cool-water tributaries and lakes in Canada and the United

States. The maximum recorded size is approximately 27 inches and 12 pounds.

## Smashmouth Bassist



**Paul Gerald De Lisle** (born June 13, 1963) is a Canadian musician and songwriter. He is the bassist and one of two constant members of the pop rock band Smash Mouth since their formation in 1994.



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## A'PRES DIVE

As always diving is about having fun with friends and enjoying the day. We always look forward to a good meal and a chance to relax before the drive home.

Please feel free to join us at the Lighthouse on the Parkway Restaurant for some good friends with some good natured abuse, jokes and stories of the giant fish or whale shark you saw in the river.

4301 Niagara Pkwy Fort Erie Canada, approximately 1 block from the Netherby Road intersection.

