



# NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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The last meeting was held April 15, 2013 at the Kendallville Public Library with 14 members and guests present.

We looked over some old fishing magazine donated by Glenn Helbert as well as many VHS videos. Glenn has also carved several really neat Spoonplugs from cedar this past winter at his Texas retreat while imagining the rest of the NIS members drilling holes in ice and shivering while perched on plastic buckets and staring blankly at the tip of a flimsy 2 foot long pole....

Water temperatures in area lakes were reported as still quite low at 43 to 46 degrees. Due to these low temperatures and the unstable weather conditions, the fish were very inactive for mid-April. We have experienced very poor fishing conditions this spring....even for the Midwest! As we move from spring into early summer, the weather conditions typically become more stable and we should be due for a little stability! To add insult to injury, many of the lakes are being sprayed for weeds....during the heart of spawning season...which puts even more stress on those fish that have yet to spawn. Spraying of weeds was a rarity 10 years ago

but is now a yearly event on many if not most lakes and there seems to be very little fishermen can do about it. Boating, jetskiing and similar watersports trumps fishing and the only thing we can do is try to adapt to the situation.

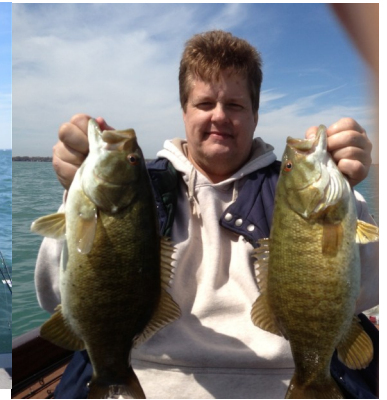
Denny reported catching 5 muskies so far from 36 to 45 inches.

Both Denny and John suggested fishing the smaller area lakes as they tend to warm up several weeks faster than the larger, deeper lakes.

John also recommended that those fishing the soft-bottomed lakes suggested for early fishing be very aware of watching their rod tips when on the troll. Some of these recommended lakes have bottom sediments that are so light and "loose" that your Spoonplug can actually be running underneath the bottom and you can barely feel it. Watching the rod tip can help detect such a bottom condition with a little practice. This is especially important when using long line lengths this time of year.

**NEXT MEETING: May 20, 2013 at the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.**

**" KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS "**



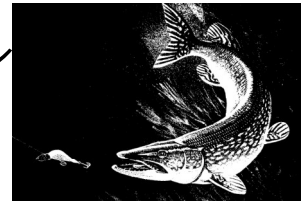
Lake St. Clair outing Friday/Monday: May 3-6 , 2013. The three day total for 6 Spoonpluggers in 3 boats was 608 quality fish. We caught 'em trolling. We caught 'em casting. We caught 'em trolling to speeds of 4 mph. We caught 'em casting tubes dragged along the bottom. We caught 'em ripping Bales Blades. We caught 'em singly and had multiple doubles. We caught mostly smallies but sometimes the walleye, muskies, and northern pike got in the way. This fish came on blade baits, crankbaits, jerkbaits, tube jigs, and home-made lures. We used NO-BO and braided line; spinning rods and bait casting rods. We fished three main areas; and incredibly we caught 'em where no one else was fishing. And when other boats came into our areas, and even saw us taking pictures, they just kept on going! We used the latest electronics to find and work the structure situations but never saw the fish we were catching. Structure, not baitfish, was our guide to where the fish were located. We witnessed the inability of bass boats to adjust to the fishing conditions.

**“ KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”**



# Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



Weather and water conditions! These are the two factors that determine how good or how bad the fishing will be. Under stable weather and water conditions, the fishing will be easier. We are conditioned to watch the weather conditions most all of the season. We know that the main thing that we are concerned with is a cold front. Here in Indiana or anywhere in the Midwest, we are lucky to have three days of stable weather before a cold front blasts through. Lucky for us that we have the northern pike, a few walleye and the musky in some of our lakes. We know that when we look at a weather condition, we look at it as a light condition. Pre-frontal conditions produce a dark condition with lots of clouds and post-frontal conditions are normally associated with a clear blue washed out sky. The day after the front, there can still be a few fish around but sometimes the second day after the front can be worse yet!

