



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 3

#209

FOUNDED 1991

March 2012

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The last meeting was held February 13, 2012 with members and 17 guests present.

We welcomed Brad Osborn of Fort Wayne as a new prospective member.

Everyone was bored stiff due to insufficient ice to do any ice fishing and yet just enough ice that a boat couldn't be launched. Denny stated that within a couple of weeks, the ice would be gone and we would be able to fish once again.....and he was dead on! Every area lake is now open and ready to be fished. Get your boat (and trailer) prepared for the season. Change oil (if applicable), lower unit gear lube, and be sure to check trailer bearings. A new set of spark plugs is good insurance for the season. If you haven't done so already, this is a good time to tear reels down for a thorough cleaning and lubrication. If monofilament line is over a year or two old, consider replacing. Wire and braid can last longer, but braid will wear and wire can "wear-hardened". Check it out and remove the last 20-30 yards if necessary. Reels should be fully spooled with line.

Check rod tips and guides for wear or looseness.

Make sure you have 100 feet of anchor rope (and a good anchor) and have at least one marker buoy with 40-50 feet of line. This is the time of year where a spinning rod can come in handy. Spring weather conditions in the Midwest can be all over the place. Sometime small jigs can make all the difference. Be prepared!

Denny also suggested a fish "gripper" for the toothy critters. They are available at Bass Pro Shops for around \$22.00. He also suggested having a good pair of LONG needle nose pliers. Having the proper

equipment to handle and release musky and northern pike can save the fish as well as prevent bloody fingers! Someone also suggested carrying a pair of cutters that can quickly cut through a 5/0 hook. Some horror stories ensued about getting one hook in the hand or leg while another hook was still in a flopping musky or northern. Ouch!

Denny said that the first 2-3 days in the spring that are 50 degrees or above with wind blowing into the bays would trigger crappies. He also suggested that the pre-spawn muskies would also be active under the same conditions. Often times these fish can be in as little as 2 feet of water so don't rule out these ultra-shallow depths this time of year.

John mentioned that in our natural lakes, there are always some fish living in the weeds, some under docks, etc. This is why tournament guys fish these areas. However, these fish are stragglers. They are rarely, if ever, and any type of schooled situation. Schools are what the Spoonpluggers seeks. We live for the next time we get into a school of adult fish and can hook one on every cast. This is the ultimate in fishing. Consider that even though most Spoonpluggers have experienced this thrill from time to time, most fishermen NEVER have had the experience. It is one of the things that makes Spoonplugging unique.

REMINDER: March meeting is being held a week earlier than normal (See below)

NEXT MEETING: March 12, 2012 at the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.

" KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS "

Illinois Spoonpluggers

Winter Seminar

March 24, 2012
Elk Grove Public Library from 9:00 A.M. to 4:45 P.M.
Elk Grove, Illinois
Contact Jim Duplex
(630) 579-9815
jjd82@sbcglobal.net

Leoni Spoonpluggers Jackson, MI

June 20,21,22,23,24, 2012
Contact John Zaborny (517) 414-3508
jszaborny@yahoo.com

Muskegon Outing Muskegon, Michigan

Fisherman's Landing Campground
July 11, 12, 13, 14, 2012
Contact: Chase Klinesteker (616) 949-8665
Ckspoon1@aol.com

Northern Indiana Spoonpluggers

"Buck Sez" Outing

Columbia City, Indiana
Forest Ridge Campground (NW of Columbia City)
August 16, 17, 18, 2012
Contact: John Bales (260) 854-3921
johnb@kuntrynet.com
Denny Coulardot (260) 691-3118
coular@peoplepc.com

Buck Perry Memorial Outing

Taylorsville, NC
September 8, 9, 10, 2011
Contact: Terry O'Malley (828) 324-0661
Jeri Perry (828) 632-8058
buckperry@charter.net

