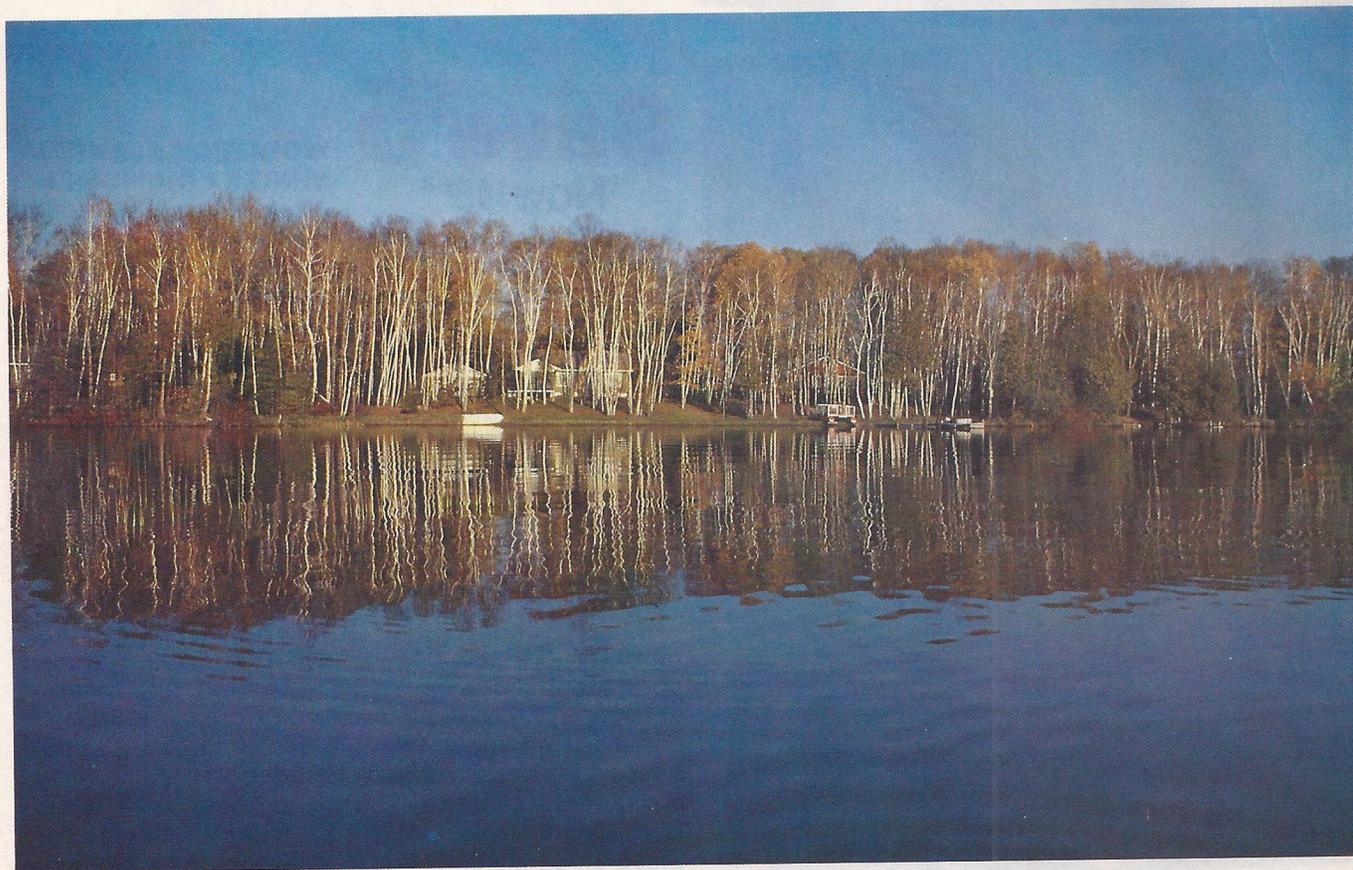




Buck talks fishing

by Buck Perry, Education Editor

How to Deal with These Common Fishing Situations



A knowledgeable fisherman looks forward to fishing new and unfamiliar waters. There is an added satisfaction and thrill in putting a particular water "in his hip pocket." But, more importantly, he knows there is no better "teacher" than fishing strange water.

