



# NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER



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The last meeting was held September 19, 2005 at the Kendallville Public Library with 16 members present. President Denny reported that he had received confirmation from the Forest Ridge Campground on next years **"Buck Sez" Network Outing for August 10, 11, & 12, 2006.** Mark your calendars.

Denny said he had heard from Harold Eaton (Instructor from Mobile, Alabama) who reported he had packed up and got out before Hurricane Katrina hit. Water came within 100 yards of his home, so all is well with Harold.....at least from Katrina. Don't know how he did with Rita!

We all wished Leo Seltenright a Happy 79th birthday. He's finally caught up with Charlie Krause who turned 79 a few months back. Charlie just had a stint put in so he should be good for another 100,000 miles. Charles Downey's wife, Susan was scheduled for a knee replacement the day after the meeting. We wished her luck and hope everything is going well for her. Denny has talked recently with D.J. Erdley who will be working again next summer with Jed Pearson, a State of Indiana fish biologist. He said they had a complete weed kill scheduled for Webster Lake early next summer because of the return of the lake's milfoil problem. Fishing reports were given. Dan and Norene Luley spent a few days fishing Lake Maxinkuckee. They had a good time & caught quite a few fish. Dan reported that it was the first time he had experienced a definite color preference by the fish. Typically, when the fish are active it doesn't make much difference what color is being used, but on this particular day, he noticed that one color far out-produced all the other colors they tried, but only by species! Walleyes were hitting orange and smallmouth

were hitting chrome. Quite unusual.

Leo Seltenright was in Canada during our outing and couldn't make it. He reported good catches of both wall-eye and northerns.

Denny reported that the movements of muskie had been taking place in early morning nearly all summer long. Denny also reported that the crappies are going strong right now. He as well as several others have been loading up on big crappies from a number of area lakes.

John Bales gave a report on a recent 4 day trip he took with Chase Klinesteker to Lake St. Clair. They spent some time on the St. Clair River as well as on the lake. They didn't catch a lot of fish-4 muskies 40-43 inches and 10-12 smallmouth, but a lot of information was learned about the area.

John also went over a video tape he had just watched again called "Lunker Lore" by Buck Perry. He suggested anyone who hadn't seen it should watch it if only for the underwater video of the Spoonplug bumping the bottom of the lake. He lectured everyone of the use of markers and shoreline sightings and the importance of getting into the habit of using them. He told of Terry O'Malley having shoreline sightings in his fishing of the Fox Chain near Chicago. By having so many shoreline sightings, he was able to same countless hours each year by fishing the most productive structure and being able to hit the bars "right on the money" every time. We can all do the asme thing with practice.

**NEXT MEETING: October 17, 2005 at the Kendallville Public Library at 6:30 P.M.**

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



Mike Price with a nice Tippicanoe muskie.



Denny Coulardot with an extra-fat northern



Mike Zaborney with a Lake St. Clair muskie. 35lbs 52". 800 Spoonplug on wire.



John Bales with a nice Lake St Clair smallmouth.



