



THE SMALLMOUTH HORIZON

Helping to Protect and Preserve Quality Smallmouth Bass Fishing

May 2015

**Thank you all, job well done!
Our fundraising auction was
a big success.**

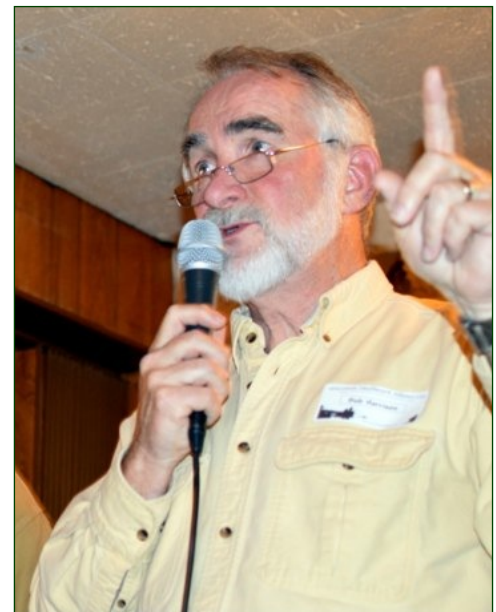
We have the totals. Auction net was \$5,354 and Raffle \$250. That includes the sale of the donated rods earlier.

by Mike Simon, Auction chairman

Clockwise from right: Bob Harrison handles auctioneer duties.

Showing items was just one of the jobs handled by auction chairman, Mike Simon.

Board member Rich Connors displays one of two boxes of flies donated by Umpqua Feather Merchants.



Great job everyone! I was very pleased to have people comment on the event and even call the next day on how much they enjoyed it. Several people made great suggestions for the overall procedure for

next year, plus even suggested items to sell, which doesn't happen often.

We have discussed the Silent Auction procedure and think we have that smoothed out. Let us know if you have anything we need to hear.

A message from Nancy Winters

First thank you to the club for the generous donation to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. It is a true comment on the caring nature of the members of this club.

One of the best things you can do to honor Steve's memory is to keep this club strong. His favorite fish was the smallmouth and encouraging the preservation of the species and its habitat was very important to him.

Second, I want everyone to know that on Saturday, August 1st, between noon and 5:00 P.M., Steve's children, Melissa and John, and I are having a party at my house to celebrate Steve's life.

This party is the one thing Steve made me promise I would do in his memory. I know it is right in the middle of fishing season and on a Saturday, but I am hoping that I am giving you enough notice that you might be able to stop by at least for a short time.

Also, per Steve's instructions, "There will be no light beer or young whiskey." I am adding, "no spiced rum."

Please let me know if you are coming so I can plan for food and beverages. You can e-mail me at ncarolwinters@gmail.com or call me at 608-524-6348 or on my cell at 608-963-3186.



Photo credit: USFWS/Steve Hillebrand

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Articles, photos, and calendar events for the newsletter are encouraged and should be submitted by the 1st day of the month to: Dan Johnson, 426 Glenway St. Madison, WI 53711. Send to: johnson7@tds.net, editor.

Catching River Smallies

River Smallies can be caught practically all year if one knows where to target them. Also, the methods vary by season, water clarity, and stream flow. This month's article speaks about post spawn and early summer. And yes, summer will eventually arrive. A future article will discuss late summer and fall periods. These topics were taken from Tim Holschlag's noteworthy work, River Smallmouth Fishing.

Post Spawn (Immediately After Spawn)

What's Happening:

This is the time right after the majority of males in a given section of river have quit guarding their fry, so they (and most of the females) are recuperating from the rigors of spawning. While it only lasts a week, or at most 3 weeks, I regard this as the most difficult period of the year to catch smallmouth. And that's why I call it the "post-spawn funk". Because indeed, in some areas the smallies go into a major funk after spawning; from one weekend to the next, fishing may go from fast to frustrating. In other areas, the post-spawn downturn isn't nearly as noticeable. On rivers with unusually high numbers of bronzebacks, spawning activity often gets spread out. By the time some fish are entering the post-spawn period, others have already passed through it and are starting to feed. However, in plenty of other smallmouth waters, the "funk" is severe and smallies develop a bad case of lockjaw. But despite these tough conditions, some fish can be caught, and here's how.