There are two saucer-type lakes that we should consider in our fishing. One is rather small, while the other is very large. The first is on the order of a "sink hole," and the second is like a large, clean, glacier lake.

One thing these lakes have in common is that the bottom of each is smooth, either of sand or clay, and with no apparent structure of any description. This presents somewhat of a problem, not only for the fish but for the fisherman as well. The prob-

lem being—how or where does the migration of fish occur? However, we should keep in mind **a feature too small to see on a depth sounder could look like a mountain to a fish.**

In **Figures 1, 1A and 1B**, a saucer-type lake is shown with one deep hole. This hole could be 60 or 100 feet deep. The bottoms are so smooth and uniform, and migration of fish so scattered, that no pattern or "hot-spots" can be noted. Thus, no direction for migration can be determined in advance.

Finding the deep hole would present no problem. The problem would be presenting lures. Casting or "jigging" this hole would be practically impossible for any degree of *consistent* successful fishing.

One of the best ways to fish this lake is by trolling. In **Figure 1**, we have a troller. He has gone to the area of the deep hole, then as he slowly moves away, he releases an extra long length of line. As soon as the line is out, he stops the boat and

continued

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allows the lure and line to sink to the bottom. Then slowly he takes up the slack line and removes any "bow" that might have occurred between the rod and lure. He then starts his trolling run in a straight line. He continues this path until the lure has come into shallow water. Many times in a small lake of this type, his trolling run will be halted by the shoreline long before his lure has moved out of the hole. In this case, he kills the motor and continues the lure movement by retrieve.

Figure 1B shows the different trolling paths to take with this approach. In some cases, the productive path will be established for a particular lake. But there may be instances where the path or direction will change.

The above trolling procedure is also effective when working extra deep structure in any type lake or reservoir.

The second lake (**Figure 2**)—the big glacier type—possibly could be worked in this manner, but in large saucer-type lakes, with their huge, smooth, flat bottoms, it would be better to locate fish migration routes by a visual method. These routes may be few and far between, but there is always the possibility that some man-made structures can be found. Dredged canals, whether for commercial traffic or for boat docks or piers are excellent. In most cases, the deeper water created by the dredging becomes the deep water sanctuaries (home) of the fish. The breaks and breaklines created will provide ideal migration routes. All causeways, bridges, roadbeds, wind breaks (breakwaters) are prime fishing areas.

Another visual route often found in large, saucer-type lakes are reefs. Reefs are usually rocks that stick up out of flat bottoms. Some reefs do not come all the way to the shoreline, but often they do. Some are solid rocks along the bottom, while some are scattered rocks—but still close enough together so the fish can see them. Some reefs are wide, but most, if viewed in relation to the lake size, are considered narrow. There may be only one reef in miles and miles of lake shoreline.

LAKE CHAIN

Figure 3 represents a "chain" of natural lakes. There is a stream run-
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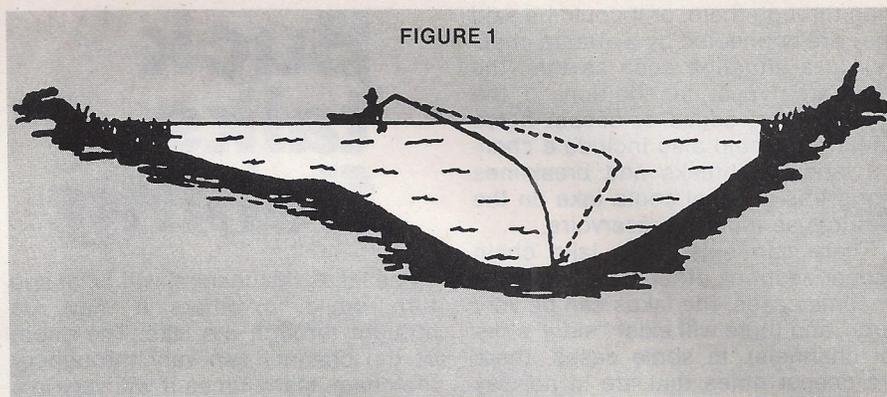


