



# NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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

Charlie & Sue Downing gave a report on their recent trip to Florida. They didn't get to fish every day and had a bit of cold weather, but managed to catch some crappies despite the obstacles

John and Denny recently gave a seminar at the a local UAW with 40-50 members present. They felt it was an attentive group and were pleased with the turnout.

John and Denny will also be conducting a seminar for the group who meet monthly with the DNR fisheries biologist, Jed Pearson. The group provides input to the fisheries managers on possible rule changes on fishing regulations. Denny feels there will be several changes made in the next few years as a result of the fishing community input. The Indiana Natural Resource Commission is accepting suggestions under their Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Project. If you have a suggestion, you may go to <http://www.in.gov/nrc/> and click on "Submit A Suggestion".

Denny feels limits on bass size in certain lakes is a real possibility.

John claims there will be boats in the water within a month. We've had a nasty cold snap, but with the recent influx of warm weather, some of the smaller lakes and especially the rivers will open up in a hurry. The northern and walleye will be staging for their spring spawn soon. The northerns may have already made the move since they are among the first to spawn as soon as the ice leaves. 40 degree

water temperatures. The musky and walleye won't be far behind.

John presented a discussion on fishing for early wall-eyes below the dams of some area rivers. He described in great detail the techniques used in order to match the size of the jig to the velocity of the current in order not loose everything in your tackle box in the first 15 minutes. He indicated that casts must be made straight out into the current rather than a bit upstream in order to not get snagged up constantly. Speeds are normally pretty slow during this period. John also went into detail on a couple of area lakes that are connected to river systems and that have good walleye population during the early part of the season.

Denny also explained the use of small holes just after ice-out. Anchoring and fan casting is often productive late in the season, but can also be quite productive for several species just after ice-out. If the hole is large you may have to use several anchoring positions in order to cover the hole. Speed control is checked with the use of several different weights of jigs and well as the length the rod tip is moved on each jump.

Don't forget that the National dues will be coming due in June.

**NEXT MEETING:** March 16, 2009 at  
the Kendallville Public Library. 6:30  
P.M.



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

**Bud Perry (The late Mrs. Buck Perry) once said.....**

I have something in common with a lot of women—I married a fisherman!

Men are addicted to fishing in varying degrees There are those who go only once or twice a year. Others may average once a month. Then there are those who go every weekend, many afternoons after work when they can sneak off, and every vacation is spent at some fishing resort.

If the little woman has a word of complaint about all his free time being spent on the lake, she is considered a little wacky. Any wife worth her salt is supposed to know that fishing is a good-wholesome-outdoor sport. “Better fishing than wine, women and song”, she hears.

If she balks at the fishing heaven she is being transported to on vacation, which is usually ninety miles from nowhere, BUT has modern-housekeeping units, that palpitorator-of-hearts she married looks at her and no words are necessary to convey his thinking, “How did I ever get married to a woman who can be so selfish as to complain that she has no respite from cooking and washing dishes if we take our vacation at this fishing paradise”.

We, who married what some might call fishing “nuts” gradually come to the full realization that nagging, fussing, pouting and screeching is not going to win the battle being faced—that of sharing a little of our husbands free time and being considered occasionally as to our desires.

The enemy is a formidable enchanting siren, offering thrills and excitements and that combination is pretty hard to beat. Let’s face it, most of us aren’t sirens and don’t have the knowhow to compete. This “other love” is difficult to understand. Constant battle is wearying, frustrating and self-defeating.

How do you fight an enemy that you don’t see until it comes home on a stringer and is already dead. You can’t scratch, bite or kick it—Handy weapons for a visible enemy!

There comes a day though when an impasse is reached and the decision is made that something must be done. But WHAT? Strategy and planning becomes the order of the day. Any battle plan will. Sooner or later, reveal mistakes, so expect to advance and retreat—but how far you can go and much how much give is available on the other side—then stand your ground. This gives you a starting point.

