



# NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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#174

**FOUNDED 1991**

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The last meeting was held March 16, 2009 at the Kendallville Public Library with 22 members and guests present.

Joining us was Mr. & Mrs. Roy Johnson of Auburn. Denny Coulardot stated that he had caught 38 bass in the previous 2 days and also that the crappie are beginning to come on strong. Speeds are still fairly slow because of the cold water temps.

John discussed the recent Illinois Spoonpluggers 7th Annual Winter Seminar. Nearly 70 Spoonpluggers attended from various areas of the country. The all day programs featured discussions by several Spoonpluggers detailing the many aspects of Spoonplugging. Phil Szafranski discussed Weeds and Mapping, Jim Duplex and Jerry Hein moderated discussions on questions submitted by the audience and John Bales gave an in depth explanation of fishing deeper water. Fran Myers created a PowerPoint presentation for John using illustrations and passages from the study material in the Green Book and the 9 volume Study Series. I believe most people attending came away with information that will make the better Spoonpluggers this season.

Congratulations go to the Illinois Spoonpluggers and those who helped make this annual discussion group one of the premier learning experiences for Spoonpluggers.

Denny discussed fishing a bar and the importance of interpreting a lake map in order to focus on the most likely places to fish. Although lake maps are notoriously inaccurate in details, they can often give good information as to the general areas on which to concentrate our fishing efforts. Denny pointed out the importance of depth changes and what to look for on

a lake map as an indication on zeroing in not only the better areas but also on the contact points on those areas. He pointed out the importance of being able to recognize the contact points, especially when fishing under bad weather conditions.

Denny also mentioned the importance of using longer lines lengths in the springtime cold water periods and the importance of using NoBo line as opposed to the braided lines. The braided lines may offer better feel, but proper line lengths may not be possible.

John Bales gave a lecture on the importance of using marker buoys in fishing as well as mapping structure. He noted the value of using markers to improve the accuracy in making trolling passes as well as getting into a proper casting position. We have discussed the importance of getting better at fishing deeper structures due to the increasing clearing of our lakes and rivers. Mr. Perry illustrates that while it may be easy for a trolling pass or a cast to be accurate on targets that can be seen or are in shallow water, that trolling pass or casting position becomes increasingly more difficult as we go downstairs. The deeper we fish the more accurate we must be and we cannot expect the fish to always come to us. We must be prepared to go to the fish, at whatever depth they may be. Markers and line sights become some of the most important tools we have in the boat and we must learn to use them properly.

**NEXT MEETING:** April 20, 2009 at the Kendallville Public Library. 6:30 P.M.

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

## OUTINGS FOR 2009

**Weise Lake**, Cedar Bluff Alabama  
Bama & Southern Ohio Spoonpluggers  
April 15, 17, 18, 19  
Contact: James Clark (256) 536-6932  
jamesclark@knology.net

**Leoni Spoonpluggers** Jackson, MI  
June 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7  
Contact John Zaborny (517) 414-3508  
jszaborny@yahoo.com

**Muskegon Outing** Muskegon, Michigan  
Fisherman's Landing Campground  
July 14, 15, 16, 17, 18  
Contact: Chase Klinesteker (616) 949-8665  
Ckspoon1@aol.com

**Northern Indiana Spoonpluggers**  
**"Buck Sez" Outing**  
Columbia City, Indiana  
Forest Ridge Campground (NW of Columbia City)  
August 7, 8, 9  
Contact: John Bales (260) 854-3921  
johnb@kuntrynet.com  
Denny Coulardot (260) 691-3118  
coular@peoplepc.com

**Buck Perry Memorial Outing**  
Taylorsville, NC  
September 4, 5, 6  
Contact: Terry O'Malley (828) 324-0661  
buckperry@charter.net

