



THE SMALLMOUTH HORIZON

Helping to Protect and Preserve Quality Smallmouth Bass Fishing

December 2012

Tis the season...

by Steve Winters



Christmas is less than a month away, and that means holiday parties, eggnog, presents, and to many of us, tinsel shopping!

If you tie flies for pike, muskies, tarpon, or peacock bass, this is the time of year to hit the stores for large mylar tinsel. My favorite place is True Value Hardware, but any number of stores stock tinsel this time of year, and at really bargain prices.

I prefer the holographic variety, but plain is also available, and if you are tying a lot of big streamers or poppers, the savings are considerable, and it's only here for a short time, so I get a years supply. Prices range from 77 cents to about two dollars for a large hank of your favorite colors. That's about 20% of what the same amount of saltwater flashabou will cost at your local fly shop or mail-order store, and to be honest, I prefer the texture & stiffness of the Christmas tree tinsel for my big fish flies.

Happy tying and a Merry Christmas to all.

**Holiday Party
Tuesday
December 18th**

Members input requested for 2013 trips

Last year's trip was to the Bittersweet Lakes and six club members went along. We had some rain, but most of the members stuck out the rainy weather and caught a huge number of largemouth bass. All six who went along were eager to have a trip again in 2013, so we would like to put forth several options for the club this coming year.

OPTION #1. This trip would be to the Sylvania Wilderness Area in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The "free fishing weekend" for 2013 is June 8 and 9, so you would not have to purchase a Michigan Fishing License. Sylvania has thirty-four lakes, and all but one are totally catch and release for bass. Smallmouth are the predominate species in most of the lakes although walleye, northern pike, largemouth bass, panfish, and a chance to catch a rare Lake Trout are available.

You can drive directly to the boat ramp on the Clark Lake (820 acres maximum depth 74 feet) which is the largest lake in Sylvania and the only lake with Lake Trout. Some of the largest smallmouth are in Deer Island Lake, and that is accessible by portage from Clark to Loon (.22 mile portage) and from Loon to Deer Island (.24 mile portage).

There are some very strict regulations in Sylvania, and one to be especially aware of is that only artificial baits are to be used, and no salt or flavored baits are to be used. Realize that means that any plastics used

Continued on next page

must be scent and salt free. Six of us did this trip two years ago and we stayed at Lac Vieux Resort and Casino in Watersmeet Michigan which is only a ten minute drive to Sylvia.

Rooms were standard motel rooms, reasonably priced, and an excellent restaurant is on site at the Casino. Watersmeet, Michigan is located twenty-four miles straight north of Eagle River, Wisconsin on US Highway 45. There are campsites at Clark Lake as well as back country primitive sites accessible by watercraft. No motors or wheels for portaging are allowed.

OPTION #2. This trip would be to the Minocqua Area. This year we would fish a variety of lakes, but probably concentrate on the Northern Highland Fishery Research Area which would be Escanaba, Nebish, and Palette. Escanaba is 293 acres and has musky, pike, walleye, largemouth, smallmouth (although the Wisconsin Lakes book does not acknowledge this, Rick Reese and myself have first hand experience) and panfish.

Palette is 173 acres and has pike, smallmouth, and panfish and is accessible by a .31 mile trail. Nebish is 96 acres and has smallmouth (rated ABUNDANT) and panfish. There are boat ramps on Escanaba and Nebish. A free fishing permit is obtained at the Fisheries Station on Escanaba Lake and catches must be recorded and deposited at the station.

Another interesting lake close by is Lost Canoe Lake which is outside of the Fisheries Area but is close. Lost Canoe is a very clear lake, 279 acres and has musky, pike, walleye, largemouth, smallmouth, and panfish. It accessible by a short, steep portage. Lodging as well as restaurants are plentiful in this region.



OPTION #3. A trip down the Wisconsin River somewhere between Wisconsin Dells and Lone Rock. Since this is close to most of our members, it could be a day trip.

OPTION #4. A trip down the Flambeau River. There are numerous trips available down this river for smallmouth and musky. Dan Johnson and I fished here last summer and did quite well. To show you how good this river is, three different guiding companies provide trips on this river. The river varies from placid to minor rapids to riffles to rapids that can scare you.

We will be careful in planning this trip to avoid any dangerous sections. Lodging would probably be in Park Falls which has numerous facilities.

Please call Andy Davidson (608-338-2639) or buroakakd@gmail.com or Jerry Pasdo (608-345-2198) regarding interest in any of these trips.

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<p style="font-size: 24px; margin: 0;">Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance Ltd.</p> <p style="font-size: 12px; margin: 0;">2701 Gust Road Verona, WI 53593 (608) 843-3770 wisconsin-smallmouth.com</p>	<p>Jerry Pasdo President (608) 233-2774 japasdo@gmail.com</p>	<p>John Pritchard Vice President (608) 877-0344 john_pritchard@sbcglobal.net</p>	<p>Mike Simon Treas./Membership (608) 848-3770 madisonmike@tds.net</p>	<p>Gerry Zingg Secretary (608) 233-7348 zingger@charter.net</p>	<p>Andy Davidson Board (608) 338-2639 buroakakd@gmail.com</p>	
	<p>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.</p>					<p>Steve Winters Board (608) 524-6348 swinters@jvlnet.com</p>
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Gator Johnson does it again!

by Andy Davidson

World renowned as the only person to catch an alligator on a fly rod in the Wisconsin River, Dan Johnson almost had another world record on November 5, 2012.

While fishing with me on Lake Mendota, Dan was using a blue tube bait on a spinning rod with eight pound test. Dan thought that he had a snag but as he tried to free his tube, the line began to move.

A huge pike? A rare musky in Lake Mendota?