If you don’t fish—make up your mind to learn how. If you have fished some and just don’t like it—go anyway. Remember that no battles are won without fighting and this is one of the battles.

When you “volunteer” to go fishing, don’t be surprised where you end up. It could be part of their strategy to discourage you, so expect the worst possible thing they can think of.

I’ve never forgotten my first one. It was to be trout fishing in one of our Carolina mountain streams. We had to be there by daylight—we were. We parked the car at the bottom of a mountain and I was informed we were to climb it. I looked up that steep mountain side I was supposed to climb (too dark to see the top—thank goodness) and thought, “How nice if you had married a mountain goat”. I won’t bore you with the details of how one pulls oneself forward—then go from one tree to the other until you finally reach the top. Going down the other side is faster. You hang on to the trees for dear life and if you slip

and start rolling just remember the next tree will stop you. Just be prepared for bumps, scratches and bruises and be extremely grateful when you finally reach the bottom and no broken bones are evident. If you can move, nothing is broken. The hurting is from the bangs and bruises.

The stream at the bottom of the mountain is truly beautiful—you think. Of course you haven’t put on your hip-high rubber boots as yet and waded out in it. When you get out to the middle, as you have been directed to do, you suddenly realize the water is no elephant, so what is it going to do to you? Well! Your feet fly out from under you and you go scooting down the full length of that big rock and you go until you hit a sticking up rock that stops you.

This is where you begin your retreat action. You retreat to the shore and under some pretext or other you refuse to be cajoled back into that roaring inferno of water. When you get back home and a warm bath and medication has restored some feeling to your battered body and sufficient strength is restored so you can again speak—the first demand is made. Never again are you to be taken trout fishing in the mountains. Stick to it, and you’ll never again regret any trout trips your one-and-only makes.

One way to discourage the afternoon sneak-offs is to suggest that you fix a picnic supper and he can pick up you and the kids on the way out. Explain this would make a nice family outing and the kids would love it.

These are just several little examples of tactics that proved useful and helped provide a way to arrive at an understanding. Most wives will find they can be pretty ingenious in counter-attacking if they put their minds to it.

I’ll be the first to admit that fishing with two active children is not my cup of tea. He soon realizes it to. And when it finally dawns on him that you mean to make it a permanent family affair you will find those after-work fishing trips becoming fewer and farther between.

I don’t think you can ever dilute to any appreciable degree the love a man has for fishing, and I’m sure that over the years I have been the one to make the greatest change. The wisest decision I made was to go fishing. A few fish, valiantly fought and netted, begin to give you a little understanding of the thrill and excitement that the sport of fishing offers. Apathy and indifference gives way to excitement and anticipation.

The ultimate in fishing pleasure and experience is to locate that school of lunkers where every cast produces a strike. This I have experienced many, many times, but I always start shaking when we get the school pinpointed. I never stop shaking until the action is over.

Why is catching fish such a thrill? I can’t describe it. I can’t explain it, but I know it is there and having experienced it I can understand Buck’s love and enjoyment.

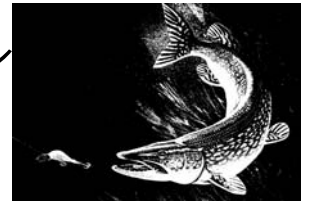
Perhaps all that I’m really saying is, “If you can’t beat ‘em—join ‘em.” I’m happy I did.

**“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS”**



# *Good Spoonplugging*

**By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor**



All good Spoonpluggers have a map of their lake. One that is bought from a store, a hand drawn map, or even one that is in their heads but they all have a map. It is literally impossible to fish a structure situation properly without some kind of a map. One thing that the fisherman must look for is the contact point. A contour map should be studied and the near contact point should be noticed. How would it be possible to know which area of a structure situation to work without knowing the location of the contact point? The contact point is the first thing that the fish make contact with on their way towards the shallows. Many times, the movement of the fish does not go beyond this point due to a bad condition. If the fisherman cannot interpret this spot and does not carry his depth control to this spot, the two will not get together on that day.

