



Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance Ltd.

Helping to Protect and Preserve Quality Smallmouth Bass Fishing

July 2017

Monthly Meetings

Wisc. Smallmouth Alliance

Meets 3rd Tuesday, 7 p.m. Maple Tree Restaurant, McFarland. Gone fishing until September.

Club Information

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INFORMATIVE MEETINGS

Jerry Pasdo

The membership survey conducted last fall resulted in categories being rated for meeting topics. In order of preference, they were: presentations from members, presentations from guides, general chat sessions, presentations from resource managers/professionals, and tips on locations. With these in mind your Board will be discussing topics and personnel soon.

We all can contribute. If you have topics you would like to see covered, and better yet, know someone suitable to present the topic, please let Mike Simon or me know soon. We would like a full slate ready for the year before our first meeting.

KIDS DON'T FLOAT

Friends of the Lower Wisconsin River (FLOW) is a volunteer organization whose mission is to encourage the safe and environmentally sound use of the lower Wisconsin River.

We have undertaken an effort to help eliminate needless drownings on the river. To do so, we have been erecting "Kids Don't Float" kiosks at landings along the river. The kiosks provide free loaner life vests (PFDs) to any "kid" of any age using the river. We ask that the life vests be returned either where picked up or at a convenient take out spot.

Our understanding is that no one has ever drowned on the lower Wisconsin River while wearing an appropriately sized PFD in good condition. We strongly encourage all boaters and swimmers to have one and wear it.

We have erected ten kiosks along the lower river, five of which are located within the boundaries of the River Valley school district: Arena, Hwy 14, Peck's Landing, Lone Rock and Gotham. Volunteers and donations have made this possible. While most life vests are returned, some are not and they also have a useful life expectancy.

We cooperate with the WI DNR and can get advice on the safety of older life vests when needed. We ask for support for funds and donations of gently used PFDs to resupply aging life vests at our kiosks.

Our thanks go to the members of the Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance for their support of this important effort.

For more information, see
<https://www.wisconsinriverfriends.org/kids-dont-float>

Sincerely,
The FLOW Kids Don't Float committee

Note: WSA has agreed to partner with FLOW on this very worthwhile project and has donated \$325 towards it in 2017.

FISHING FOR NESTING BASS

Even when a nesting bass is quickly released, it can lose 50-100% of its brood.

**Outdoor Canada
Gord Pyzer**

Compelling new science has confirmed what we've known for years. The annual recruitment or year class strength of a bass population is directly proportional to the reproductive success, and any activity that impacts or decreases that success—specifically fishing for nesting males—causes a reduction in recruitment.

It's the result of a 22-year study undertaken by Dr. David P. Philipp, principal scientist at the Illinois Natural History Survey, University of Illinois. If Philipp's name sounds familiar it's because he's been involved in cooperative research over the years with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources in southeastern Ontario. Indeed, much of the data, that Philipp and his colleagues have assembled is Ontario based.

"Not to toot our own horn," says Philipp, "but rest assured these are the only datasets in the world that address this issue. I feel confident saying this, because this one dataset took 22 years and over 1,800 miles of snorkeling to gather. We have similar datasets for other smallmouth and largemouth bass populations as well, and they all show the same relationship."

The relationship is the direct connection between reproductive success and recruitment.

"This relationship holds for many species," Philipp explains, "but it is particularly acute for black bass because of the extended parental care that males provide for their offspring. If the male is removed from his brood at any point during the four to five week period of parental care, his brood is quickly consumed by brood predators (approximately 50% after ten minutes of male absence). Harvest of a guarding male results in 100% brood destruction. Catch-and-release angling of a guarding male results in partial consumption while he is off the nest, and 100% destruction if he abandons that nest as a result of the angling incident, which is not uncommon. When there is low reproductive success, there is low recruitment, and when reproductive success is high, recruitment is good."

A decades long study by renowned bass scientist, Dr. David Philipp shows conclusively that fishing for nesting bass negatively affects year class success. But what about the contention of many bass anglers that catch-and-release angling doesn't impact reproductive success and, even if it did, anglers can't actually catch enough fish to impact the population.

"To address the first aspect," says Philipp, "our group and many others have repeatedly shown that removing a nesting bass results in the predation of its brood. Additionally, with enough brood loss or enough physical stress from the angling event, males will abandon their nests. There is little debate about this.