What if we have a bad weather condition and a bad water condition at the same time? Let's look at what happened a few weeks ago. Eight inches of rain in just a few days. How did that affect our water conditions? First of all, the runoff in many of the lakes turned the water a bit muddy. Second of all, Mr. Perry stated one time that a single inch of water over and above the norm will put so many foot pounds of pressure on the fish and that alone will give the fish a belly ache. What about 8 inches? I don't know the exact physics of what he was speaking but since he was right about everything else in fishing, I accept what he says as fact.

If you were wanting to find a place to fish after all this rain, I would look to some of our clear water lakes with less run off. The fact that all of our lakes were high and it was a pretty quick change in the fish's environment, we will have to wait for conditions to become stable again before we can expect better fish movements. Mr. Perry always said that fishing is usually bad and then it gets worse.

So far this year, we have had much colder temperatures and last week, we finally had some stable weather and the water conditions have had a chance to stabilize also. And as it always does, another front moved in and we start over. Day 1, Day 2, Day 3,..... cold front, Day 1, Day 2, cold front..... Day 1, cold front, sound familiar? This is the way it works. The fish are completely controlled by the weather and water conditions. You can be a great Spoonplugger and know everything there is to know and you will only catch what the weather and water conditions allow you to catch.

The greatest thing about living on a lake is to walk out and look into the water and see what is there. Sometimes there is nothing! Not even a minnow. Sometimes the minnows are everywhere with the little bass not far behind. They are all controlled by the weather and water conditions. Even the minnows. It is a learning experience to see what the fish do in the spring (pre-spawn and spawn), where they all move up to the inside edge of the weeds and then when a front blows through, they all move to the outside of the weeds or deeper. This happens over and over again until the time is right and then each species moves up and does their thing. But it is still all controlled by the weather and water conditions. When I say we see that the fish are on the inside edge and move to the outside after a front, I actually am talking about catching the fish, not looking at them visually or on a depth meter. When looking for the answers in fishing, a conclusion can only be had by the actual catching of the fish. It is only then that you have an answer to a question.

*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:**

In the study of water color, we approach the subject from the same standpoint we did in Weather Conditions. That is, in terms of LIGHT. We should think of it as how much light penetrates the water. The MORE penetration, the worse the condition. The LESS penetration, the better the condition. CLEAR WATER means deep fish, short migrations, slow growth, and reproduction, increased weed and moss growth, and usually more water skiers. It means more of everything that spells trouble for you as a fisherman.

The more dingy, cloudy, or darker the water is, the better the conditions for fishing. So—a Spoonplugger will pay as much attention to his water color selection as he will the anything—gear, methods, weather, structure, etc. If the selection of water color is not considered, he is asking for troubles which may be avoided.

We are not saying that clear water does not contain fish. What we are saying is, water clarity will control or determine **how deep** fish are—where he starts from (sanctuary), **just how shallow he comes on migration, and how long he stays.**

Presentation of lures (or bait), and interpretation of the deeper structures can be very difficult. Which means, if you are “stuck” with a deep clear lake, you must take **more** time in studying the deeper structures. It means you must work **longer** and put forth **more** effort in presenting lures **more** correctly in deep water—if you expect any degree of success.

Your reaction might be: if this is so, why not fish at night only? Hold on a minute! We did not say an absence of light, as such, we said a light **condition**. We said we use light as our guide; we’re sure other factors are involved, but this does not change our original thought. If we had a clear water situation, and the fish did not move in the daytime, our “guideline” would dictate we wait for a darker condition of light to cause the fish to come **far enough** for us to make contact.

To clarify this, let’s say you are fishing a deep clear lake. If a movement occurs in the middle of the afternoon, you might not be aware of it because the fish did not migrate up to where you were fishing. If you stayed on the lake into the night, you would draw a blank, because the fish had **already moved**, and probably would not move again until the next morning.

When you are faced with deep clear lakes, fishing at night does have its good points, but it does not mean the fish will move every night, regardless what the weather and water conditions might be. At certain periods during mid-summer, the major movements may occur at night, If you are experiencing troubles in the daytime, check it at **daylight**. This should indicate the movement pattern, and you can fish accordingly. BUT you must remember, any sort of movement pattern can change overnight—it usually does—at the first weather change.

You must be aware of the fact that some species, at times **DO** move at night, and some species **DO NOT** move at night

**“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”**