



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER



VOLUME 10 ISSUE 6

#128

FOUNDED 1991

June 2005

PRESIDENT/FOUNDER: Denny Coulardot
(260) 691-3118

SECRETARY: Ted Walter
(260) 495-5042

EDUCATION DIRECTOR: John Bales
(260) 854-3921

Our last meeting was held May 16, 2005 at the Kendallville Public Library with 19 members and guests present. We welcomed Robert Womack of Auburn and Dave Gould of Fort Wayne. Both are new to Spoonplugging but have friends who have some experience so they decided to stop by and take a peek at what goes on in a meeting. Robert read Chase Klinesteker's recent article in the Herald. We hope they will be inspired to return.

A few fishing reports were given. We are definitely not in a summer pattern as yet, but the reports we pretty good given to cool weather of the past month. Water temperatures are flirting with the optimum for bass to spawn, but each time it gets near, we get another shot out of the north and we have had a number of systems out of the east lately! Not much good weather comes from the east!!! We're about due for some good warm weather. Probably wish for something not quite so warm soon.

Denny Coulardot and Mike Price have been doing very well at keeping the muskies stirred up in several area lakes, both casting and trolling.

John Bales discussed mapping and displayed some of Terry O'Malley's maps of area lakes that Terry mapped in the late 60's or early 70's. Terry's maps kind of set the Gold Standard for mapping. His maps are simple, accurate and easy to read and understand. John pointed out some features drawn on the shoreline such as houses, etc. John explained that even though line sights were not drawn on the map, you can bet that Terry put those features on the

maps for good reason...namely he had line sights that he used for exact trolling passes.

Although most of us pale by comparison to Terry when it comes to drawing maps, John explained that the point of mapping was to record information for oneself. By drawing the structure, we test ourselves to see what we have really learned from the mapping process. Detailing a map imprints the structure in our brain. Maps don't have to be pretty or elaborate...unless you want or need to have them that way. The main thing is that they are meaningful to the mapper. They should display the shape of the features, notes on any detectable breaklines, depths of both the deepest water in the area and depths of any breaklines or weedlines...and of course, the location of any fish caught in the process. If any breaks are found, such as a snag, or rock pile, those should be noted, and finally, any line sights used for trolling passes.

Remember to put an arrow marking "North" on your map. It may not sound that important, but when you get my age and look at a three year-old drawing, it becomes a vital guideline!

Brodie Allred also discussed a map he brought to the meeting and Mike Whirrett offered to draw a map for the next meeting which is:

NEXT MEETING:

**June 20, 2005 at the Kendallville Public Library
6:30 P.M.**

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS"



Good Spoonplugging



By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor

WATER COLOR

Catching fish is not as easy as it used to be. Just ask Terry O'Malley or Vic Saunders. We find ourselves having to go deeper and deeper in order to make a catch. There are many reasons for us having to do so. The zebra mussel and new septic systems around the natural lakes are just a couple of reasons that our lakes are clearing up. This forces us to fish deeper to make a catch.

All is not lost and there are decisions that we can make to off-set the clear water conditions. That one major decision can not only make fishing easier but may be the deciding factor in how many fish are caught during a whole fishing season. The key is choosing a lake with water color. You may have heard this a few hundred times in your studies and in the years of Spoonplugging articles. Here are a few things that are in our favor when we have water color.

How does the color of the water affect our ability to fish a body of water? Let's start with how the water color affects the amount of weeds in a body of water and how it may effect our presentation of lures. We may have a lake with great color and no weeds. Let's compare it to a clear water lake with a 20 foot weedline. Let's start out by actually fishing the lake with good color. We have never fished this lake before so we begin as always with a 500 and find out what is happening. A couple of layers are let out and we get the boat into 2 to 4 foot of water until we feel the lure touching the bottom. We slowly turn out until the lure begins to run free and turn back in slowly to get the lure bumping again. We are now contour trolling the 2 to 4 feet depth and checking out our speeds while doing so. The lure is transferring the hard and soft bottoms back to us and we are already beginning to notice a bar off of a point of land. We go a distance past the bar and come back with a 400 and try to keep the lure fishing by contour trolling in 4 to 6 feet of water. Our next pass insures us of a nice bar and by the time we get to the 250 and down to about 9 feet, we begin to notice a couple of nice fingers that are breaking quickly into some deeper water. Two markers are thrown on the fingers and we now make a few straight line passes across the tips of these two points with a 200 around 11 feet. On our second pass a good bass is hooked and a 4 pounder is landed. We waste no time in getting the boat anchored in the right spot and get to the cast. A 100 is chosen and the cast is made and we are into them good. We get 14 bass up to 5 3/4 pounds before it is over. A couple of shoreline sightings are taken and written down and we now have another spot that will last us a lifetime.

Let's go across the street to that other clear water lake. We start with a 500 just as before. Our first pass doesn't seem a lot different than the our first lake other than the fact that we can stand up and see if there are any fish around by looking into the water. We are on the inside edge of the weedline. All goes well on the first pass so we head back with a 400 at about 6 feet. We go about 20 feet and we are into some heavy weeds that come near the surface. It doesn't take long to see that at this depth, the weeds will not allow us to check out our depths and speeds. We turn on the depth meter and notice that the weeds are tall all the way to the drop off and they do not come up too high where they end at 21 feet. Our only choice is to stack up our lures along the face of this weedline. We find that we are having trouble keeping lures in position with no markers thrown. We run the boat and try to follow the base of the weedline and this shows us a couple of nice

“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS”

fingers that run way out and drop off into deep water. One marker is thrown just inside the tip and just out of the way of our trolling passes. Many passes are made stacking our lures all the way to the base of the weeds at 21 feet. At times our lures were running free and other passes we made some contact with the weeds but were able to jerk them off with some hard sharp snaps of the rod tip. Now we must make contact with the bottom beyond the 21 foot weedline. We have already established some good line sights for our passes along both sides and off the end of the bar. We were paying attention to where we were and got some sightings that will work for our first couple of passes. An 800 on No-Bo is put on and enough line is let out to get the lure just tipping the bottom. We bump about 4 times and the lure goes dead. We reel in and there is a heavy glob of dark moss about a foot long on the treble hook. Several passes are made with the same results. We find that we can not work our lures on the bottom. We have just lost one of the most important factors in fishing and that is the walk of the lure on the bottom and our ability to make a fish take. We find out that this moss finally goes away at about 42 feet.

A good Spoonplugger with a lot of experience can still make a catch of fish on this type of lake. He will know that it will take more time and his interpretation will have to be on the money in working these depths of water but it can be done.

Buck Perry said this. "The most important observation that you will make in your fishing is in terms of WATER COLOR". Our comparisons of these two lakes do not list all of the problems that exist for the fisherman in clear waters. We only listed a few. There are many more.

Do not forget to include the words WATER COLOR in this fishing season. If you do not fish any clear lakes this season and only fish the ones with the best color, you are already headed for a better season with more fish catching and many times it will be with No-Bo and the smaller lures. You will also be getting into more casting positions easier, quicker and more often than in the past. And this success will be just because you picked the lakes with the best WATER COLOR.

Yes it is that easy!

*Good Spoonplugging
John Bales*



Mike Price with a nice early-season
Muskie.

“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”