



THE SMALLMOUTH HORIZON

Helping to Protect and Preserve Quality Smallmouth Bass Fishing

March 2010

5th annual Trash & Treasure Auction April 20th

It's time to get everyone thinking about our annual fundraising auction! I have volunteered again this year to be the chairman. We'll be following the successful formula of years past, with some tweaking.

Back by popular demand will be auctioneer Bob Harrison, and a cast of thousands. Bob's ability to keep things moving has proved to be invaluable.

Help is needed in soliciting items, as well as donating or hand-crafting items your self. It is important that we don't over extend our welcome by repeating solicitations to the same donors. So far, we have volunteers to contact Dorn Hardware, Orvis, D&S, Gander, Wilderness Sports, and Fontana. Don't hesitate to call me to see if the place you have in mind has already been contacted.

Many of us use the auction to buy flies for the coming year. The club will furnish as many boxes as we can to the excellent tiers who are members or supporters of our club. Please call if you can tie a dozen or two flies for the auction and need a box.

Steve Wall will again seek donations from the Avenue Bar, Red Robin, and the Maple Tree Restaurant. I'll check with the Marigold Restaurant and Original House of Pancakes. There are a lot of other places that may be willing to donate.

I'm also talking with guides about trips (with help from volunteers) and firming up their commitments. Roger Lapenter of Angler's All, and Kip Vieth have once again committed to donating a trip. As we confirm additional donations, we will post them on our website.

As you know, many of our members live outside of the area and can't attend the auction. New this year will be an opportunity for our distant members to bid. If you are one of those members and see a trip or item of interest on the website, contact me or another board member (contact info is on the back of the newsletter) to put in your bid and assign someone to bid for you, up to a given amount. This is one way we can appeal to more bidders.

Most important to having a successful auction is **attendance**. Everyone can help by attending and bringing a guest, or two. This year we have many great items for bid, but the auction is only as good as the number of bidders present. If you've been at past auctions, you have seen how much fun a room full of people can have bidding on these treasures! **This is the one time of the year** that every member can pitch in and help the club, and have a lot of fun doing it.

A reminder: only cash or checks are accepted as payment for items.

WHERE'S THE MONEY GOING?

With our fifth fundraiser coming up in April, it's only appropriate to inform our members and donors how we're spending the money. Other the past four years, we have contributed over \$7,000 to various causes. Last year we contributed the following:

The Kid's Ice Fishing Organization and Youth Conservation Days in Sauk. This addresses one of our missions of keeping kids interested in fishing and conservation. This donation affects over **one thousand kids!**

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Bluegill as prey

by Andy Davidson

I am sure that some of you remember the times when none of us had boats, float tubes, or personal pontoon craft and we would fly fish for bluegill in the spring. Some of the favorite spots were University Bay (when you could park in Lot 60), Lake Farm Park on Lake Waubesa, and Turville Bay on Monona.

Most of us fished with a fly rod and a small popper while wading dangerously close to the top of our waders. As we walked through the shallows looking for gills, we would occasionally spot a bass cruising the beds or just off the beds on the edge of the drop off. Every once in a while, one of these bass would either hit our popper or engulf the small gill on the end of our line, and the battle would ensue.

Last year on Lake Monona, the bass were both in the bluegill beds as well as just off the beds in about eight feet of water

Smallmouth spawn occurs at 62 degrees F, and largemouth spawn at 68 degrees F. After the spawn, both species head to deeper water to recover from the spawning ritual. Since bluegill spawn at 72, what were these bass doing in the shallow water? Not only were the bass feeding on smaller adult bluegill, but they were also feeding on their eggs and fry which had already hatched.

The larger bass could be holding off the deep edge of the beds waiting for their prey to leave the nests and head for deeper water. I had seen this happen one time when I took Steve and Nancy Winters fishing on

Prong Lake (a walk-in, catch and release lake for bass) just northeast of Woodruff.

Steve was fishing for bass with a large popper, and Nancy was fishing for panfish with a small popper when she spotted some bluegills just off shore. Her first cast and the popper was slurped in by a fish, and as the bluegill struggled on the surface, a large-mouth slammed it just as it reached the edge of the deeper water.

Her next and subsequent casts brought the same result. The bass were waiting just off the shallow weeds and when a bluegill would swim away from the protection of shallow water and cover, it would quickly and noisily be attacked by the bass.

When available, at least 40% of the largemouth bass diet is bluegill, with smallmouth feeding on a lesser amount. This tells us that lures which imitate this natural prey should be used extensively. Probably the most important thing to remember is that when the bass are feeding in this manner, they are not always feeding on the large, spawning bluegill, but sometimes on the smaller fish that are sneaking into the nests to steal the eggs.