Spoonpluggers Jamboree

Kentucky Lake/Barkley Lake

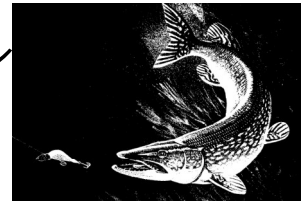
Kenlake State Park and Resort
October 4, 5, 6, 2012
Contact: John Bales (260) 854-3921
johnspoon@embarqmail.com
Fran Myers (651) 492-6672
myersf@comcast.net

" KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS "



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



Got out this past weekend and did it feel good! Saturday, I went with Jeff Parham to Crooked Lake over by Denny's house. We got 30 bass with about half of them from 2 to 3 lbs. Not much going in the morning but by noon, they started to get more active. This is normal for this time of year for the best part of the day to be right at mid day. Oh, by the way, Jeff is getting pretty good with a silver buddy. He not only kept up with me but at times was ahead. His time on the water shows with his success. Good job Jeff. Sunday, I needed to get over to Shipshewana Lake. I knew this could be a mistake for a couple of reasons. With the bad front and high winds, this lake may not offer enough depth to offset the bad conditions. Even with the great water color, I could be in trouble. But I needed to know so I took the chance. Fished from 8:30 to 2:30 and caught only one bass around 3 1/2lbs and 20 4 inch crappie and a 16 inch short nosed gar and had a giant carp on for about ten seconds. The deeper section was stacked with fish but they did not become active enough for me to catch them for the time that I was on the water. Do I look at this as a failure? Of course not. Just another learning experience.

Our choice of lakes to fish can make the difference between success and just another learning experience like I had on Sunday. We should spend time thinking about what lakes may or may not be the best choice under certain weather conditions and the time of year. Water color is the key for fishing success. It is the number one part of our fishing that we can control. What species we want to go after on these same conditions and if the populations are good should be considered also. Walleyes are a good early season fish to consider because they are more active than the bass for this time of year. The northern pike lakes are a good bet after a major cold front, not the bass.

We should spend some time going through our Uncle Larry's lake map books during the season. Not just to study the contour lines in the shallows, the deep, and all in between, but to keep in mind what water colors and species these lakes have to offer. If you have not fished some of them, this season might be a good one to pick out ten of them and try to fish them all. Fishing the same lakes all the time can become boring and your learning could slow because of that. You should always have something to look forward to for the upcoming season. In this way, you keep the fire burning. Knowledge cannot be pushed into a person's brain. It has to be absorbed. Desire is not something that someone else can give you or make you have. It must already be there. Knowing that someone is willing to work hard at Spoonplugging and viewing their success is about as good as it gets for me. At the last meeting, Shawn Nicodemus had spent a day on the river with no success. Denny and I drew him a map and showed him where they will be. A couple of days later, I get an e-mail from Shawn with a stringer full of smallmouth which he later released and a thank you from him also. This is my ultimate feeling of satisfaction when others can experience success. To see someone go out and work hard at putting fishing knowledge to work, on the water, is the best teacher there is. His desire to learn just got stronger.

Good Spoonplugging
John Bales

“ KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”



“The more I learn, the more I see there is to learn.” *E. L. “Buck” Perry*

BUCK SEZ:

