



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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PRESIDENT/FOUNDER: Denny Coulardot
(260) 691-3118

SECRETARY: Ted Walter
(260) 495-5042

EDUCATION DIRECTOR: John Bales
(260) 854-3921

The last meeting was held April 19, 2010 at the Kendallville Public Library with 21 members and guest present.

Denny Coulardot reported that Mike Price and himself had caught 38 muskies to date up to 38 inches. (40 counting the photos sent the day after the meeting...see next page)

Denny feels the muskies spawned about 2 weeks ago or about the 1st of April. He said the musky have been shallow with nothing caught below 18 feet. He also reported big crappies have been caught lately using jigs and bobber.

John Bales reported good catches of bass. He has been concentrating almost exclusively on lakes with good water color and has recorded more 4 & 5 pounders so far this year than all of last year combined.

John drew two identical structure situations on the board; one with weeds to 10-12 feet and the other without weeds. He then asked the group a series of questions concerning the different approaches as to how each structure situation should be fished.

A great deal of detail went into explaining how each should be approached on an early season basis. This included tips on how to fish the inside edge of the weedline as well as fishing outside the weed edge, casting positions, when and where trolling can be used, what constituted breaks and breaklines, etc. John explained that a jerk-bait can be used in certain instances during the early season. He stated that a jerk-bait can be a good choice for about 6 days a year. At this time of year, he carries a tackle box of various baits that have proven to work well in the

spring when shallower waters are fished to a greater extent than any other time of year. He also utilizes a spinning rod with light line during the early season. In a month or so, this tackle will be retired for the remainder of the year.

The topic of spinner baits came up. John's comment was that he felt the spinner bait has a very important and specific use. "Cut the wire just below where the blades are attached and discard the blades. Then cut the hook off just ahead of the bend and discard the hook and barb. This leaves you with a hunk of lead with wires protruding out both ends at different angles. You now have the perfect tool to keep in the back of your boat to clean out the water discharge hole in your motor when it becomes clogged."

John and Denny were both presented with trolling rods that were wrapped by Mr. Perry some 50 years ago as a token of the appreciation by the membership of Northern Indiana Spoonpluggers for all the hours of instruction, on-the-water and in the classroom both have given over that past 18 or 19 years since the club was formed. I sure every NIS members agrees that we have become much better fishermen because of their efforts. Their dedication and adherence to the teachings of Mr. Perry have been an inspiration to the NIS membership as well as many other Spoonpluggers across the county. Thanks, Guys

**NEXT MEETING: MAY 17, 2010 at the
Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.**

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS"



Denny Coulardot and Mike Price with a few of many early season muskies



“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS”



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



I was contemplating going fishing today and was thinking on what might be the most fun to catch and where. The water temps are near 60 and some bass are spawning and others are thinking about it. Today is the third day after the front and the last two days have been clear and cooler nights near freezing. Denny says that the musky are done spawning for a couple of weeks and they are being caught a lot deeper than just a few weeks ago. That's a good sign that they are done. The night bite below the dam for the walleye's at Sylvan is about over. The warm weather came quickly this year which has put us two to three weeks ahead of normal. Most of the lakes are clear which is nature's way assuring the fish's eggs get plenty of sun to hatch the baby's. The deeper waters that carry the good populations of northerns have yet to warm so it will be several more weeks before we see them move up to the weedline in good numbers. So what do I fish for today? What species and what lake will be a good choice and why? This will be a good thing to talk about at the next meeting. Let's just save our answers for the meeting.

Two weeks ago the weedline out of Brady's landing on Sylvan was at 7 feet. Yesterday it went down to 9 feet in some places. What do you suppose happened? Why did they grow deeper in such a short time? If the bass are spawning on a small, shallow lake, if I drive to a large deep clear lake will I find that the bass there are in pre spawn? Would the smallmouth in the deep clear lake be spawning at the same time as the largemouth in the small shallow lake? Since the walleye are one of the first species to spawn, would I expect them to return to normal movements by this time of year? Would Sylvan be a better choice for trying for the walleye than Clear Lake? Why? Would the crappie be a good choice of species while every other specie seems to be either spawning or not done with their recovery? Why? Think about this for the next meeting. We will see if any one actually reads their newsletter. Bring it with you. See you then.

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:

My belief is, as the fish gets older and bigger, his ability to adapt to changes in his environment begins to slow down or to diminish (starting about the third year). This “slow down” may be greater in some fish than in others of the same species. This alone would explain “stragglers.” I believe his ability to adapt to changes in his environment slows until he dies of old age. This **forces** bigger fish to deep water and this in turn plays a part in survival of the young and the species. I figure a small fish feels pretty safe when he stays or scoots to the shallows (0 to 8-10 feet) when the big fish get on the prowl.

Let’s face it, there are two main drives all creatures have: 1-Survival, 2-Continuation of the Species. If the deep water wasn’t the place where the fish spend a greater part of their time, they probably wouldn’t be around today for us to catch.

I could say I pity those who only have doubts about the deep water being the home of the fish, especially larger fish. However, I would not use the term “pity” when speaking to those whose minds are not open enough to at least give it a try.

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Another thought concerning northern pike in a series of lakes such as chain of lakes is their apparent mass movement from one lake to another during the warmer part of the season. Large concentrations of big northern may show up in a lake during a certain period, and fishing can be terrific for a week or more. Then the action slows in this particular lake, and the fish start showing up in the lake above, and later on in the lake above that one, and so on. When in a given area, these fish will use the structures present. Apparently, they make the return journey—as the next season, the movement starts all over again in the same lake and at approximately the same period.

Fishermen who fish primarily for this species, and who fish water of this nature (Lake chain) would be wise to study this yearly migration fully. A definite pattern or date periods may not be possible, as the migrations would be controlled by the weather and water conditions that exist, and very few years would be the same. But a good enough pattern could be secured to keep the fisherman in the most likely spots.

Many fishermen consider the northern pike a cold water fish. This is true to a certain extent, as he is active in colder water, often being the target of the “ice fisherman.” But, it would be well to note, the best action occurs during the hottest periods of the year. Casting for northern can be effective, especially when they are in the shallows. But to consistently catch the BIG northern in numbers, trolling the deeper weedlines, breaklines, and drop-offs with appropriate lures is the way to go for most of the season.

When thinking of muskie, we change our view very little from that of the northern. Except in certain reservoirs, the shallower headwater sections will be prime spawning areas. After the water warms, they move back to the deeper sections. In the case of muskie, his deepwater sanctuary may be much deeper—and as he gets larger, he becomes more reluctant to move to shallow waters. His migration will be shorter and for less time. Where bass may have their “shallow” deepwater sanctuary, in 30-35 feet of water, muskie at the same time may have his at 45-55 feet if available. Big muskie are very reluctant to move shallow except during spawning period. After spawning, big muskie in the shallows become few and far between. If a particular lake had several deep holes with different depths, the muskie fisherman should concentrate his efforts around the deepest one for most of the season. Here again, lures trolled at deep breaklines will shoot to pieces the myth that muskies are difficult to catch.

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