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# *Good Spoonplugging*

**By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor**



For many years, I have dealt with many types of fisherman and many of them are close friends. Yes I have friends who fish tournaments also. You and I can learn from them too. One thing I have paid attention to is what the others have caught when I am on the lake. Where did they catch them? How deep? What were they doing when the fish were caught? If they were caught on a rattletrap, how fast were they cranking it and were they touching the weeds (if present) when doing so? Were they caught on a jig? How deep were they fishing? What weight jig? How fast were they moving it? Was it being hopped gently or slow or hopped fast and high? When I fished tournaments and had a bad day, my partner would want to load up the boat and get the heck out of there. I would never let him. Why? I wanted to know what was caught on that day, who caught them and who didn't, and what it took to win by weight and the biggest fish. Why did I want to know this? I wanted to learn. What did they do to catch the fish that day that I failed to check? It doesn't matter if you are on the water with other Spoonpluggers or those who only cast. There is always more to learn. Denny Coulardot and I have shared what we have caught for all the years that we have been fishing. What time the fish moved. The depth that they were caught. The speed that was used for the lures that were being used and the final count of the species that were caught. You would be surprised at the answers you get. One time Denny hit the bass really good (pre-spawn) casting rattletraps across the end of a weedy point. The same day, I got a bunch on the lake that I live on and on the same day, Jerry Borst tore them up somewhere south of Chicago and his boy got a bass that weighed 7 lbs. The weather was stable. The three fishermen were aware of what they had to do to catch a fish for that time of the year and the results were the same for each. This is Spoonplugging at its finest. It is the sharing of fishing knowledge that will make you grow as a fisherman. Not just the taking but also the giving.

Any time you compare notes on a particular day, you learn. What did I fail to do today? Did I start shallow enough? Did I fail to check my speeds thoroughly during the day? Should I have cast more? Should I have went with the jig more to check out the slower speeds? Did I check deep enough? You have to ask yourself these questions on those days that the fish don't seem to want to jump in the boat. This is how we get better.

The last couple of weeks have not been good for me from Mr. Bass. Although I hear that many of the fishermen have been making some very good catches in water no deeper than three feet. This tells me that I may want to check a little shallower before expecting the fish to be deeper. It is all a learning process. It never stops.

*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:**

### **LIVE BAIT vs. ARTIFICIAL**

To make sure you have the full message on Depth and Speed control, and that you understand these terms when applied to different structures and their locations, it would be wise to again classify lures. I will put them into two groups, (1) Live bait, and (2) Artificials. Each of these have a role to play in fishing. You may prefer one over the other, but both may be necessary at certain times and under certain conditions.

Most game fish can be taken on live bait in one form or another. We will approach the subject from the standpoint of your becoming a better fisherman, since this is the reason behind this book.

In discussing live bait versus artificials, let us observe two things:

- 1- “Biting” and “Striking”.
- 2- Depth and Speed control

A game fish is designated as a fish with a pugnacious nature. He can be made to **strike—not feed**. The strike is produced by the unusual, the odd-ball, the different. The strike is a result of his disposition, so to speak. Nature’s selective evolution, the survival of the fittest, eliminates the weak, the sick, and the dying. It is the nature of fish to destroy these—to strike them. They represent the odd-ball, the different, and the unusual.

In the case of feeding (biting), this action is caused by the normal, the unusual, the natural.

You must keep in mind that a fish is cold blooded, and his metabolism is controlled by his environment. Percentage wise, his feeding time would be of short duration, and at times may be non-existent for rather long periods. Lucky, then, is the fisherman who goes fishing and finds the fish **feeding**. Giving him the better odds, he might be on the water when this occurs about five percent of the time. This leaves the greater part of the day, or season, for his fishing to be done when the fish are not feeding. Thus, he has to rely mainly on fish **striking**, if he is going to have success in a consistent manner.

Live bait represents the natural, the normal food supply, the regular bill-of-fare. It represents a way to catch fish, provided it is in position at the feeding (biting) periods.

Since the feeding period covers only a small part of the fishing day, live bait would have to be made to appear unusual, different, in order to prove effective during the non-feeding period. The fisherman could hook the bait in such a way as to make it “act” a little different, such as sticking it on a jig. Thus, it would produce a strike in preference to the natural bait which is all around. But it is rather difficult to present live bait correctly in an unusual manner or unnatural state. Depth and speed control becomes too difficult. It would be better for the live bait fisherman to represent the normal or natural as near as possible, as it would be very effective during feeding periods.

Artificial lures, on the other hand, have the ability to appear natural and normal to a degree. They can be made to imitate the natural food, and will produce when fish are feeding. At the same time they appear normal, they also have a degree of the unusual. They have “aids: of color, size and action more readily available. These aids, plus speed and depth control, are additional advantages which live bait does not have.

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