FIGURE 1

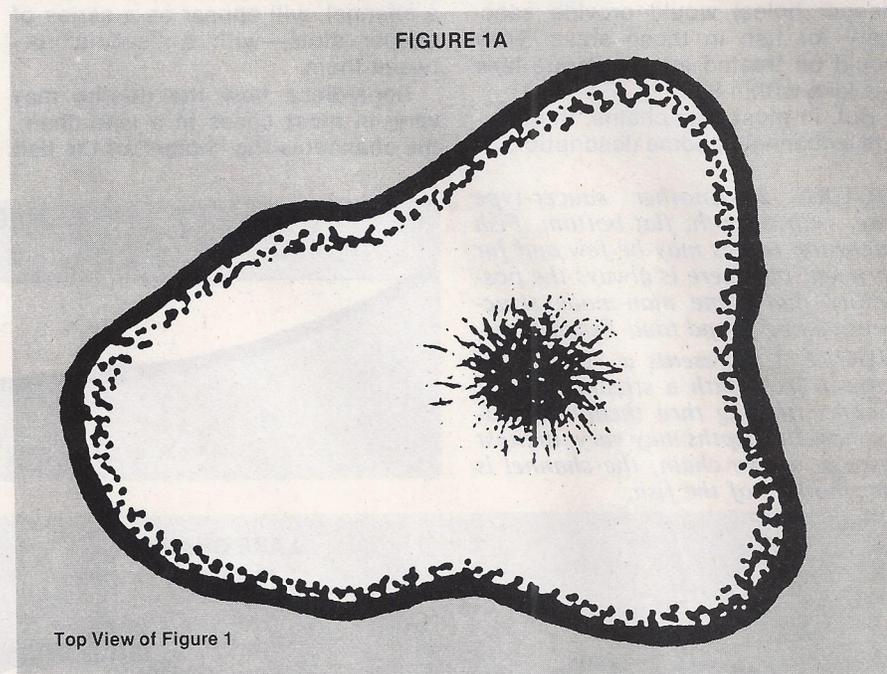


FIGURE 1A

Top View of Figure 1

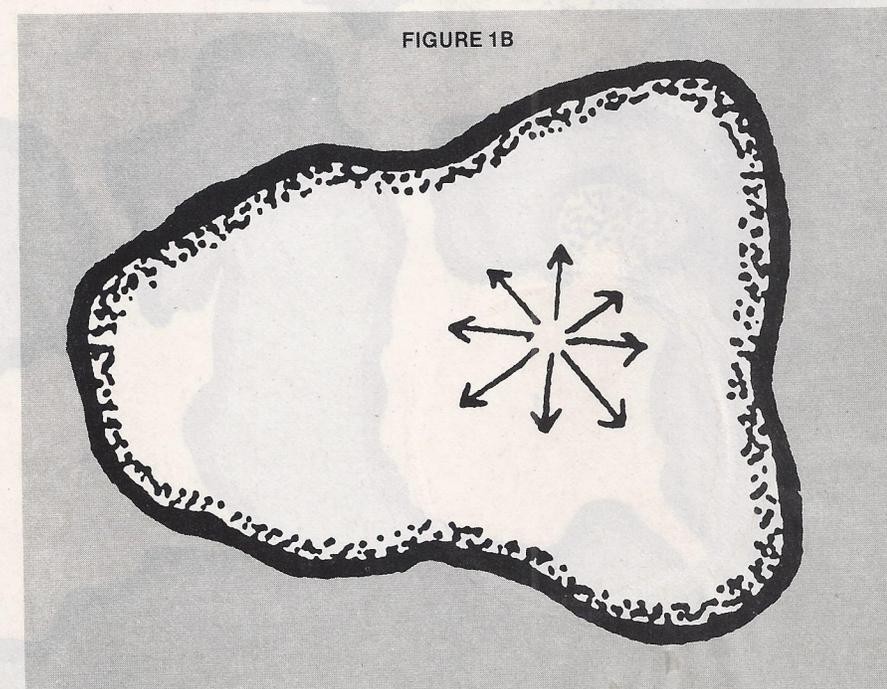


FIGURE 1B

FIGURES 1, 1A and 1B show a deep, saucer-type lake with one deep hole, and little or no obvious bottom structure. Would you know where and how to fish it correctly?

