



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

VOLUME 18 ISSUE 4

#222

FOUNDED 1991

April 2013

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The last meeting was held March 18, 2013 at the Kendallville Public Library with 15 members and guests present.

We started the meeting with John Bales showing a small segment of the latest video produced by Stephen Gillian of Spoonplugger Films, LLC. The video is a 6 disk set shot on the Detroit River in October 2012. See the complete review on the following page. Denny reported that most lake temperatures were 34 to 36 degrees and many lakes had not yet completely opened up. That has, of course, changed now that temperatures have moved to a more spring-like nature. Denny said the fish are still pretty dormant and fishing was very slow with only a few being caught.

Everyone is anxious to get out there and catch some fish. We need to keep in mind that spring/spawning time is the most unique time of the year. The fish are presently in the deeper holes but won't remain there long with the recent rise in air temperature combined with the strong winds mixing up the warming water. The fish will soon start staging near their spawning areas...if they haven't already spawned... and will move shallow as soon as conditions permit. They just don't

have a choice. And since they are at the mercy of their reproductive nature, they can be much less predictable than at other times of the year. This is the great advantage of Spoonplugging; if we follow the guidelines, we can be as adaptable as the fish we are attempting to catch. Read John's questions carefully on page three to get an idea of the things we need to be aware of in order to be successful...and it is especially important to be adaptable at this time of year when weather and water conditions can be so unstable.

Pay particular attention to his comments on line length. It's something many of us have neglected to give due consideration.

John reported on the Annual Chicago Winter Seminar. He relayed that the speakers were very good and gave really interesting talks. John talked tools and controls and took in his rods, reels, baits, etc. as examples of how he sets his equipment up. He was pleasantly surprised at the reception he got. It seems everyone was quite interested and he may bring his equipment to one of our meetings in the near future.

NEXT MEETING: April 15, 2013 at the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.

“ KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”

SPOONPLUGGER FILM REVIEW

I'm a bit reluctant to give this kind of praise since it's liable to make John Bales head swell to the size where his ponytail becomes obscure and he'll begin trying to charge members for autographs, but even given that downside, I have to say this of the latest (3rd) in the **In-Your-Face** series videos on Natural Lakes: John and Stephen have hit it out of the park!

Following the short section of video John Bales recently showed to the Northern Indiana Spoonplugger's March meeting, it brought back fond memories of fishing with John during the early days of discovery of one of America's greatest smallmouth bass fisheries; the Detroit River/Lake Erie junction. Of course, smallmouth are not the only species in the area. There are also walleye and Great Lakes muskies, but smallies are the drug that keeps many of us addicted to the area.

This 3rd in the "In-Your-Face" video series was directed and produced by Stephen Gillian of **Spoonplugger Films LLC**. If you haven't seen the first two you're missing out on some great Spoonplugging instruction and footage of John Bales explaining and dissecting natural lakes. Although the first two in the series also focus on natural lakes, the instructions apply to reservoirs as well. John and Stephen spent several days at the confluence of the Detroit River and Lake Erie which contains quite a bit of manmade structure shooting the video. This particular production includes 6 disks and is loaded with information that would be helpful...make that vital to anyone planning a fishing trip to the area, but even if you're never going to fish this area, the videos offer a wealth of information on locating schools of fish on the troll and then making a catch on the cast. This 6 disk set is available for \$103.50 (includes shipping) at:

Spoonplugger Films, LLC

P.O. Box 2494

Christiansburg, VA 24068

Tel: 540-446-1764

sg@spoonpluggerfilms.com

Disk #1 explains the area fished in detail which will be helpful for those who intend to fish there at some point in time but may also offer insights to fisheries elsewhere. The next 5 disks explain how to locate schools of bass on the troll and then catch as many as possible casting to the school which is information that anyone can use no matter where they fish.

So, this is a valuable instructional for beginners and veterans alike and I have no reservations whatsoever in recommending it...despite having to now pay for autographs.

The questions that you may ask include:

Does this video compare to the professional fishermen programs I see on TV? The answer is NO!

This is better by a factor of 10! The video includes split screen so you can monitor the depth meter as you view and listen to the commentary. There are also drafts and drawings interspersed to further explain what is being accomplished. It's as close to being in the boat with someone I've ever seen on film. To compare it to the things we usually see on the various sports channels would be an insult to Stephen and John.

Doesn't this cost a lot? After viewing the series, I can't imagine anyone complaining about the price. It's really an investment! A great many hours went into the production and it meets or exceeds the high quality I've come to appreciate from Stephen's work. As for John's instructions....well, (I'll probably regret saying this, but) his instructionals are simply as good as it gets. How much would you pay for a day out with a guide? And I guarantee you'd not get even a small fraction of the information present in these videos.

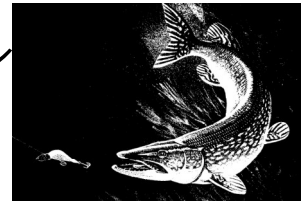
If this series doesn't inspire you to fish this area...or fish in a similar manner elsewhere...you might as well sell your fishing equipment and take up croquet. Just sayin'.

" KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS "



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



I Have Some Questions.....

How long do you check a particular depth before you can say that the fish are not there? How much do you vary your speeds to find the correct one? What about line lengths? We have mentioned line lengths more in the last few years than we ever have. I suppose the boys from the south had a lot to do with the chatter on that subject. Have you ever considered when a short line is in order and when a long line should be checked? What about the short lines used in the Florida lakes for the bass? What about trolling a lure in the prop wash for the Musky? Have you ever considered making several passes on one spot with different lures and different line lengths? Let's say that we are trolling a bar and we want to hit it at ten feet. If we chose a 200 and No-Bo line and make a pass with 8 layers or two colors and bump the bar, would you consider that spot to be fished and assume there are no fish there? Did you ever read where Mr. Perry says to start with a 500 and let out one color and go for a distance and then let out two colors and then go for a distance and then let out three colors and check that line length? Why do you suppose he said that?

Do you have a reason for making every trolling pass? Do you vary your speeds. Are you aware of exactly where your lure is when trolling a mucky bottom? When you are finished trolling a bar or any feature, are you completely convinced that you have done a good job and if the fish were there you would have caught him? Do you fish with confidence that when casting or trolling, you are doing it correctly? Are you prepared to spend the entire day trolling all of the best features in the lake until the fish become active? If you are not making any contact with the fish on the troll, are you reluctant to cast a few of the best spots to check out the slower speeds? If a very bad front goes through do you go fishing or do you stay home and wait for a better weather condition? This answer may vary, depending on if you are retired or still working or if you are one who is just lazy or a self motivated person.

Do you ever consider what lake might be best to fish on a particular day or season? Did you ever consider that some species may be easier to catch during a bad weather condition? What species should you think about fishing for when the water temperature is 43 degrees? How would you go about it? Pretty lake, Pike Lake, Sylvan Lake and Winona Lake. What do these lakes have in common? When fishing for the walleye, which lake would be the best right after ice out? Which lake would be the toughest and why? Would you fish them all in the same manner? The bass are spawning in Atwood Lake. If you want to fish a lake that the bass are not spawning yet, what lake would you go to and why did you pick it? If the musky are done spawning in Skinner and you still want to find some fish shallow that are not done yet, what lake would you head to and why?

You are fishing in the late fall and most of the lakes are frozen. Which lake do you head to for some open water and why?

Do you start planning your weekend several days ahead in your mind? Which lake should I go to? What time of the year is it? What have the weather conditions been like the last few days and what will they be on the day that I want to fish? What fishing equipment will I have to take with me? Will I have what I need if I run into this situation or that situation? Should I lay out a marker before I make this pass? Is my net out and ready? Do I have some anchor rope out and is it ready to throw or is it still tied up or buried in the storage box?

Lots of stupid questions huh? Are they stupid? There are over 260 pages in the green book. Each statement should be questioned.

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:

Just don't forget that clear water can mean the movements are not as predictable; they occur deeper, for a shorter distance, and for less time than those in water of less clarity. It is for this reason, we consider the selection of water color as the most important thing you can do to make a good catch. You can't control the weather, the water conditions, the movements of the fish or his appetite, BUT you can control, in most instances, the water color.

In time, a good Spoonplugger can work out ANY water. If it's clear, it takes a little longer. He will work hard and become good in his interpretation and presentation.

Fortunately, the fisherman does not have to limit himself to just clear conditions. He usually has a choice of different bodies of water, or the SEASONAL CHANGES in water color that occur in both natural and man-made lakes.

In natural lakes there is a degree of change due to algae growth, pollution, boat activity, wind and rain run-off. In artificial reservoirs there is a seasonal change, and in addition, very few reservoirs exist that do not have different water color in different areas. Normally, the upper part of a reservoir will have darker color due to the feeder streams. A good rule to follow is to move toward the headwaters of the main channel or feeder streams when seeking darker water. This could also be true when the reverse is desired.

There are, however, some areas where a fisherman does not have access to a great variety of water. He is limited to water in his area that does not change during the season—a stabilizing water color. If this is a problem, he should realize it and fish accordingly. For instance, if the only available water is clear and deep, he knows from the study how light affects fish, he would have to expect the fish to be deep most of the time, and he would have to present the lures properly. If this proves too difficult, he would put the emphasis on picking the right weather conditions, such as cloudy, hazy, or rainy days; or fish early or late. Or at night so the clear water is partially offset by the darker conditions.

Most of the time we will be faced with too much clarity. But, in some sections of the country at certain periods of the year, we may face water which is too muddy. The entire lake may be affected, but still, some sections will have a greater degree of clarity (less muddy) than others. Most of the time the problem is not finding waters with more clarity, but rather **finding more dingy areas**. Your selection of water color will have a definite bearing on your catches. It could spell the difference between catching fish or not catching fish. It will determine whether or not fishing is easy or tough.

“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”