



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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FOUNDED 1991

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PRESIDENT: Denny Coulardot

(260) 691-3118

SECRETARY: Ted Walter

(260) 668-0216

EDUCATION DIRECTOR: John Bales

(260) 854-3921

The last meeting was held January 19, 2015 at the Kendallville Public Library with 16 members present.

With area lakes now frozen over, several members have been getting some ice fishing in. Denny reported catching some decent bluegills as well as a few crappies.

Denny warned potential ice fishermen to make sure to check ice conditions before venturing out as several lakes were reporting some unsafe ice due to a January thaw following a stretch on very cold conditions.

Much of the meeting was spent viewing photos from the John Zaborny library sent to Denny. Shawn was able to project them onto the large screen TV in the meeting room. The photos were primarily of past Leoni Spoonplugger outings and brought back many enjoyable memories.

A wounded John Bales related his fall fishing for white bass on Lake Tippecanoe. (Got his fingers smashed under a steel plate on a shearing machine at work which squashed them like grapes...I know, it hurts just thinking about it). Most of his white bass were caught in 60 feet or deeper and weighed up to 3 1/2 lbs.

You can watch a Jim Duplex YouTube video of white bass jigging with John on Tippecanoe here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2HJD5xeCOU>

MAPPING

One of the things most Spoonpluggers can improve on is the process of mapping a structure. And one of the hardest things for many is transferring the mapping process to paper. Whenever I draw a map of a

structure, I'm embarrassed at the crudeness of the drawing and reminded of what a failure I was in art class in high school! When I look at beautifully drawn maps by Brent Christianson or Terry O'Malley I am envy their abilities.

But unsophisticated as ours may be, drawing out a structure we have mapped is an important step in understanding what lies below the surface and will pay dividends on future trips. We are the only ones who needs to understand our maps in the beginning and with practice, we may even be able to make others understand what makes a structure tick! The best time to do it is while on the water when our thoughts are fresh and any questions may be answered by immediately remapping the area in question. But often, we are more concerned with catching a fish than doodling and I can certainly sympathize. After all, the whole idea of going fishing is to catch a fish! That doesn't mean we can't sit down and draw a map later. Doing so can often answer questions we may not have thought of while going through the mechanics of trolling or casting at the time. Study of the mapping procedures, even at a later time, can and often does lead us to improved trolling passes or anchoring positions on subsequent trips.

I'm reminded of the words of Terry O'Malley: "If you can't draw it, you haven't really mapped it!"

NOTE MEETING DATE BELOW!!!

NEXT MEETING: February 2, 2015
at the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.

" KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS "

Illinois Spoonpluggers Winter Seminar Elk Grove Village, IL

March 21, 2015

Elk Grove Village Public Library
1001 Wellington Avenue, Elk Grove Village, IL
60007

Doors open at 9:00 A.M.

Contact: Brett Christianson
312-952-2196

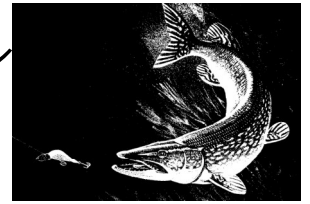
bchristenson@marquetteassociates.com

“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



If I am not fishing, I am thinking about it!

I was watching a fishing tournament show this morning and it is the type of new format where all of the fishermen are kept up to date on what the other guys are catching. The fun part for me is to watch the other guys crumble under the pressure of knowing that some of the guys are knocking them dead and some are not. You can watch the wheels turning and feel the pressure build. The guys all know which fishermen are doing well and they know each other well and each may have a fishing style that they are noted for. The guessing game starts with all of the others that are lagging behind and wondering what and how are they fishing.

Two of the guys are out in front and catching fish on every cast. The rest of the field is struggling. What are the two guys doing that the others are not?

It was easy to see that the two leaders were both fishing deeper than 8-10 feet and both were fishing structure and obviously into a school of fish on some kind of break. All of the others were up on top of the features or just going down the bank and were only able to get stragglers one at a time. Being a Spoonplugger allows us to understand fishing situations no matter if we are on the water or viewing it on television. We are so lucky to have the guidelines that Mr. Perry wrote. We are the only ones that have the truth laid out for us and all we need to do is put forth the effort and follow those guidelines. Success will follow.

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:

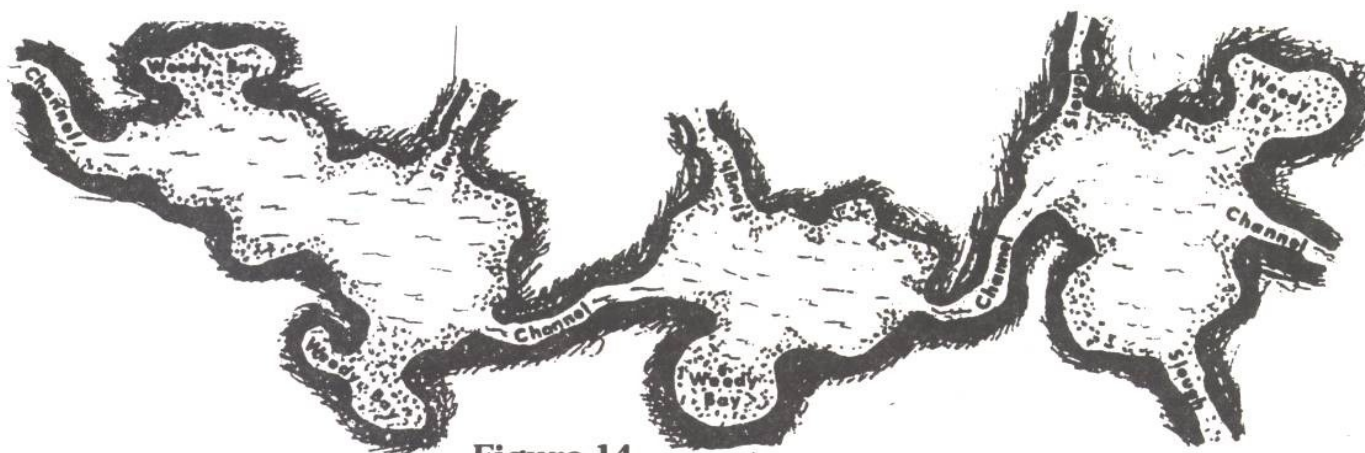


Figure 14

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 ”