The bass may not always be in close proximity to the beds, so if you don't see any bass in shallow, move out and fish in the ten to twelve foot depths.

SMALL CRANKBAITS

In this category, there are lots of lures to consider. For fishing these shallow bass, a long time favorite lures are the Rapala DT Series. A DT6 or DT10 (runs to ten feet), and with their deep bodies fits the "matching the hatch" requirement quite well. To keep the DT10 shallow and above the weeds, fish with your rod tip high and fish with a swim/pause motion since all of the DT Series float when at rest. Another one that I have bought for this spring is the Bagley Small Fry Bream in two and three inch sizes. The Norman lures square bill wake bait also looks like a possible choice, and this lure runs just under the surface and is 2 1/2" long.

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Articles, photos, information, 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. Word files sent to: johnson7@tds.net are most appreciated.

SURFACE PROP BAIT.

The Heddon Torpedo in the Natural Perch color is close, but I wish it had front and rear props to create more of a disturbance. I would like to recommend the old standard Jitterbug in this class, but unfortunately they do not make one in the exact color that I would prefer.

What you could do, however, is to purchase one in the bass color and paint orange on the front half of the lure bottom. If you want to experiment, you could order unfinished wood bodies from one of the lure making companies, paint it, add props front and back, and attach some good quality hooks (I use split rings to attach hooks).

Like me, if you have a wood lathe, you can turn your own bodies from scrap woods that you might have. One advantage to this is that you can make the bodies from wood other than balsa or cedar. By using different hardwoods (I use cherry because I have a good supply) you can make lures that are smaller and heavier. This added weight allows you to make smaller lures that will sit lower in the water column and are easier to cast on medium weight rods.

SPINNERBAITS

I do know that Jimmy Houston said that any color is fine so long as it is chartreuse and white, and although most of use spinnerbaits are this color, remember that you want one to match bluegill color, so try to find one that has blue color with bits of orange

on the bottom. These can be tough to find, but Strike King does make one that comes close.

One other thing to remember about this type of lure is that double Colorado blades will make more of a “thump” than any other type of blade, and this is what you want in fishing in or just off the bluegill beds. If you want to get really creative with the spinnerbait, remove the standard

blade, attach a new blue or green blade (to match the bluegill back), remove the skirt and push on a bluegill color skirt.

These blades and skirts are available at Jann’s Netcraft

www.jannsnecraft.com.



SWIMBAITS

This type of lure was created to fish the clear, deep lakes in California to imitate the stocked rainbow trout. There the transplanted Florida strain largemouth reach huge sizes, and most of the largest bass on record are from these trout stocked lakes. Soon bass fishers in other parts of the country found out that these baits worked wherever bluegill are found. At 3 1/2” long, and at a cost of from \$12.00 to \$23.00 this is a big fish lure, and unless you are fishing water that does have large fish, other lures might be a better choice.

While this does not always work, this is definitely worth a try when you see bluegills fanning the beds this spring. I know that when I see this occurring, I will be tossing a double prop floater or a spinnerbait with custom blade and skirt just off the beds.

SPAWNING TEMPERATURES

SPECIES	TEMPS	BOTTOM STRUCTURE
PIKE	39-50	WEEDS / MUCK
YELLOW PERCH	42-52	OVER AQUATIC VEGETATION
MUSKY	48-59	OVER SAND
SMALLMOUTH	58-65	ROCK / GRAVEL NEAR COVER
LARGEMOUTH	60-70	FIRM BOTTOM / SOME COVER
BLUEGILL	70-75	FIRM SANDY BOTTOM / COVER

INTERESTING BLUEGILL FACT

In 1960, Richard J. Daley, mayor of Chicago, presented bluegill to then Crown Prince Akihito of Japan who then donated them to Japanese research facilities. These fish escaped and are now considered an invasive species wreaking havoc on the native fisheries. The emperor apologized.

January 11, 2010 was the date that Manabu Kurata tied the existing world’s record for largemouth bass as recognized by the International Game Fish Association. This fish was caught by in Japan and weighed 22 pounds, 4.97 ounces. Could there be a connection?

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Fishing Has No Boundaries is a program for individuals with handicaps. This is also an opportunity for members to volunteer their services.

The River Alliance of Wisconsin keeps a watchful eye on the rivers around our state and the home of some great Smallmouth bass fishing.