All good Spoonpluggers started their mapping in the shallows. They learned to run the first three size lures. If you are not able to keep these three lures in position and learn to troll the shallows, you need to take this season to learn how to do so. Find yourself a dark water color lake or several in an area and stay on them until you are able to take the next step. Learn how to throw markers and get shoreline sightings. Stop and cast when ever a fish is caught. Soon you will not have to think or wonder if you are doing things in the correct manner.

All the time you are learning you will be observing the weather and relating it to the movements of the fish. You will note how the water colors effect all fish movements as to how far they move and how long they stay. As you present lures properly, you will know when you are on a soft mucky bottom and know where the firmer bottoms are. You become aware of speed control and how it can make a fish take a lure plus relate that speed to the conditions that are present on that particular day. There are no short cuts to successful fishing. If there is a short cut, it is following Mr. Perry's guidelines to a tee. Every aid that is available should be used to allow us a way to present lures properly. Markers, the depth meter, shoreline sightings and what ever else we must do to get our lures in position. A lure out of position will catch no fish!!!!!!

If you do not know the exact size and shape of the structure situation that you are fishing, how in the world do you expect to be in the right place, at the right time and fishing in the right manner.

If a bar has four fingers, you must be able to interpret which finger is best. Are you able to do this? If not, then this is something that you have to take the time to work on. Forget about putting a lure in the water. Take the time to look the situation over before ever wetting a lure. Throw the markers. Then stand back and take a look at what you have. Now, run off of each finger and take note of the breaklines and the depths that each finger breaks to. Which one is best? Now take a time out and draw it on a piece of paper and then it is time to go to work on it. This is how you progress in your fishing.

*Good Spoonplugging*  
*John Bales*

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**“The more I learn, the more I see  
there is to learn.”** *E. L. “Buck” Perry*

### **BUCK SEZ:**

Too often, during the pre-spawn and the spawning season, fishermen rush to the water expecting to find the fish in the shallows. They become puzzled when they don't find them there. They tend to forget that how far a fish moves on migration, and how long they stay is dependent upon the weather and water conditions that exist at that particular time. They neglect weather and water, and if the deeper parts of the structures are checked at all—it's a short check—done in a half hearted manner. They return to the shallows **with no regard to where it is** because “the fish just gotta be there—it's that time of the year.”

The pre-spawn and spawning season is a period of changing weather and water conditions. Fish react to these changes just as they do in any part of the season. Weather and water condition can wreck a spawning season. This is one of the reasons why there are missing age groups in most waters. A good rule to follow during this period is; the closer the spawning season the more fish can be **expected** in the shallows. Be happy when this occurs. One trip may be good and the next bad. One year might be good and the next bad.

Regardless how many times I say the speed control will vary during the season—reaching a maximum in hot weather, and a minimum in the colder—I find the average fisherman encounters a great deal of difficulty in adapting his speed control to the season. He has a tendency to forget how much this control can change during the season. He will tend to stick with one speed too long after a reduction or and increase is called for. Maybe he hasn't fished for a couple of months, and doesn't realize the speed factor may have changed. You must remember that speed control can change from a trolling speed with the motor practically full throttle (5-10 H.P.) in the hottest weather, to a speed in the cold part, to a jump type lure that is moving so slowly it seems an eternity between each new cast.

My experience through the years has proven to me that few fishermen absorb anything but the operation and controls that were present when contact was made with the fish—a specific lure produced at a particular place, and in a certain way. They failed at a later date because they assumed where the fish would be, and what it took to catch him. This kind of thinking results in failure. You must never believe that a particular presentation, depth, speed, or color is best. Being neutral in every respect on every trip is a must. Only after fish have been located is it safe to say that something appears best, but certainly not before, nor on future trips.

Whatever the time of year it might be, or whatever the weather and water conditions may be, regardless of how short and slow the movement might be, your best chance of catching fish is by fishing the most potentially productive water. You will never catch fish by fishing where they ain't.

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