ning through them, or it could be said they are connected by a stream channel. In a situation such as this, the structure types, in addition to the bars, humps, edges of deeper holes and slots, could also include a channel, and the breaks and breaklines along this channel could take on the features as found in reservoirs.

There can exist in a lake chain deeper sections other than a channel. In some cases, the lakes can be very large, and there will exist "side" slots (or channels). In some cases, there are deeper holes that are in no way connected to the channel, and these (deeper holes) would provide sanctuary for fish in those areas. They would be treated as a separate lake—a lake within itself.

But, in most lake chains, there exists a channel of some description. In

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some lakes the channel will twist and turn, while in others it may run straight through the lake. The depth of the channel can vary throughout the chain. Many times it will vary in a given lake, and instead of looking like a channel, will appear as a series of deeper slots—with a "saddle" between them.

Regardless how the depths may vary, in most cases in a lake chain, the channel is the "home" of the fish.

Water color can vary in a lake chain. Each lake may have a different color. Normally, water color isn't too great a problem in a lake chain due to the feeder stream. However, some portions of a lake in the chain may become too clear for the best fishing conditions.

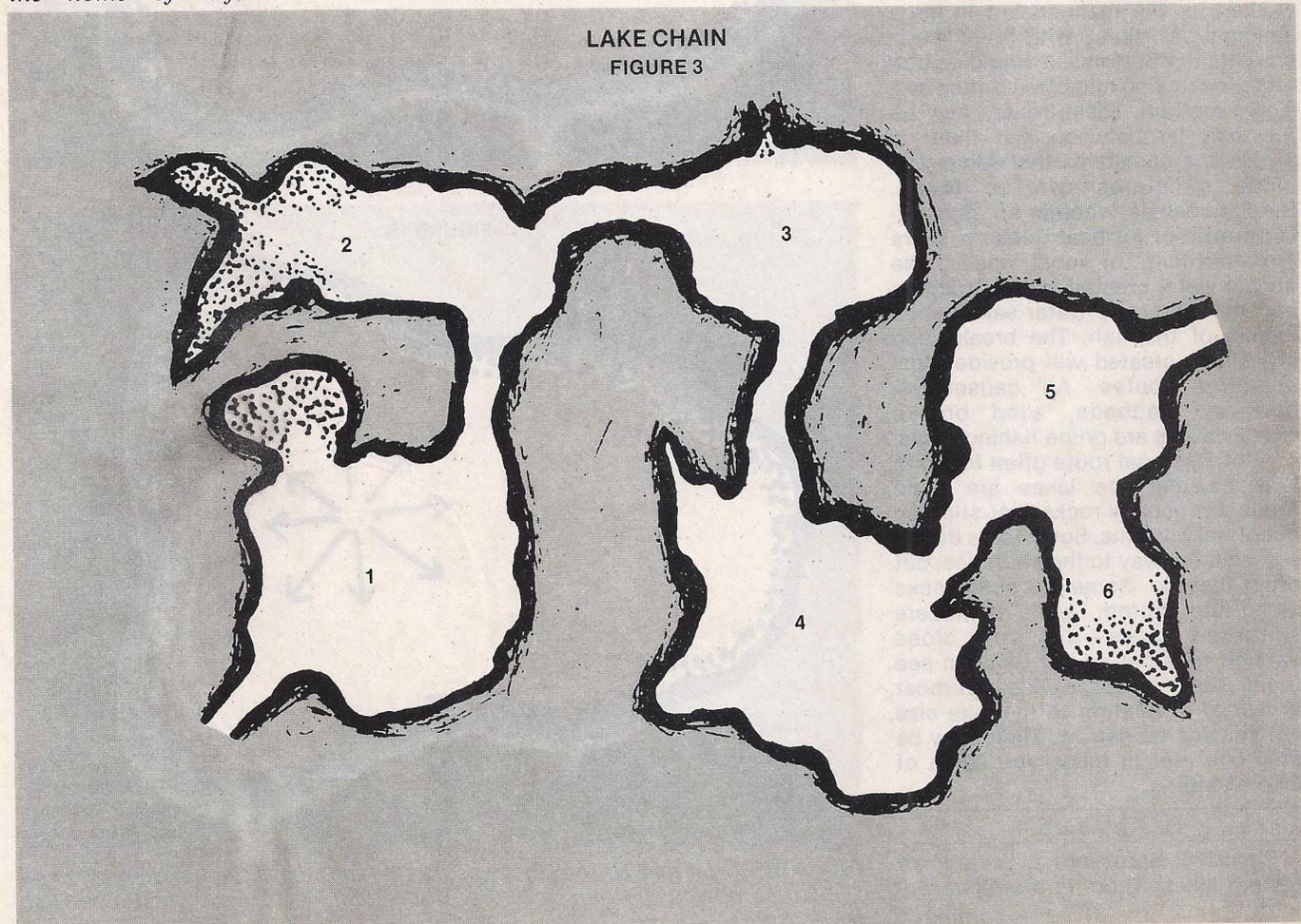
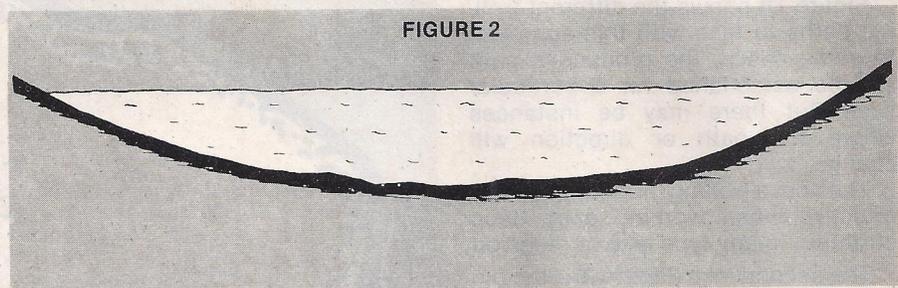
Weed growth can vary from lake to lake, and features (structure, breaks, breaklines) can be different.