"To address the second aspect, we have conducted two separate but related studies. In the first, we had two anglers in a boat fish a number of stretches of shoreline in several lakes during the bass nesting season. These anglers had never been on these lakes before. Every bass that they captured angling, they gave an upper



caudal clip and immediately released at the point of capture. After the angling was completed for that stretch, a snorkeler swam through it and counted the number of nesting bass with and without caudal clips. Results showed that with just one pass of anglers, they captured 49% of all nesting largemouth bass, and 62% of all nesting smallmouth bass. In addition, more than 95% of all bass captured were nesting males.

"In the second study, we had four boats with two anglers each fish a single lake, about 150 acres in size with four kilometres of shoreline, at the same time, spread out around the lake and all moving in a clockwise direction. Again, none of these anglers had fished this lake before. They fished and monitored how long it took them as a team to catch their 12 bass limit (greater than 12 inches in length). The four teams took 47-83 minutes, although all fish in this study were released immediately with an upper caudal clip. Snorkelers determined that during the entire spawning season that year, there were 88 smallmouth bass nests, of which 71 were successful. The total number of smallmouth nests active at the time of the fishing, however, was only 73. So the bottom line is that the four boats (eight anglers) fishing on this lake caught 66% of the nesting smallmouth in the whole lake in about one hour!

"To test this claim," says Philipp, "we initiated a whole-lake experimental management study in which four restricted-access lakes were exposed for eight successive years to two different management regimes. In one, there was no angling during the entire spawning period, and in the other, catch-and-immediate release angling was allowed during this same period. So over the eight-year study period, each lake underwent four years of no fishing and four years of catch-and-immediate release angling during the bass spawning period. Relative recruitment, was determined by repeated visual assessments. Snorkelers swam the entire shoreline of each lake multiple times, and counted the number of one-year old bass spawned the previous year, and two-year old bass spawned two years earlier.

"We found that for every one of the four study lakes, the recruitment during the years in which there was catch-and-immediate release angling of nesting bass was significantly lower than during the years when there was no fishing allowed during the spawning season. In our opinion, the results of these various studies represent overwhelming support for our original working hypothesis, that angling for nesting bass during the spawning season decreases lake wide recruitment of bass."

View entire article and photos at: <http://www.outdoorcanada.ca/Fishing-for-nesting-bass>



Mike Simon with 9-1/4" red ear sunfish and opening day crappie



A few photos from the Lake Nipigon, Ontario trip.

Bob Harrison with a 45" Ontario pike

Dan Zavadsky with 40" Ontario pike

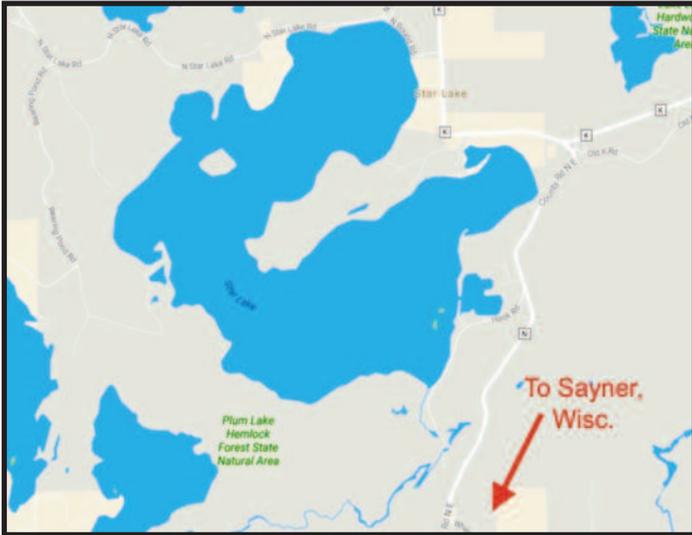
Gene Knutson with a 41" Ontario pike



DESTINATIONS

By John Cantwell

Star Lake, Vilas County



Star Lake is another gem in Vilas County. It is a large lake with minimal development - some dwellings on the NE portions of each thumb. It also has two State campgrounds. It is 1219 acres with a maximum depth of 68 feet. Fish include Musky, Panfish, Large-mouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Northern Pike and Walleye. The lake's water clarity is very clear. A nice boat landing with parking is off Highway N. Look for rocky shoreline off islands and the SW - NW shorelines. Use crawfish and crawler imitations, spinner baits or leach patterns.



Three generations of Koscik's with fish from a May canoe trip to Quetico Provincial Park.

Spencer Koscik holding the two smallmouth bass he and his friend Todd Bauer caught using Rebel Pop R's. We camped in the park five nights and canoed about forty miles.

Top left, my son Ken Koscik Jr. Right, Ken Koscik. Lower Left, Ken's grandson, Spencer Koscik.