



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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FOUNDED 1991

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The last meeting was held May 17, 2010 at the Kendallville Public Library with 17 members and guests present.

Denny Coulardot reported that the muskie are still going pretty good. Mike Price and Denny have also been having good success catching northerns lately by trolling spinner baits over the weeds. Their tally so far this season is: 45 muskie and 53 northerns.

They have also caught a few bass. Mike reported a 21 inch largemouth just a few days ago.

Most of the bass have now spawned. A few remain in the shallows on the spawn, but for the most part the bass's shallow water days are over. It will take some time and some warmer weather before the bass will be caught with any consistency. But fortunately, the walleye and northerns have recovered from their spawn and are ready for action.

Denny gave a spawning timeline on the Midwest game fish from the first to the last to spawn:

Northerns (just after ice-out)

Walleyes

Musky

Crappie

Smallmouth Bass

Largemouth Bass (water temps first reach the mid 60's)

The upcoming Jackson, Michigan Leoni Outing was discussed and a few of the Northern Indiana Spoonpluggers will be present. The Leoni Outing will be June 8-13, 2010. Contact John Zaborny (517) 414-3596 or email jszaborny@yahoo.com.

John Bales went over questions raised in last

month's newsletter. He stressed the importance of fishing shallower and darker colored lakes in the early season. These lakes warm up much faster than the deeper, clearer lakes so fish metabolism gets jazzed up much earlier. This factor may account for why darker colored lakes seem to produce more and fatter fish. By the time a deep clear lake warms to the deeper depths, the summer season is nearly over. This was especially true for the 2009 season. John feels he has already caught more and bigger bass so far this year than all of the 2009 season.

It has been observed many times that northerns caught deep in deep clear lakes are often skinnier than their counterparts in shallower lakes. John and Denny also discussed 3-way rigging using a Spoonplug as a kind of "downrigger" to troll stickbaits or thin spoons on a trailing line. Different trailer line lengths were discussed as well as attachment methods. The 3-way rig is especially effective for walleye this time of year but can be used for other game fish as well.

John and Denny also discussed considerations in choosing a body of water to fish following a cold front: Water color; Depth of the body of water to be fished; Species (what species is being focused upon and which are most active first following a front); are shad or bluegill the main bait fish (makes a difference in growth/size of game fish); Population (is there a good population of the fish you are seeking.)

**NEXT MEETING: June 21, 2010 at the
Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.**

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS"

LUNKER HUNTERS

MUSKEGON OUTING

- July 7-11, 2010 at Fishermans' Landing**
- All Spoonpluggers welcome**
- Campsites still available, call 231-726-6100**
- Many good lakes & Lake MI closeby**
- Hospitality Tent**
- Evening fishing reports/chalkboard sessions**
- Thursday Lunker Hunter program: "Mapping from a Surveyors Perspective"**
- Saturday evening delicious meal planned by Mike and Nyann Dordan**
- Contour map copies of area lakes**
- Chance to fish with other Spoonpluggers**
- Contact Chase: ckspoonpl1@aol.com**



John and Debbie Bales at '09 Muskegon Outing

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS"



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



Interpretation is an important part of our learning. Interpretation of bottom conditions, weather and water, and how these effect the movements and migrations of fish. This cannot be learned over night or in one day; however with some study and effort, it can be accomplished. If I were to ask you to take a 1/4 mile of shoreline and draw me a map in detail of the structure situations that exist in this area, could you do it? If not, then you need to ask yourself what you need to do to get you to that point where you can.

I have said this before and I believe that of all that is important, the number one thing that we need to be able to do is interpret bottom conditions. If a weedline stops at ten feet, you need to be able to follow that weedline and find the size and shape of what ever exists along that shoreline. If we are not able to do this, how will we be able to place markers on the fingers so that we can make a correct trolling pass? A good Spoonplugger can size up a structure situation in a matter of minutes, place markers or get a shoreline sighting and begin making correct trolling passes and begin getting answers immediately. Are the fish moving right now? You will know this in just a few passes. If you cannot do this part of the mechanics of Spoonplugging then you need to get to work on it until you can. This part of the learning is a must. Every lake has breaklines. A breakline is a more rapid increase in depth. If you run from the shallows to the deep and watch your depth meter, these breaklines will be seen. Some are very subtle and some stand out like a sore thumb. A Spoonplugger needs to know and interpret every one of them in the lake that they are checking out. Each breakline needs to be checked out starting with the shallowest one and finishing with the deepest one or the deepest one that we can reach if no fish are caught shallower. This may take some time and effort but so what. It is about the catching of the fish that is important here. We do what ever it takes both trolling and casting until we find the fish. If we go through all of the guidelines of trolling and casting and do not find the fish, then we start over, either on the same structure situation or move to another. We do not stop following Mr. Perry's guidelines or vary from them during a fishing day until it is time to go home. This mental approach is what separates the men from the boys. It is the difference between going home with no fish or loading the boat. Catching fish is important!!!!!! It is why we do this!!!! The beauty of the weather and being out there is much more satisfying when the fish are caught. A good Spoonplugger will know the reasons if the fish are not found on any particular day.

If you study and work hard the results will come and great satisfaction will follow. Fishing independence is a wonderful thing. Mr. Perry said that.

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:

In working tall weeds, the different size lure should be worked alongside these weeds, and just as close to them as possible.

The contour of the weedline is not being followed properly if the lure is continually fouled—this indicates the lure is too close. Neither is the contour being followed properly if the lure is never fouled—this indicates the lure is too far out. After a few passes, especially if a marker is used, the route to take should be known.;

If any fish movement has extended back into the weeds, this does not mean all the fish are in the weeds—some will still be along the outer edge. Quite often fish move up to the weedline, but do not penetrate or go back into the weeds.

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A mistake too often made by fishermen is to put too much faith in one particular size lure that can work only one section of water. At times, this particular size may be the greatest thing ever developed—but, it could have been used earlier or later, and as far as catching fish is concerned, was a piece of junk.

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After working all sections of the shallows and as deep as possible on the structure, and no fish are found, the question arises—“What should be done now?”

- * If the area just fished is known to be productive, exercise patience for the fish to move, with efforts concentrated as deep on the migration route as possible. Preferably at the spot where fish first make contact with the structure (contact point).
- * If there is some doubt the water at this particular structure has been “strained” thoroughly—repeat all steps.
- * If there is any question or doubt concerning the direction of nature of this structure, work it until its exact nature is known.
- * Check other shorelines for additional structures. As many of these as possible should be known. In looking for structures and working them, you not only learn the lake, but the experience gained is invaluable.
- * When additional hot-spots and structures are known, these should be checked. Some particular condition could delay migration in one particular area, but not in another.
- * Run shallows for stragglers, periodically returning to check structures for migration.

However, a word of caution—don’t go tearing up and down the lake trying to find fish at the expense of thoroughness. Work each structure thoroughly before leaving it.

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When Trolling in deep water, some fishermen experience difficulty in returning to the same spot where a fish has been caught. This difficulty can be overcome by using markers and shoreline sightings.

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The fisherman who learns SPOONPLUGGING will always expect to catch his limit of fish and anything less will be understood. The only things that should defeat a SPOONPLUGGER is the extreme weather conditions such as a cold front, or the time spent on the waters was not long enough to include a migration, or to find the good areas.

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