We must try to visualize what is found under the water in lakes and reservoirs. So let us look at this lake chain and try to figure out what type of features (structure, breaks, breaklines, etc.) might exist in each lake. At the same time, try to visualize the movements of the fish.

Before we can begin to understand what may exist, or does exist, we must remember one important fact

FIGURE 2—Another saucer-type lake, with smooth, flat bottom. Fish migration routes may be few and far between, but there is always the possibility that some man-made structures can be found (and fished) here.

FIGURE 3 represents a "chain" of natural lakes with a stream or river channel running thru them. Regardless how the depths may vary, in most cases in a lake chain, the channel is the "home" of the fish.



about moving water. **Water tends to flow in a straight line.** In other words, water will go straight until it hits some obstruction that turns or directs it. After it turns, it will continue flowing in a straight line until diverted again. A stream channel will twist and turn because the water comes to a hard place, rocks, a hill, etc. The water cannot wash it away, so it has to turn. If the bottom over which it flows is level and equal in softness or hardness, the channel will be more straight.

Let us look at each lake in **Figure 3** and try to determine what features exist. The flowing water will be our guide.

Lake No. 1 should have fairly deep water in the form of a channel. This deep water should be located approximately in the center. The weedy bay,

off the lake, should be prime spawning areas. Fish would be found here during the pre-spawn and spawning period. Any good structures that may exist should be located directly off the "mouths" of the streams entering and leaving. The breaks and breaklines along the channel would be prime fishing spots.

Lake No. 2 should be more shallow than **Lake No. 1**, and would possibly have better spawning areas. The channel should be located at the right end of the lake, and is probably the only deep water in the lake. The best structure would be located near the deeper water. This lake should have clearer water, with more weeds on the left-hand side than on the right-hand side.

