



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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The last meeting was held November 19, 2007 at the Kendallville Public Library with 13 members and guests present. We welcomed Wendell Schaeffer of Fremont, IN who has been reading about Spoonplugging in the local newspaper and decided to stop by to take a closer look.

Mike Price reported boating his best musky to date recently (see picture on following page) After measuring, Mike released this fine fish to fight another day. It measured 51 inches and had an estimated weight of 35-38 lbs. Muskies are notorious for their fondness of faster speeds but Mike and Denny Coulardot stated that the speeds having been quite slow recently, however, the muskies are definitely moving. They also said that at these slow speeds the hook **MUST** be set if you are to be successful. A hard hook set is usually unnecessary when speeds are fast, but the slower speeds combine with the extra hard armor on a muskie's mouth makes the hook set necessary if you want to get the fish to the boat!

We all signed a Get-Well-Soon card for Bobby Meredith who suffered back and neck injuries from a hard fall in November.

John Bales reported on a recent trip to the Detroit River/Lake Erie where he took part in an ESPN2 smallmouth show with host, Mark Zona. (World's Greatest Fishing Show). Mark has been requesting an outing with John for some time and they finally agreed on a date. We are unsure as to which Saturday the show will air but John claims Mark gave Spoonplugging a very nice boost in the introduction. Weather conditions were bad, but John was able to put them on enough big smallmouth to make a very

interesting show. Now that John is a movie star I suppose we will have to stand in line at the meetings to get autographs!

Dan Luley reported that he is still catching a few northerns, but that they are very deep. This time of year, 40 ft is not too deep.

Randy Ireland also reported that the bass are also bunching up for winter as he has made some good catches lately. By anchoring in the holes near known structure situations, often in the middle of the holes, and fan casting, you may be able to locate a nice school of bass. Several casting positions may need to be made and all speeds need to be checked on the cast. 3/4 to 1-1/2 oz jump lures may be the ticket in the summer, but this time of year switching to 3/8 and 1/2oz could be what is called for.

John Bales also reported on the benefits of GPS units when fishing bigger waters where rifle sights may be difficult to obtain. He warned that the GPS is a tool, not unlike any other tool we use. The GPS can get us close, but we must make the final interpretation of the structure.

John recently talked to Scott Jenkins of Buck's Baits. John reported that Scott is working very hard to make sure Spoonpluggers are well supplied despite the recent spike in metal prices and other materials. Which reminds me.....It's nearly Christmas. Have you placed your Spoonplug orders yet??

Merry Christmas to all that I don't see at the next meeting:

NEXT MEETING: December 17, 2007 at the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS"



Mike Price with an extra nice late season musky. This one was 51 inches with an estimated weight of 35 lbs



Denny Coulardot with a fall musky and largemouth bass



John Bales with a Lake Erie smallmouth

“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS”



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



One of our goals of being a Spoonplugger is to become better each and every year. One way to do that is to fish new lakes as much as possible. There are 17 different structure situations. We may not be able to experience all of them, but the more we see and interpret, the better we will become. Even in our natural lakes, which only have three structure situations (bars, humps and saddles), there are no two features that are exactly the same.

Natural lakes are easy. You have the deeper holes and you have your bars, humps, and saddles. Your basic interpretations will be the same for all of them. If you do not see something different once in a while, you begin to get bored and the learning can slow down. We need to get on new bodies of water once in a while. This will keep the learning going and keep you wanting a little more.

Several years ago I began fishing Lake Erie. Ted Walter and I began in the shallows and learned everything in the area. It wasn't long before we found the slots out into the lake. This presented a whole new type of fishing situation for us. On the rough days, we were forced into the river for safety reasons. This led us to the area with the muskies. Soon after, we unlocked what it took to catch the most and the biggest muskies in the system. The learning continued and we wanted more. We continued moving farther north into Lake St. Clair. Soon the whole river from Lake St. Clair and all the way to the entrance of Lake Erie had been checked.

A year or so later, the St. Clair River was looked into and a large section if it was checked. There are differences of water color and where and how the different species react in the two sections of rivers. Another learning process for us.

You must fish new waters for the learning to continue. There is no better feeling than to go to new waters and observe the conditions of weather and water and find the fish in short order. This type of satisfaction makes you want to learn even more.

Is there a point where you cannot learn more? Never!!!!!!! Spoonplugging is a never ending learning process.

We fish for many species on many types of waters and in every fishing season. This allows for many learning situations and we continue gaining fishing knowledge. Mr. Perry says that we do not approach every fishing situation the same way every time. It is our interpretation of the weather and water conditions, the season, and the structure situation that will give us an idea of how to approach each and every fishing situation. We learn this fishing knowledge with time on the water and experience on many types of waters and in fishing the many seasons.

I like Mr. Perry's quote which is in every one of our local newsletters. "The more I learn, the more I see there is to learn."

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:

Whenever the movement occurs, early or late, in the middle of the day or night it does not necessarily mean that any two movements will be for the same distance or for the same length of time. How far the fish go and how long they stay is controlled by the weather and water conditions at that particular time. No matter how many times, or periods, we go fishing, we are not likely to find the same conditions twice.

When migration occurs, the fish move up these structures, using the bottom features as their guide. If conditions are good, they move up to the eight to ten foot depth. If conditions are very good, some will then scatter into the shallows. When fish scatter into the shallows along the shoreline, the fisherman becomes aware of it, as this is the time he says, “The fish are biting.”

At certain times of the year, spring mostly, the fish may remain for some time in the shallows, and they may move as far as the bays, coves, flats, etc. However, most of the season they are in the shallows in quantity for only a short period of time, and the distance they scatter will not be very great; thus, the productive shoreline can be very short.

The first fish to appear in the shallows will be the smaller “yearling” fish. If yearling bass are caught in the shallows this usually means a movement, and the larger fish could be at a reachable depth, on structure, in the near area.

Usually, though, the migration of the larger fish does not extend quite to or past the scatter point (eight to ten feet). This is particularly true if the school contains the biggest bass found in the waters of the area.

Never expect this entire school of large fish to move into the shallows and scatter at the same time. In all of our fishing, we have never seen more than two or three move in at one time. You have probably fished the shoreline at some time and found the bass really biting. But how many **big** fish did you catch? The reason you caught only a few, or none, perhaps was not due to any fault of yours, nor was it due to the fact that these large fish were wise “ole birds.” It was due to the fact the fish were not there.

North or south, some fish live longer, grow faster, and obtain a final weight above the average, but normally largemouth bass will die off by the time they reach six pounds. In most areas of the country, the average life span in relation to the average growing rate will **normally produce some schools whose average weight is slightly under six pounds**. But whatever the average final weight, if any “lunkers” exist in the area, they will be with this group. A group (or school) could be all one size (2 lbs., 3 lbs., 4 lbs., etc.) or the school could contain several sizes.

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