Confusion beset us. With both of us excited, the monster finally came toward the surface. I got the big net ready. Suddenly, the six foot long monster almost broke free of the water. One hundred pounds at least.

Now with both of us laughing and the crowd on the shore cheering, Dan valiantly fought the behemoth with aching muscles. "DON'T USE THE NET, he shouted, "IT WILL JUST TEAR-UP THE NET AND GET OFF!"

Never fear, I pulled the net back into the boat and Dan continued his Herculean effort. Still not totally sure what he had, the monster again headed to the surface. Excitement reigned both in the boat and those

cheering on shore. This time, the fish broke totally free of the water, at least six feet long and well over one hundred pounds.



A Lake Mendota Sturgeon!

The sturgeon went down again, and with straining muscles, Dan continued the combat. Suddenly, the line went slack. The fish was gone, but the memory will linger on for both of us.

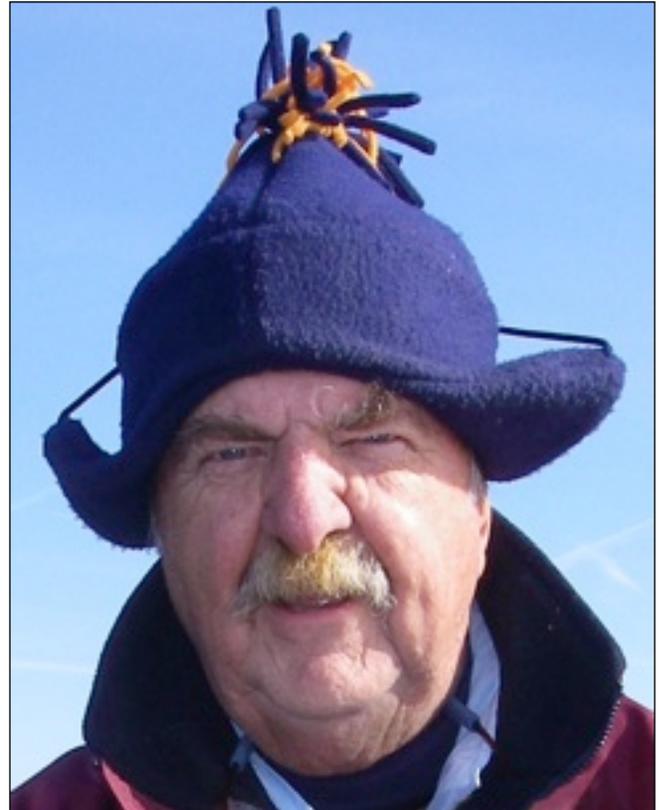
"I think that I will quit fishing the rest of my life, because I will never top that fish," Dan said as his quaking muscles finally began to relax.

But those of us who know Dan are aware that his quest for another monster will continue.

Editor's note: Kurt Welke of the DNR says that the sturgeon in Lake Mendota are remnants of a stocking effort in the 1930's. with at least one successful spawn since. Kurt reports the total number at probably less than 50 individuals.

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Correction



This is the hat that Andy Davidson was wearing in the photo in [last month's newsletter](#). It was made by Andy's talented wife Marie, and Andy proudly notes that it sports the colors of his Alma Mater, Illinois, and his favorite NFL team, the Bears.

In the [photo that ran last month](#), due to unusual lighting conditions on the lake, it appeared to be a different color.

Your editor regrets not noticing this sooner.

Our Next Meeting:

**Tuesday
December 18th**

Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance and Badger Fly Fishers Holiday Party

Please join us for an evening of holiday fun and fellowship at the Mapletree restaurant in McFarland. Bring your spouse or a friend too.

Arrive by 6:00 p.m. for cocktails, dinner will be served at 6:30. Cost is \$16 per person, includes chicken, fish, Swiss steak, dessert, coffee and tip.

Please bring cash (exact amount is appreciated) or a check for the club so that we can make a single payment to the Mapletree. Tip is included.

Please RSVP to [Jerry Pasdo](#) (608-345-2198) if you plan to attend.

It will be a great time with good cheer and good friends. It will be better, though, with you there too.

After dinner, Cully Shelton, Interpretive Programs Manager for the International Crane Foundation will present a program on the foundation's visionary conservation.

For almost four decades, the International Crane Foundation has worked worldwide to conserve cranes and the ecosystems, watersheds, and flyways on which they depend. Discover the 15 crane species of the world through beautiful photography, personal stories, intriguing science, and an engaging discussion with Cully.

As a child, he spent many weeks traveling through Wisconsin each year with his family and friends to camp, hike, fish, canoe, and explore. During this time, he discov-

ered a passion for teaching others about the outdoors. Through his work at ICF, Cully hopes to continue to inspire the next generation of conservation heroes, while working alongside the conservation heroes of today.

Cully received a B.S in Outdoor Education (Natural History/ Interpretation Concentration) and a minor in Environmental Education from Northland College (Ashland, WI). Cully has worked at the Cable Natural History Museum (Cable, WI) as a Naturalist; Living History Farms (Des Moines, IA) as a Historical Interpretive Intern; and Northland College (Ashland, WI) as a Adventure Program Leader.

Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, December 18th 6:00 p.m. **WSA & BFF Holiday Party** Crane Migration

Tuesday, January 15th 7:00 p.m. **WSA Monthly Meeting**, Greg Fitch, Locators, down and side imaging, plus mapping using your PC

Tuesday, February 19th 7:00 p.m. **WSA Monthly Meeting**, Mike Jacobs, "Fly Fishing Overlooked Waters for Trophy Smallmouth Bass."

Tuesday, March 12th 7:00 p.m. **WSA Monthly Meeting**, Ron Barefield, "Fishing the Madison Chain"

Tuesday, April 16th

WSA Monthly Meeting, Trash & Treasure Auction

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!**