Lake No. 3 should have good deep water with good structures. The

stream makes a sharp bend, and the feeder stream should produce a good breakline into the main channel. The "slough," or feeder stream, should be prime spawning area for northern pike.

Lake No. 4 should, again, be a lake with good structure and deep water. The main stream makes a fast sweeping turn, and the shoreline indicates that many good structures should exist here.

Lake No. 5 should be more like **Lake No. 1**. The deeper water is probably a "slot" running right down the middle. This lake should have large areas of "flats" on each side of the channel. The productive areas would be the breaklines along the channel. The main structures would be at the entrance points of the streams.

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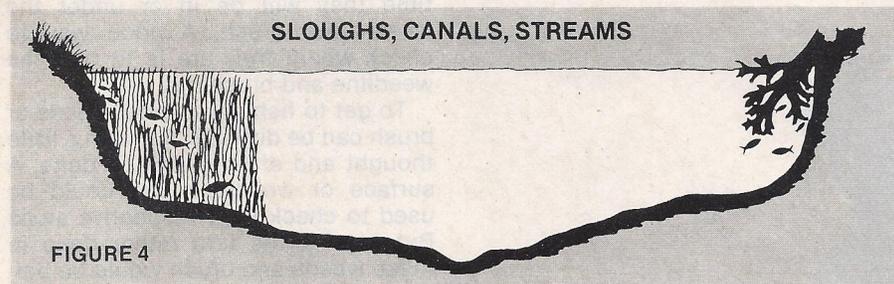


FIGURE 4 shows a cross section of a slough, canal, stream (or dishpan-type lake). During active periods, fish may venture out along the outside of the weedline and brushline and, if conditions are excellent, out into open water.

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Lake No. 6 is more an arm or large bay off of Lake No. 5. This should be a shallow lake. It should contain clearer water with heavy weed growth. All indications are that this lake would be productive primarily in the pre-spawn and spawning period. Later in the season, this lake could draw a blank.

The stream channels between these lakes can be productive at times, and these should not be passed up. A good way to check them out is to troll them as the different lakes are fished.

The interpretation given to this "chain" of lakes is to indicate that not all lakes in a chain such as this are equal in structure, water color, water depth, amount of weeds, and productive structure that could be used during all seasons of the year. Lakes

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must have certain conditions in order to be productive. The fisherman must analyze his water to be sure he is fishing the most productive areas at the proper time.

Keeping in mind how water flows, try to draw in the channel through these lakes.

Figure 4 shows a cross section of a slough, canal, stream (or dishpan-type lake). There are many bodies of

water such as this. They contain fish in quantity. In some cases, the weeds will be on both sides, others brush, or a combination.

In water of this type, the overall depth is just about the same. In some cases, the center section might be slightly deeper than the surrounding areas. But normally, no great change in depth will be found.

In the above case, the fisherman should find the fish in the weeds or under the brush (cover) most of the time. **At movement periods they may venture out along the outside of the weedline and brushline and, if conditions are excellent, out into open water.** During certain parts of the season, fish could be found out in the open area for quite a period of time. But this does not mean that on every movement period they migrate out into the open water. A majority of the time they will be in or under the weeds and brush. A good way to check where they are is to troll the weedline and brushline.

