

SPOONPLUGGING STUDY GROUP MEETING, JANUARY 19, 2006

FISHING REPORTS

Fishing reports were slim probably due to the unusual January weather. Charlie Meyers fished the Grand River at the Rogue with no luck. He said the water temperature was 33 degrees and there was skim ice by the ramp. Bob Strek said that the walleye and steelhead recently shut off in the Grand with the high and dirty water. Don Stephens said he heard that lots of fish have been moving through the fish ladder lately. Riley Rogers fished Muskegon Lake recently up by the rivermouth. He caught only 1 pike using live bait on the bottom in 35 feet of water, although there were lots of fish showing on the scope. There were 10 boats out there but he didn't see any other fish caught. Macatawa, Muskegon, and Pigeon Lakes are all open now. Chet Babcock tried to raise our spirits by reporting that he caught lots of redfish and sea trout in the shallow flats of Floridas' west coast. They were using live shrimp under docks by the dredged out channels (deepest water in the area).

PROGRAM

Roger Bouwkamp gave an excellent program on fishing Mona Lake. He passed out copies of DNR fish-planting records for walleye and musky in Mona Lake over a number of years. There should be a good population of walleyes in there as the emphasis has been on them the last several years, with the last muskies planted in 1991. Rogers' in-laws live on the lake so he has fished it a lot over many years. He said that many species of fish are present in Mona, including smallmouth, largemouth, musky, catfish, drum, walleye, and pike. Some good sized fish are present, but there are more trophy fish available in Muskegon Lake. The channel to Lake Michigan is only about 3 or 4 feet deep, so there probably isn't the fish migration from Lake Michigan as there would be with a deeper channel. Mona Lake has good water color with some turbidity to block out light and allow fish to come shallower. This makes it an excellent lake to learn Spoonplugging on, where weeds end at 4 or 5 feet, and lures can walk the bottom below that without interference. At times he has gotten all his fish on the 2 smallest lures covering 2 to 6 feet in depth (# 500+ # 400). He catches the majority of his fish, including the larger ones, at 6-9 foot depths (#250). Roger said he began Spoonplugging in the early 80s' when he read Fishing Facts Magazine and articles by Buck Perry. Before that, he would fish Mona just casting the shallows, catching some fish, but never really being satisfied with his results. Then he read Bucks' book "Spoonplugging—Your Guide to Lunker Catches". It made a lot of sense to him about fish behavior and how to most effectively present lures. By studying and applying the information on the water his success fishing gradually began to get better and better. Roger claims that he is still learning from reading Buck Perrys' material. He says that there is no magic lure, method, or shortcut to fishing success, and that knowledge and experience on the water is the key to improving your fishing. This approach to fishing gives him the confidence that he knows what to do when he gets out on the water. His fishing results confirm that he is doing it right!

After a delicious pie and donut snack (many thanks, Charlie!), Chase Klinesteker presented a "Basic Spoonplugging" seminar which he will be giving at the Grand Rapids Sport, Fishing, and RV Show March 16-19. Spoonplugging was described as a lifetime learning process based in the knowledge about fish behavior discovered by Buck Perry, the father of modern-day structure fishing. It is not just another method or only using Spoonplugs. There are 8 areas of knowledge about fishing. They are: Basic Movements of Fish, Structure, Weather and Water, Mapping and Interpretation, Controls and Tools, Lure Presentation, Lake Types, and Mental Aspects. Knowledge must be gained in all 8 of these areas if one is to become successful and well rounded in all facets of fishing. Some fishermen spend most of their time learning new methods of lure presentations at the expense of the other 7 areas, leaving them at a disadvantage. Terry O'Malley describes Spoonplugging as a simple, orderly, and precise way in which to fish which is the "Ultimate in Fishing" because we fish all types of waters, for all species of fish, and we target the largest fish of those species. That requires knowledge in many areas and it does not come easily or overnight. Excellence must be worked hard for-- in any field of endeavor. In the seminar, Chase explained each of the 8 areas and their significance. He also gave 3 reasons Spoonpluggers catch their share of trophy fish. Only one person was caught closing their eyes during the seminar, likely claiming to be in deep thought!!

Don't forget the Winter Spoonplugging Seminar in Illinois on March 11. Contact Chase if you are interested.