Up to \$1,000 has been approved by the membership for development of a boat landing on the Baraboo River, once approval and additional funding by others has run the course.

The club has purchased a projector to be used by our speakers and other club functions.

We are currently accessing, with input from fisheries biologist Heath Benike, how we might be able to assist with the Apple River Restoration project in northwestern Wisconsin.

It is important to remember that none of this would be possible without donors contributing amazing items for auction, including generous guides like Kip Vieth, Roger Lapenter, and others who donate trips. Our website will list individuals and businesses with the items they donate. Check it out, as we will update it regularly.

Trash & Treasure Auction 2010

April 20, 2010 at the Maple Tree Restaurant, McFarland • Auction sign-in at 6:30; auction begins at 7:00 p.m.
Please patronize our generous contributors listed below! • Questions? Contact Mike Simon 608-848-3770

Fly selections for bass, trout, bluegill, pike, and musky, tied by the following talented fly tiers:

Bill Heckel – Buzz Busek Award winner
Bob Harrison
Bob Nasby – former MN smallmouth guide
Charles Connel
Charlie Piette
Curt Nordrum – from the “Flychuckers” of Minneapolis
Dan Johnson
Dave Barron – guide
Dave Braley
Dave Pinczkowski – smallmouth guide
Gerry Zingg
Hunter Dorn – Smallmouth guide
Jack Holowinski – Master fly tier
Murray Wilson – fly tier from Camperdown, Victoria
Australia 1 doz. each brown and green drakes
Paul Maurer
Phil Eldred – from the “Flychuckers” of Minneapolis
Ray Larson – Smallmouth guide
Scott Stewart
Steve Winters
Steven Gillenwater – former pro tier from Louisville, KY
Todd Polacek – Smallmouth guide
Tom Betchkal

Plus:
WSA cribbage boards
WSA tip-ups
Maple syrup - **John Simon**
Baked goods
Numerous restaurant certificates, including Avenue Bar, Marigold, and Original House of Pancakes

Guided Trips & Lodging:

Roger Lapenter

Chequamegon Bay, 2 people one day

Kip Vieth

Mississippi or St. Croix River, 2 people one day

Ron Barefield

Wisconsin River or Madison lakes,
2 people one day

Wilderness Resort of Wisconsin Dells

(2) one-night stays during off-peak times

For more information about these generous guides, please visit the “Links” and “Guides” pages on our web site!

Other Items:

Tight Lines - Guide's Selection of flies

River's Edge Sport Shop and Resort

Fenwick GS66L 6'6" rod for 1/8 to 1/2 oz. lures

Fenwick GS70ML-2 7 ft. rod for 1/8 to 5/8 oz lures

2 Shimano Syncopate 2000 open-faced spinning reels

Sage Bass fly rods:

The “Largemouth” rod, line, and case

The “Smallmouth” outfit: rod, reel, line, and case
lightly used and ready to fish!

Sage Vantage outfit; rod, reel, line, and case, ready to fish and selected by Tom Andersen, **Sage Rod Co. & WSA**

St. Croix rod 40% off certificate – **St. Croix Rods**

Laminated wood boat net – **made by Alan Hamstra**

\$25 gift certificate – **Norton's Dry Dock**, Princeton, WI

And more!

Best of luck to Ken Kehl

We received a note from Ken when he renewed his membership. Ken reports that he will be working in Paraguay for the next two years. If any of you find yourself headed that way for fishing or whatever, drop him a note at kehl.ken@gmail.com

Our Next Meeting:

**Tuesday,
March 16th**

Ron Barefield: “Getting the Most from Side Scan Sonar”

Ron Barefield will present a program on Humminbird's side imaging sonars.

Along with features and detailed information about what your locator is showing you, Ron will show how he uses this equipment.

He will also discuss what is new for 2010 in Humminbird's line of locators.



Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, March 16th 7:00 P.M
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

Monday, March 22nd 7:00 P.M
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

Tuesday, April 20th 7:00 P.M
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

WSA Monthly Meeting
Ron Barefield “Getting the most from side scan sonar”

BFF Monthly Meeting
Dave Roberts on fly tying feathers

WSA Monthly Meeting
Trash & Treasure night!

Member has boat for sale

12 ft Pelican (Coleman) Jon-boat.
115# weight
* It has a RAM-X double hull
* 6 ft 2 piece oars
* 8 years old
* Very good condition
* \$295 (cash)

This is an excellent boat for those that want a small craft to get around some small lakes for evening panfish or bass fishing. It will fit nicely on top of the car or small trailer. Stores well over winter. Richard @ 952-831-6997