Chase Klinesteker with a nice Great Lakes muskie caught on Lake St. Clair

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# Good Spoonplugging



**By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor**

We have talked a lot at the last couple of meetings about not getting lost on the water. Lake Erie is one of the places where you do not want to be lost. Much can be said about this body of water. Just this past weekend, my son John and I spent two days fishing out of the Metro-Park ramp and spent both days fishing just outside of where the Detroit River enters into Lake Erie. This time of the year offers a Spoonpluggers the chance of a lifetime to catch a really big smallmouth. In the two days, we caught and released well over 70 smallies with the biggest at 5.5 pounds and the average fish was 3 1/2 to 4 lbs. Saturday the pickings were slow and it was tough to get them on the troll. We took up many anchoring positions and by trolling and casting we were able to end up with close to 30 fish for the day. Sunday was a bit different. The morning was very slow with only four or five fish up to 3 pounds being caught. The haze was so bad that you could only see about 1/4 mile. At one time I looked and could not see land anywhere. That is not a good feeling. Lucky for us, we knew the shape of the large feature that we were on and continued to fish around this 1/2 mile of humps until we could see some land appear. I explained to my son that we needed either the fog to lift or the wind to come up to change the light condition and we could then hope for a movement and it should be a good one. At around 10:30 we got some wind and it happened. We were near the shipping channel when I got a good fish on the troll. It was one of my favorite spots that I hit them on last year. A marker went out and then an anchoring position was taken. Due to the current and the depths involved, a 3/4 oz jig was chosen to cast. The first cast we made we were into them. The fish were very active and they were taking the jig before it would hit the bottom. Every cast for at least 40 minutes we had a good fish on. The largest fish were the first ones to be caught and as time went on they got smaller and smaller until they were finally done. There were very few fish caught under three pounds with this group of fish. Somewhere between 30 and 40 fish were caught and released and at least that many were lost and for some reason they stayed right there. Who knows how many fish were in this group but until you having experienced this place, you just don't know how good it is!

There are plenty of land sightings that can be used when fishing this area. There are ends of islands that you can line up with what ever is behind them. There are shipping channel buoys that you can use to line up with whatever is behind them and you can keep an eye on them as you are trolling so that when you hit a fish you can have a shoreline sighting as well as the marker that you always throw when hitting a fish. Several large markers are a must when fishing where there is a chance of some big waves. You can use the tall buildings in downtown Detroit lined up with something. There are good sightings everywhere as long as you can visually see them.

As good as the fishing is, there are some obstacles such as floating weeds. They can get so bad that when casting, you have to look for an open spot to cast into. And trolling can become a nightmare so be ready for a long hard day but the rewards can be outstanding. I will have some pictures for next month's newsletter. I thought about drawing the structure for you but that would be too easy. You wouldn't learn a thing. However if I were to get a phone call, I may be able to steer you in the right direction and then you are on your own.

*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:**

*“My lake has a bottom completely covered with muck, moss or short grass. I can’t work my lures on the bottom. What do you suggest?”*

As we stated earlier, if you **can’t** work the bottom, then you have to **work as close as you can**. This may present problems, but we can regulate our lure size and line length (on cast or troll) so that the lure “barely” skips the debris. If our gear is correct, most of the muck and grass can be “jerked” free, but the moss may be another story.

Many times we have been faced with a lake bottom such as yours. We have found we can regulate depth on the troll by lure size and line length. On the cast, we may have to go to a weedless type lure, but even here the muck and moss can foul it.

We normally work a lake of this nature first by trolling as close to the debris as possible so as to not be **continually** fouled. But all the time we’re looking for a clean spot or a hard spot. Most every lake of this nature will have some clean or hard spots. They may be few and far between, but they will exist. Our lures must tell us what type of bottom exists, or we would never find the areas we are looking for. We must find the more workable bottoms, for **that will be where the fish are**. Fish do not like to be on muck or soft bottoms, if the clean spot (break) is available. All of this means we get fouled quite a lot. But most of them can be quickly cleaned by a hard jerk or jerks, with the stiff rod and non-stretch line—with no time lost. The clean or hard bottom presents no problem on the cast.

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*“Some place back in the study you said to look for the deep water ‘first’, and then look for the structure in relationship to this deep water. Then in this study you tell us to check the ‘shallows first’, before going deeper. This seems to be a contradiction.”*

I believe if you go back and restudy what we said previously (under Structure, Breaks and Break-lines) you will find we were talking about **interpreting** a fishing situation, or **when studying a contour map**. The **first thing you do is locate the deep water**; then look for any structure in the area. It would be rather a waste of time to spend time looking for good structure on a contour map, and then find out there was no deep water in the area.

In this study of Presentation, we are talking about an entirely different thing. We’re talking about what area do we **“fish”** first.

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