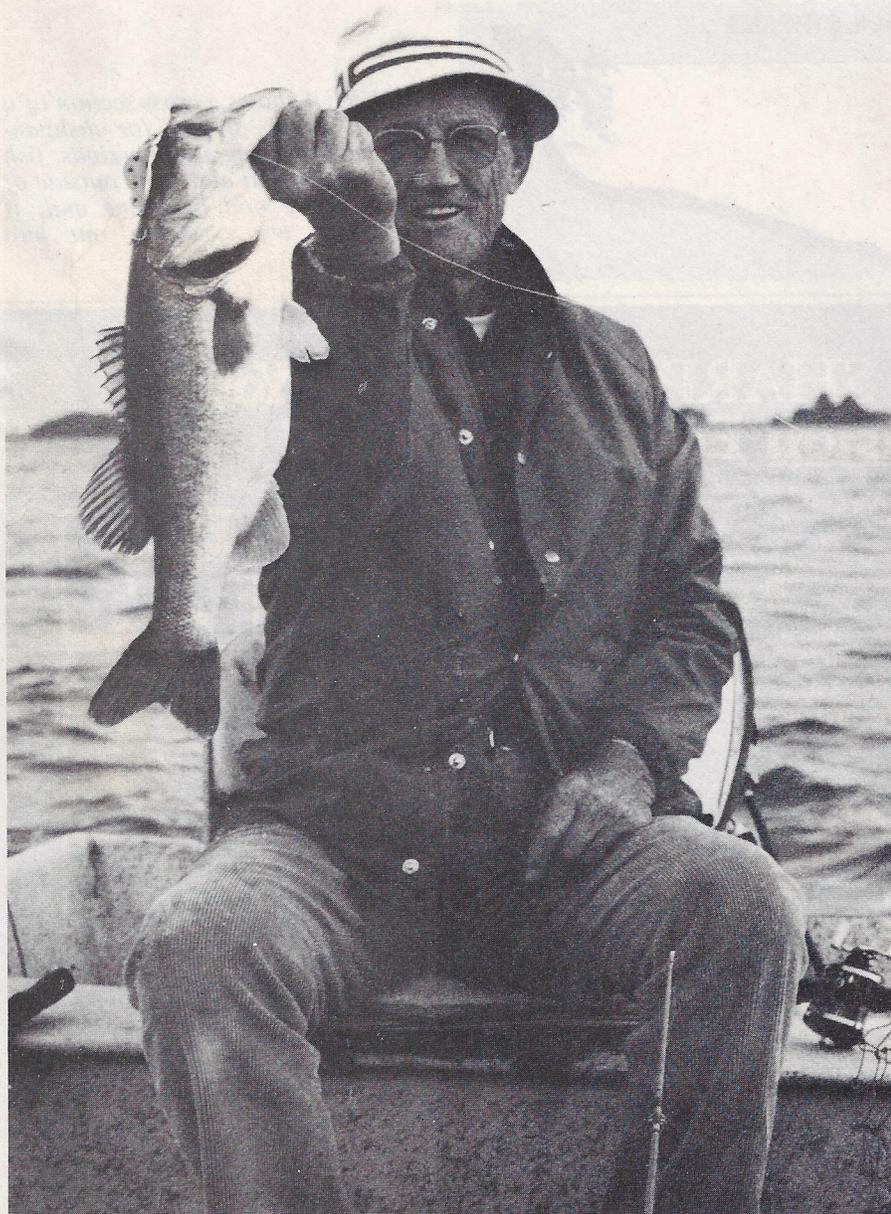
To get to fish back under weeds or brush can be difficult, but with a little thought and effort it can be done. A surface or weedless lure could be used to check their respective areas. But getting the lure rather deep in these weeds and brush would be better most of the time. The fisherman can drop jump-type lures (jigs, etc.) in them with a casting rod, or use a long cane pole to get the lures (or bait) down through the weeds and brush.

Often a certain spot, or spots, will be more productive than others. But in many cases, and especially in the case of weeds, the spot with the greatest action can change from day to day.

Situations such as this will often cause fishermen to doubt that the deep water in the area, when available, is the home of the fish. **In this case (Figure 3) the "cover" would be better for the fish than the shallow open water.**

In some shallow LAKES of this nature, the mass of the water is covered with weeds. Only a few narrow slots, or small areas, are free of weeds. In these cases, it is difficult to find the fish in the weeds. We have found the best bet is to concentrate all efforts at the clear areas. Often we have to wait for quite a period of time for the fish to appear, but when they move good—here they come to the open slots.

Editor's Note: The preceding article was reprinted from Buck Perry's new home study series titled, "Buck Perry's Guidelines For Fishing Success." The complete 8 volume series is available from Northwoods Tackle Company, P.O. Box 609, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, 53051.



Education Editor Buck Perry, the "guru" of modern day bass fishing, displays a fine bass caught from a dishpan-shaped natural lake.