Fish Locations:

So where are those funky fish? Most seem to be resting in the bottom of the pools and outside bends, especially next to cover. A few fish can be caught in traditional feeding areas, like head- and tail-of pool areas, but the majority of smallies will be found in deeper and slower water during the post-spawn period.

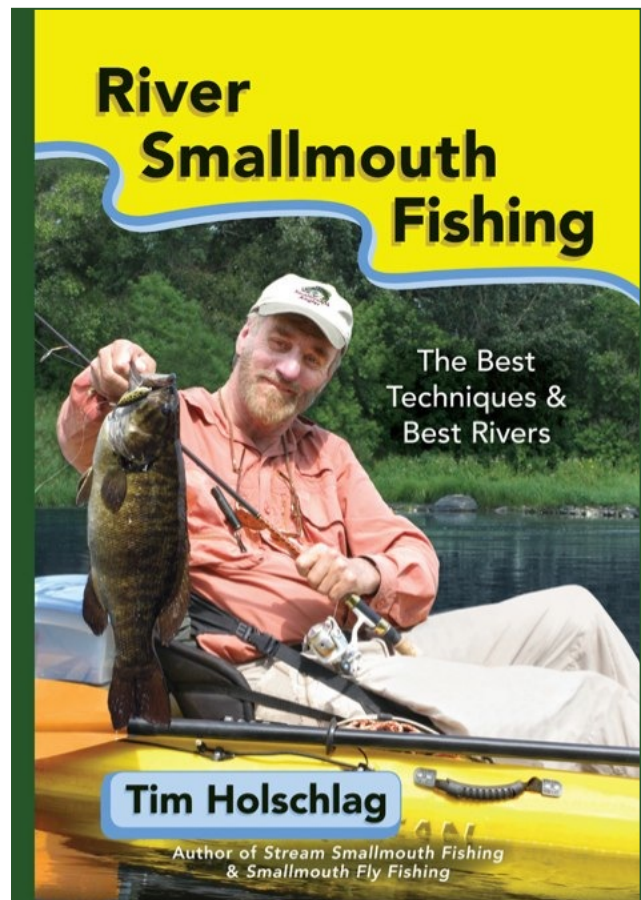
Angling Methods:

Try both fast and slow. It's no surprise that creeping jigs and plastics along the bottom will entice some fish into biting. That's a proven technique almost anytime fish are inactive. A small worm worked

painfully slow will produce some takers. So will extra-slow-sinking tubes and grubs. With jigs, it may take multiple casts to the same spot to coax a bite. A wacky worm dropped next to a log or boulder is another slow-motion method. And instead of just one cast to a spot, try two or three.

Surprisingly, another way to counter the post-spawn blues is to fish fast! I know this seems counter-intuitive with lethargic fish, but it often works during this period. Bottom-bouncing crankbaits retrieved erratically pay off. But suspending plugs, if you keep them near bottom, can be even better. Rapala's X Rap twitched and jerked along the bottom through likely resting locations has produced plenty of funky fish for me.

The easiest way to beat the post-spawn period is to simply avoid it. Not every area has waterways on significantly different schedules, but plenty do. For instance, the smallies in a wide open, slow flowing pasture stream might finish spawning a week or more ahead of the fish just 20 miles away who live in a heavily wooded, fast-flowing stream that warms slowly. In this case, by focusing on the stream where the fish have already recovered from spawning you can avoid the down cycle.



Our Next Meeting:

September



Upcoming Events:

BFF Monthly Meeting - 3rd Monday, May 18th
Cal Dewitt - Sustaining Our Streams and Wetlands

BFF Picnic and casting clinic - Saturday, June 20th
Donald Park

Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance meetings are normally held on the third Tuesday of each month. The Badger Fly Fishers meet on the fourth Monday.

Both groups meet at the Mapletree Restaurant on Highway 51, in McFarland, Wisconsin. Programs begin at 7:00 p.m., dinner at 6:00 p.m. **Visitors and guests are always welcome!**