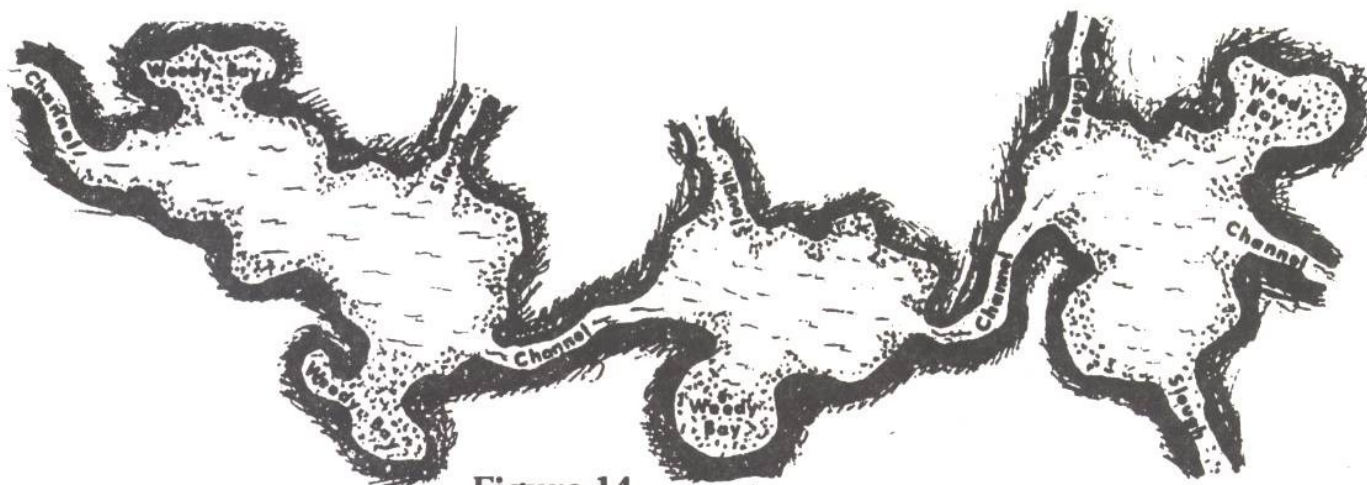


Figure 14

When viewing northern pike from a seasonal standpoint, there are things worthy of note. The pre-spawning or spawning period will find northern in the weedy bays and sloughs. Figure 14 shows a “chain” or series of lakes. The weedy bays and sloughs are noted. The northern will spawn earlier than most fish in the lake. **After spawning, the main structures and breaklines in the lake would be worked as with any other species.**

Another thought concerning northern in a series of lakes such as this is their apparent mass movement from one lake to another during the warmer part of the season. Large concentrations of big northern may show up in a lake during a certain period and fishing can be terrific for a week or more. Then the action slows in this particular lake, and the fish start showing up in the lake above, and later on in the lake above that one, and so on. When in a given area, these fish will use the structures present. Apparently, they make the return journey—as the next season, the movements starts all over again in the same lake at approximately the same period.

Fishermen who fish primarily for this species, and who fish water of this nature (Lake chain) would be wise to study this yearly migration fully. A definite pattern of date periods may not be possible, as the migration would be controlled by the weather and water conditions that exist, and very few years would be the same. But a good enough pattern could be secured to keep the fisherman in the most likely spots.

Many fishermen consider the northern pike a cold water fish. This is true, to a certain extent, as he is active in colder water, often being the target of the “ice fisherman.” But, it would be well to note, the best action occurs during the hottest periods of the year. Casting for northern can be effective, especially when they are in the shallows. But, to consistently catch BIG northern in numbers, trolling the deeper weedlines, breaklines, and drop-offs with appropriate lures is the way to go for most of the season.

When thinking of muskie, we change our view very little from that of the northern. Except in certain reservoirs, the shallower headwater sections will be prime spawning areas. After the water warms, they move back to the deeper sections. In the case of muskie, his deepwater sanctuary may be much deeper—and as he gets larger, he becomes more reluctant to move to shallow waters. His migration will be shorter and for less time. Where bass may have their “shallow” deepwater sanctuary, in 30-35 feet of water, muskie at the same time may have his at 45-55 feet if available. Big muskie are very reluctant to move shallow except during spawning period. After spawning, big muskie in the shallows become few and far between. If a particular lake had several deep holes with different depths, the muskie fisherman should concentrate his efforts around the deepest one for most of the season. Here again, lures trolled at deep breaklines will shoot to pieces the myth that muskies are difficult to catch.

“ KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”