



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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The last meeting was held December 21, 2009 at the Kendallville Public Library with 17 members and guests present.

We welcomed newcomer, Larry Essig of Goshen, Indiana as a new prospective member.

Fishing reports were rather sparse due to the recent ice-up of most smaller area lakes and the partial ice of the remainder of the deeper lakes. The channels of several lakes have enough ice to be safe for ice fishing but most members remained skeptical of the main lake ice. By the time you get this, I believe most lakes have plenty of safe ice.

In the late season open water Denny reported 61 bass in one day and 120 in 3 days....up to 21 inches as well as a few muskys.

Denny also emphasized the importance of using smaller size jump lures, especially during the colder water periods. He reported a recent fishing trip where a 1/2 blade bait would not get a bite, but by switching to a 1/4 oz the speed was enough slower to catch a nice bunch.

Speaking of blade baits, John Bales has been working on new blade bait designs for a year or more now and after numerous prototypes that he rejected for one reason or another, he homed in on a design that he really likes. He is hand making these lures and has had a web site created that features them:

balesblades.com The lures come in 3/8; 1/2; 3/4; and 1 oz sizes. The quality and craftsmanship puts everything else on the blade bait market to shame.

Check it out.

Also check out John's instructor site at
john@instructor.johnbales.com

John gave us a short seminar on Florida lakes....and this information can also apply to certain area lakes as well. John demonstrated how to fish a muck line that are so common in Florida lakes. This transition in bottom conditions is overlooked by the majority of fishermen, and even when recognized it can be a confusing and frustrating obstacle to overcome. The transition is so subtle that it can be very difficult to recognize. The fish, however, have no difficulty at all in recognizing this breakline and use it on their movements and migrations.

John demonstrated the procedures used to find the breakline and then outlined the guidelines used to keep lures in their proper positions.

This bottom transition (harder bottom to softer bottom) is common in most of our natural lakes, but with so many other breaklines that are much more pronounced they may not be as quite important to the fish. Most Florida lakes have no other distinguishable breaklines, therefore, the bottom transition is very important.

Many of us may not think we have the chance to put this information to good use if we never get to fish in Florida, however, if you find yourself on a lake (especially a shallow lake) that has few or no distinguishable breaklines, finding where the bottom condition changes can be the difference between having fish for supper or going to McDonalds.

It's 2010!!! Dues are due. Thanks

NEXT MEETING: January 18, 2010
At the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS"



Mike Price with a nice fat late season musky



Roger Black with a 38 1/2 and a 42 inch musky



John Bales with some big late season walleyes

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS"



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



There are a lot of things that we could be doing in order to be prepared for the 2010 season. Winter is the best time of the year to study Mr. Perry's material. There isn't a one of us that hasn't overlooked some part of the study that we can't learn something. This is also the time to set a goal for the next season. We may be weak at something or another. It is time to figure this out and know what we need to work on next year. If you are like me, your reels could be taken apart and oiled up. Check all your guides and tips to make sure that the guides are all in good shape. Wire line will cause the guides to grove and when they get bad enough, they will need replaced. If you are like me, you will have quite a few hooks that may need replaced on your Spoonplugs. This is a good time to do it. Maybe you need to make some different sized jigs for this season. You know that you will need them some time during the season. Do you have plenty of silver buddies in several weights?

What shape is your anchor rope in? Do you have 100 feet in case you need it? Is your anchor heavy enough to hold your boat? You should not wait till you actually need it to fix it. That will do you no good. There is no worse feeling than working very hard to find the fish and not be able to keep the boat anchored in the right spot. Now is a good time to fix it if you don't have the right equipment.

Make sure to charge your batteries at least a couple times during the winter. This will help keep it in good shape. Always make sure that you check that your lower unit does not have any water in it before it gets below freezing. A good rule of thumb is if there is water in it, there will be a milky color when you take out the lower screw. If it is milky, drain it all and put in new oil.

One of the worst things that you can do is let your boat trailer sit all winter with water in the wheel bearings. The best thing to do is shortly after your last trip, take them out and grease them. If you do this, they will last a very long time. I do mine several times a year and especially right after I put the boat away is the most important. If you don't make it to the boat launch, you can't go fishing!

*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:

“Will different species of fish use the different type structures, breaks, breaklines, etc., found in a lake? Or is the bass the only fish that will use all these different types?”

As I have said before, ALL species of fish will react to the bottom features (structure, breaks, breaklines, deep water, etc.) found in bodies of water. In some bodies of water, certain type structure will be more predominant than others. In some bodies of water the different species may use a particular type structure over another type. In some bodies of water all the species could use all the type structure, breaks, and breaklines present.

In some bodies of water the different species may be “using” a different type structure at a particular time. By this, I mean at a particular time the best bass structure may be a “bar” with a tall weedline, while at the same time a deep underwater bar (or hump) may be the best place to find walleye. While at the same time, a deep breakline is the best place for big northern or muskie. In other bodies of water all the species could be using the same type structure, breaks, or breaklines, at the same time.

When we consider migrating fish such as the walleye, white bass, stripers, etc., they will react to the same features of the bottom—in the area where they might be.

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“Why do you say fish pause or stop at “breaks” in the structure?”

Here again, I make this statement through observation, experience, and logic. I have no definite scientific proof why this is so (neither do I need it). But, if I were approaching a “danger zone” (shallow water) or an area that might mean unpleasantness, I’d want to “case the joint” a little, and I’d move from “break” to break.” I would pick out a vantage point ahead, and I’d go until I reached that point. Then I’d pause again until I spotted another vantage point, and move on to that. If things seemed to be getting too bad for me at the next point, then I wouldn’t get any closer.

You still may have grounds for another “why”—even though you would do the same thing. We know fish can adapt to changes in his environment. We also know that this is not instantaneous; it takes a little time. If a big change comes too fast, the shock could kill him. This indicates to us the **pauses** give time for adjustments to be made. As he moves shallower, there is a pressure change, temperature change, light change, oxygen change, etc. He might even have to pause or stop for “resting” from exertions that might have occurred during the migration.

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“You indicated that a ‘sharper break’ would be one of the best ‘contact points.’ If I had a structure such as a big wide bar, or a big long hump, should I concentrate my efforts primarily on any ‘sharper break’ that I find?”

I said at some place in our studies, I was going to repeat important subjects until I sounded like a broken record. The “sharper break” is such a subject.

To make a “sharper break” important to a structure, it must have two very important things. First, **it must break into deeper water**, preferably the “deepest.” The next ingredient is the **depth with which it starts to break** (breakline) into deep water. If it breaks as shallow as 8 or 9 feet (or shallower), it may not be as good as **other spots on the structure**. If this **shallow sharper break** is the only “break” around, then you shouldn’t expect many **good** migrations up on the structure very often.

“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS”