

ODU Magazine™

Winter Fishing 2012

**Fishing.....
The Good
Old Days
Are Now**

**Chasing
The
Elusive
Pompano**

**Cold
Water
Swimbaiting**

**Artificial Sounds
To Activate Fish**



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© Kathy Barker



Let me start my ramblings by asking you a question; when was the last time you walked into a strange marina and knew that you were not going to be taken advantage of? I feel confident in saying the majority of us have our hand on our wallet and just know we were going to get wool pulled over your eyes. Thank god there are exceptions to the rule and Lake Placid Marine is one of those exceptions.

I recently purchased a new (to me) used boat from Jesse Gallegos, at Lake Placid Marine and had the most positive experience that I have ever had. Jesse went out of his way to answer my question regarding the boat before I purchased the boat and made the offer. Jesse even came in on his day off to make sure that everything that I requested was completed and checked out before I picked up the boat. And talk about integrity, now keep in mind that I did not put down a deposit, the only deal was we had a hand shake on the deal; he refused an offer for more money from a guy who called back twice trying to convince him that since I did not put down a deposit that he should accept his offer. How often does that happen?

Lake Placid Marine is a few hours' drive from where I

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stay in Florida, but I will tell you this, to find people like this are worth their weight in GOLD in my book. In this day and age, it always seems to be about the money, and the heck with honesty and integrity those are traits from the bi-gone era. Believe me; I would drive a lot farther.

For what it's worth I feel quite confident in saying if you are in the market for a boat check or repair work done, give Jesse Gallegos a call at 863-465-2335 or email him at, jesse@lakeplacidmarine@hotmail.com, or even better stop by and see him at Lake Placid Marine, 310 US 27 South, Lake Placid, FL 33852 or visit them online at www.Lakeplacidmarine.com.

We hope you enjoy this issue and we will be starting off the New Year focusing on "ICE FISHING". And as usual, the February issue will be a Classic update and our New Product Tackle Box.

Please keep all of your correspondence coming. We are your magazines and without you, we are nothing. Let's all make some time to enjoy the blessings that the good Lord has given us! Get outside and enjoy life. You may not be able to, tomorrow.

Enjoy the outdoors,

Larry Thornhill
Editor & Chief

The advertisement for Crocodile Bay Resort features a large, ornate gold bow on the left side. The background is a blue, icy landscape with a large, dark, jagged rock formation. Text at the top left reads "CROCODILE BAY RESORT" and "OSA PENINSULA, COSTA RICA". On the top right, it says "Call Now 1.800.733.1115" and "Holiday Specials!". A red button with white text says "More info »". In the center, there is a small red gift box with a gold bow, and text that says "Click HERE for Your Holiday Gift". At the bottom, it says "MAKE IT A 'DECEMBER TO REMEMBER!'".

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Southern November Crankbait Fishing

By I.M. Bradley

I know it's crank bait time when the leaves have turn color and fallen to the ground; when fernlike patterns appear on my truck's windows every morning before driving to the lake. I know it's time when Jack Frost comes nipping at my nose and toes leaving a thin, white layer of crystals. It's time to resist the temptation of hiding under the covers. It's time to go crank baiting in the South.

Anglers in the South welcome the white ice crystals. It's a sure indication of the changing of the seasons when the bass move shallow to gorge themselves before the coming winter. "It's a great time to be out cranking," says Bassmaster Elite Series Pro Tim. Horton.

Although the Muscle Shoals, Alabama, fishing pro is more renowned for his deep offshore structure fishing, when November rolls around he switches crankbaits. He trades in his BD8 and BD7 for the shallow running Bomber Model 4A.

"The key to catching bass in November and December is finding out where the bass are located. I like to begin searching in a main tributary that feeds the lake," he said. "I go halfway back into it then fish toward the back end.

"Here's what I'm talking about: On Wilson Lake down in Alabama there is a big creek called Shoal Creek. I get back into the creek about a mile then focus on fishing the channel swings inside the creek."

Another bonus when fishing on Wilson Lake is the smallmouth. During late fall and early winter, big smallmouth move back into creeks feeding on schools of shad. Like the largemouth bass, smallmouth will use channel swings as prime locations for ambushing and gorging themselves on shad.

"The shad are always moving around in late fall. What I look for when fishing is shad on the surface," he noted. "I also keep an eye out



Bomber Fat Free Shad



Bomber
Model 4A



for surface action and birds.”

Horton noted that Creek channel turns, or “channel swings” as they are commonly referred to, are key locations to find schools of bass during this time of the year. His favorite lure is a small, compact Bomber Model 4A crankbait for fishing channel swings or other locations in most autumn situations. Horton likes the wobble and thumping action of the 2 1/8-inch lure.

A shallow diving crankbait is Horton’s first choice, but that’s relative to the reservoir he’s fishing.

“Most of the time I will move away from the clear water if possible,” Horton continued, “I really like to be fishing in stained water.”

When fishing channel swings, Horton is searching for curves with 45-degree banks. Normally, these will be steeper banks within the Creek channel. The key to catching bass in these areas is bouncing the crankbait off the cover such as lay downs or stumps.

Another favorite target of Horton’s when fishing creek channel swing is rocks. Big boulders or rock piles will have bass ganged up on them. To trigger strikes, Horton parallels the bank banging the crankbait into cover and rocks.

“The Bomber Model 4A will run 6- to 8-feet deep on 14-pound test fluorocarbon line,” Horton continued. “You get the most bites when the crankbait is consistently bouncing off the bottom.”

Besides using fluorocarbon line, Horton uses a Duckett White Ice Tim Horton series rod. The medium heavy rod is 7’4” in length and allows for longer casts in addition to having better leverage once a bass is hooked.

Deciding what color Model 4A to fish in November is easy for Horton. “I like rootbeer chartreuse. It’s a confidence color for me,” he said. Other popular colors during the fall include shad patterns like Tennessee’s shad, threadfin shad, royal shad, silver

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flash, pearl blue/back, black pearl and foxy shad. One other prime area for big schools of shad during November is a shallow flat on the inside the Creek channel. The bottom composition doesn't really factor into why the shad migrates to them -- the shads are feeding on plankton and the bass on shad.



XCalibur Xcs

Spotting schools of shad is easy on windless days. They swell against the surface in schools swimming around and round while nibbling at the surface making soft smacking sounds. The shad can be seen occasionally rippling over the surface trying to escape a hungry bass.

Wind often plays a major part in the activity level of bass when they're on the shallow flat. On days with little or no wind shad will be extremely skittish. They may even move off the shallow flat towards deep water.





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On days when the wind is blowing, bass will get shallow and aggressive. Often bass will leap out of the water chasing schools of shad. There's nothing like being in the middle of the schooling bass that have pushed the baitfish to the top and are churning the surface as they gorge.

Catching these shallow bass in skinny water, however, requires a different type of crankbait -- one that doesn't dive deep, but wobbles and semi-rolls flashing its body. The square-lipped XCalibur Xcs is Horton's go-to crank when catching these shallower bass.

All three sizes of Xcs dive to just 3 feet, which Horton finds perfect for this situation. To top it off, these are silent baits (no rattle), and he feels that's important when fishing for pressured bass or when there's no wind. A lack of disturbance on the surface can make both baitfish and bass skittish, and a loud rattle often is too much. For color patterns, Horton suggests mimicking the look of the baitfish.

Anglers should note that the shallow-water crankbait bite gets better as the day progresses. Bass know from experience that the shad are easier to catch when they are swimming on the surface. When Jack Frost comes knocking at your door, instead of grabbing another blanket grab your fishing pole, crankbaits and go experience the best crankbaiting of the year.





Capt. Bill prefers pompano jigs with a small pink teaser for extra attention.
(Photo by Wes Crowell)

Chasing The Elusive Pompano

Popular Fish is Fun to Catch, Tasty to Eat By Capt. Bill Miller

It's a fish most anglers have heard of and may be eaten at restaurants, but surprisingly few have actually caught one. We're talking about the Florida pompano – one of the state's most elusive inshore sport fish.

Pompano put up a good fight, and they're great on the dinner table, so you might wonder why they're such a rare catch. The reason is that pompano are constantly on the move, so they're pretty hard to target unless you devote most of your fishing time to tracking them down. Those who consistently find these fish have dedicated many years of research and time on the water.

Bridge fishing is probably the most common warm-season tactic for pompano, and the Gandy, Frankland and Skyway bridges will usually always have fish around their pilings in search of little crabs, crustaceans and barnacles. Fiddler crabs are the main bridge bait, but call your local bait shop before your trip, as supplies are inconsistent.

Fish fiddlers on a No. 4 brown hook with a 20-pound fluorocarbon leader, and braided line on a medium spinning outfit and drop the bait to the bottom with a light lead. Slowly bounce the lead off the bottom and when you feel the tap-tap set the hook. Pompano's are known bait stealers so carry plenty of bait.

Vertical jigging also works at the bridges. Using a pompano style jig, like a [Doc's, Silly Willy or Crazy Jig](#), drop to the bottom and bounce the jig up about half way. If you don't get a bite, repeat the action. Yellow, white and pink are popular colors and adding a small teaser fly to the top of the jig will increase the bites and hook ups.

On the flats, watch for pompano skipping out of your boat wake. If you spot these silver figures, return to that spot and fan cast the area with the pompano jigs. This is a hit-or-miss scenario that may lead you to an entire school of pompano, while other times it's just a couple of scattered fish that won't reappear.

Pompano also runs the gulf beaches, usually along the outside edge of the sand bar. On the high tide, they might be in the swash between the beach and the inside edge of the sand bar.

Casting jigs will work but sand fleas are the best beach bait. Pompano will also eat shrimp, but the bait stealers usually find it before the pompano. Using a small hook like a No. 4 circle or Kahle, hook the sand flea through the shell and cast it toward the sand bar's edge. A fish finder rig with a light lead above a 24-inch fluorocarbon leader will work well here. Some



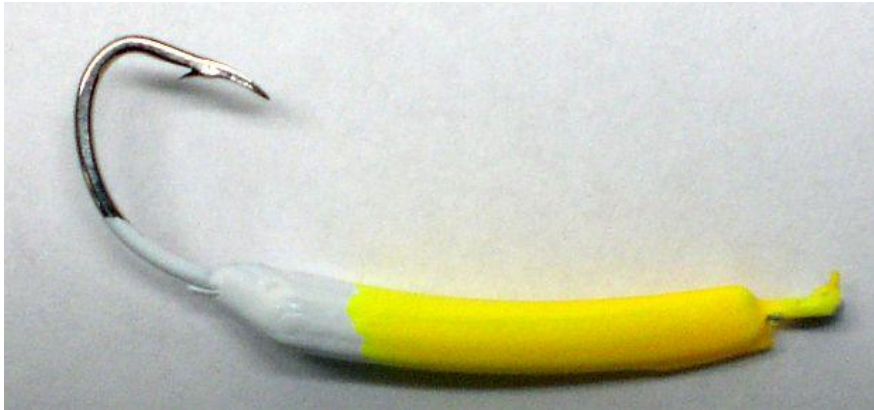
pompano anglers like to add a bright orange bead above the hook to mimic the sand flea's egg mass.

Each fall, the pompano moves out closer to the Gulf and the passes from Tarpon Springs to Boca Grande – especially the Skyway area – will be the most likely places. Drifting the edges of the sand bar is



the most likely plan in the passes, although the fish may occasionally move right up on the bar or in the middle of the pass.

Jigs work best in the passes because you can cover a lot of area with them. Sometimes, tipping the jig with a piece of shrimp will increase your hook ups.



Cold weather finds pompano moving to the warm-water runoffs of area power plants. Since 9/11, the closed security areas are much larger, so it's more difficult to reach the spots where the poms like to hold. The fish often roam beyond the main outflow area, so keep a pompano jig handy and fan cast the warm water every now and then to see if they're home.

Pompano, permit and jacks are caught in the same areas and sometimes confused. Pompano has no teeth, and their fins go back about a third of the body. Permit has a rounder shape, but their distinguishing characteristics are their long dorsal and anal fins, which may reach all the way back to the tail. Jacks have teeth and more yellowish hue to their bodies.

Minimum length for pompano is 11 inches to the fork of the tail, and the daily bag limit is six per person. For the permit, the minimum length is 22 inches to the fork with a daily bag limit of one.

For fishing videos, catch photos and lots of angling resources, visit www.fishingwithbillmiller.com.

For fishing charters in the Tampa Bay area, call (813) 363-9927.





Little Cayman Escape From The Cold

By Bill Vanderford

I watched with fascination and admiration as my beautiful partner stalked her first ever bonefish in the crystal-clear flats not more than 200 yards from the Southern Cross Club on Little Cayman Island. Her tiny, soft plastic jig made a subtle splash to the right of an average “bone”, and his protruding tail seemed to make a quick pirouette toward the lure. The almost invisible fluorocarbon leader twitched, she deftly set the hook, and the bonefish streaked across the white sand at a breakneck speed. The battle that followed included a number of powerful runs testing the light tackle drag and her muscles to the limit, but she and the reel endured...and won! She beamed with satisfaction from seeing and feeling the speed and power of such a gorgeous creature and knowing that she had finally conquered one of the elusive, streaking “grey ghosts of the flats!”

During a good part of the year, the fertile flats around Little Cayman Island offer one of the best chances in the world to catch a one-day, Flats Grand Slam that consists of a tarpon, bonefish, and permit. The prime reason for this exceptional possibility is the great number of permit that feed on the flats bordering the nearby reef. As most inshore anglers know, the permit is always the hardest part of any Grand Slam. Several days of stalking the flats near the resort revealed a good number of opportunities to catch permit, but we failed in our attempts to land one. Because of a unique geographical phenomenon, however, Tarpon are plentiful.





According to local residents, a long-forgotten hurricane carved out a freshwater lagoon inside Little Cayman Island that is known as Tarpon Pond. It is the ideal nursery for these fish. Therefore, the entire body of water is teeming with smaller tarpon weighing up to more than 60 pounds. For beginning fly fishermen, it is the perfect opportunity to marvel at the aerial antics of a Silver King on the end of a fly or jig.

Even for a veteran fly caster, catching plenty of baby tarpon on a light flyrod or spinning tackle can be a blast! We were fortunate enough to spend one afternoon fishing in Tarpon Pond from the end of a narrow boarded walkway that passed through a shaded tunnel of overhanging mangrove limbs. Upon arriving at the end of the walkway, we could see a great number of tarpon surfacing and gulping air within casting distance, so our adrenaline was pumping! Action in the next hour or so was fast and furious. Though none of our catches exceeded 10 pounds, landing more than a dozen, smaller Silver Kings on light tackle in such a short time was extremely exciting! Far too soon a brilliantly colored horizon provided by a gorgeous sunset signaling the end of another fabulous fishing day on Little Cayman Island!

Little Cayman offers plenty of other inshore and offshore fishing possibilities for any age and all skill levels, and the Southern Cross Club provides excellent, professional guides to fulfill any desire. The fishing opportunities are truly fantastic, and the diving around Little Cayman is among the world's finest! For more information, visit this web site: <http://www.southerncrossclub.com>

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Few places still exist on this planet where locks are not necessary, and you can walk on a beach all day without encountering another soul. Little Cayman Island is just such a magical place, and like others who have ventured here in the past, we found special qualities that



made us reluctant to leave. Now when the stress of life tries to take over, I close my eyes, picture the soft greens and blues of the island and the sea, have visions of dancing tarpon and streaking bonefish, and drift off for a while into memories of my time in a lost paradise just south of Cuba.

Bill Vanderford has won numerous awards for his writing and photography, and has been inducted into the National Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame as a Legendary Guide. He can be reached at 770-289-1543, at JFish51@aol.com, or at his web site: www.fishinglanier.com

FISHING TACKLE SUGGESTIONS

For the fly-fishing crowd, I would suggest bringing a 6, 7, 8, or 9-weight outfit. Use a weight forward floating line with at least 150 yards of backing. The tippets should be 9 to 14 feet in length with 6 to 14-pound line strength to handle the majority of Little Cayman's inshore fish. Though #2 to #10 fly hooks can be used, flies that are tied on #4 and #6 hooks work better. I found that various standard salt-water fly patterns can be used effectively on Little Cayman, but for shallow-water grass, the flies should be natural colors like tan, root beer, or olive. The turtle grass flats necessitate a slow sinking and /or weedless hook, but deeper water fishing and sand flats are better with Clousers and Charlies in white, yellow, or pink, with lead eyes. For the permit flies, use classic crab patterns and puffs in neutral tans or pinks on a #4 or #6 hook.

Either spin casting or light spinning equipment spooled with 6 or 8-pound test line is ideal for any novice to fish the productive flats around Little Cayman. Landing larger jacks, snappers, or barracuda near the reef, however, requires 10 to 20-pound line, and at least 12 inches of wire leader is needed for the toothy barracuda.





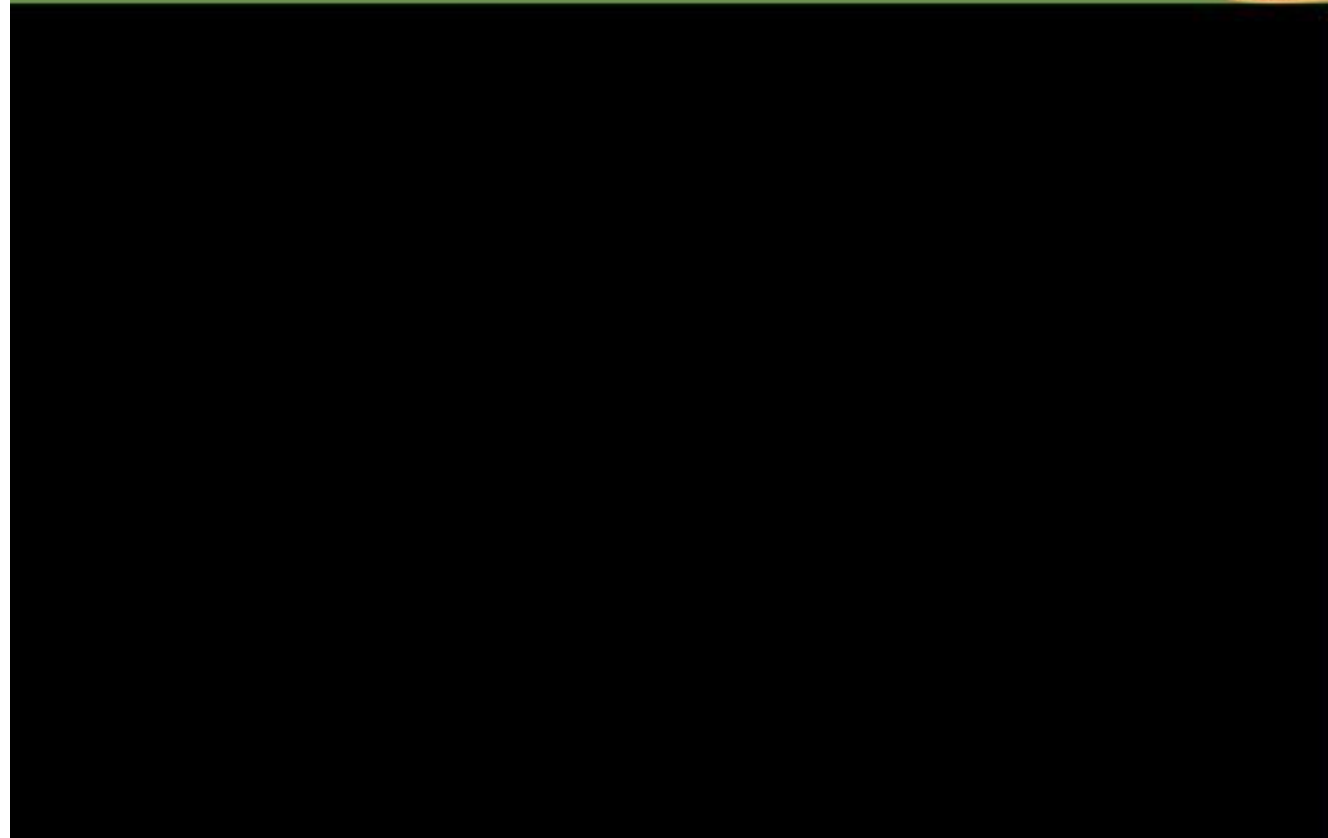
Emily Viglietta holds a beautiful steelhead taken last fall on the upper Salmon River.

Oswego County Tributaries Will be Saturated with Steelhead this Fall

By Spider Rybaak

Lake Ontario's salmon have been making it on the news a lot lately, and for good reason: a steady stream of mature kings and cohos ranging from 8 to 40 pounds has been ascending the Salmon River non-stop since the middle of September, drought conditions notwithstanding. But that's only the half of it. With all that spawning going on, the river is being carpeted with salmon eggs, the favorite food of Oswego County's most popular cold weather fish, steelhead.

Aka chromers, steelhead, like the salmon mentioned above, are indigenous to the Pacific Ocean. Both anadromous (they spend most of their adult lives in open water and return to streams to spawn) they were introduced into the Great Lakes in the second half of the last century to help control blooms of baitfish while offering anglers trophy fishing opportunities. But the similarities end there. Steelhead are a strain of rainbow trout, and instead of dying



after spawning, they return to the lake to feast on its cornucopia and return to tributaries to spawn again.

Their greatest difference, however, is in taste. Salmon indulge in gluttonous lives, pigging out on Lake Ontario's massive schools of bait fish like there's no tomorrow, putting on incredible weight in their 3 ½ years of life. Steelies, on the other hand are a little more fastidious, feeding on the same baitfish, but also on a host of insects...and caviar.



Like a siren's song, red caviar draws them out of the safe depths of Lake Ontario each fall and into the dangerous rapids of the big pond's tributaries. And while just about every other fish in the feeder stream dives for cover, cowering in the shadow of the salmon, steelhead run with them, picking off the eggs right after they're dropped, sometimes even while the parents, often big enough to

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bite the chroomer in half, are watching.

This noble courage, combined with their gentle dietary habits (they'll take a tiny fly, too), incredible beauty (their color ranges from proof silver in fresh run fish to every shade of the rainbow in fish that have been in the river for a couple weeks) and physical stamina (when hooked, their spectacular leaps and sizzling runs in the battle for freedom are legendary) endear them in the hearts of their fans, from purist fly-fishermen to bottom dragging bait anglers.

Come mid-November, when the salmon runs are nothing but fond memories and the crowds of anglers who stood shoulder to shoulder just a few days earlier go deer hunting or settle into winter mode, sinking into armchairs to watch college sports, fresh waves of steelies charge the streams to take advantage of their warmer temperatures and the steady source of caviar swept out from under the rocks all winter long by endlessly shifting currents.

Spring gathers the lake's holdouts and sends them running upstream, too. You see, when snowmelt swells the tributaries, sending their plumes two to three times deeper into the lake than normal, the fresh scent hooks the steelies' hormones, drawing them upstream to spawn. Their bellies loaded with eggs or milt, they have little room in their stomachs for food, right when they need it most to climb the raging rapids. Again, their needs are met by protein rich salmon caviar.

The action begins this month. October's cooler nights will lower water temperatures to levels





trout find comfortable, and they'll rush in like college freshmen to their first party away from home. The Salmon River will see the first schools, followed by the Oswego River. Skinny

creeks like Little Sandy and Grindstone will get their fair share immediately after heavy rains.

according to experts, this year's crop of steelhead promises to be a great one. "The summer catch out in the lake was good," says Fran Verdoliva, NYSDEC's Special Assistant for the Salmon River. "Based on the last two years, their numbers have been very strong and there shouldn't be any difference this year."

So if you've ever dreamt of hooking a rainbow, now's the time to do it. You won't find a pot of gold at the end. What you will get, provided you're skilled with rod and reel, is the light-tackle fight of your life from one of nature's most beautiful fish, set against a backdrop of quivering autumn colors.

And that's nice; just before winter and all.

For year-round fishing conditions in Oswego County and visitor information, call 1-800-248-4FUN (4386) or go to www.visitoswegocounty.com.

Spider Rybaak is an award-winning outdoor writer who has been published in more than 20 periodicals. He is the author of "Fishing Eastern New York" and "Fishing Western New York" guide books that cover 429 streams and lakes in New York State. Contact him at srybaak@yahoo.com. Check out his blog at <http://fishingandhuntinginoswego.blogspot.com/>

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Fact Or Fiction

By Chris Jenkins



As a whole, fisherman can be a funny bunch. The biggest example that comes to mind is our willingness to accept superstition on board the boat. Every since man first shoved off; he did so with a head full of irrational thoughts based on assumptions. Some even refused to set sail because of what may have been perceived as

a bad omen. I did some research on the subject and was quite amused at what I found. Throughout history, it appears that many cultures have attributed the powers of the sea to gods and devils alike. To ensure safe travels, many felt it necessary to appease the gods with gifts and even sacrifice. Yes, humans were actually sent overboard, but more often it was cattle or smaller animals that fell victim in an attempt to calm the seas. Honey, gold, bread, and brandy all found their way to the bottom of the oceans' floor when gifts were needed.

Fast forwarding hundreds of years I think we can all agree that these sacrifices were futile and a waste of good brandy. That's not to say that we have completely dismissed all the myths. In fact, we even came up with some new material along the way. Luck seems to play a major role in many anglers' eyes and can make or break a day on the water. When things go bad, we chalk it up as an unlucky day. When your buddy catches the big one, he obviously just got lucky. Many of us have our lucky pole and at some point we all had a lucky lure. Lucky hats, pennies, rabbit foot, you name it; we got it. Some ten years ago I was introduced to the notion that bananas were bad luck on a boat, and I was forced to throw mine overboard while fishing with a guide in Florida. To dispel this foolish superstition I set out with my brother once I was home to dismantle this non sense. We brought a camera and a bundle of bananas with us, and I have to admit I was extremely happy when I posed for that picture. I even had a guy tell me that bringing a camera on board the boat was bad luck. I think I killed two birds with one stone that day. Upon further research, I found out where this banana shenanigan originated. One story which dates back to the Caribbean trade of the 1700's states that the wooden boats had to travel fast in order to get the bananas to their destination before they spoiled. The men aboard the ship liked to troll fishing lines off the backs of the boat and very rarely caught anything. Logic dictates that the ships were moving far too fast to troll their simple rigs. Blame it on the banana!! Another reason I found was that many of the boats carrying bananas actually sank. I guess I would be hesitant to climb

aboard too if that were the case. However, I would venture to say that these boats were just overloaded. Furthermore, the bananas below deck would often ferment and release methane gas, which could kill a person in a confined quarters.

Lastly, well other than slipping on banana peels, the banana got a bad rap because it often harbored venomous spiders and other insects, which stowed away on the ship and occasionally bit crew members. So I think it's safe to say that having a banana on the boat can in no way have an impact on our success or failure as an angler. In my research, I came across dozens of silly superstitions just like this one though. Here's one I found interesting. Chew anise and spit on your hook for good luck. Now I wonder if this where the idea for anise scented soft plastics came from. I never fell for this sales gimmick and I don't think the fish did either. While superstitions have no basis, in reality, they can certainly affect one's confidence. And without confidence, we are merely going through the motions. I know that if I have no confidence in a lure, I will simply cast it out, and wind it in. If a man is not in possession of his lucky hat, rod, penny, or rabbit's foot, he is lacking the confidence he needs to be successful. So in a sense, it becomes a self-inflicted failure brought on by superstition. However, if having these objects close to one's self pushes you to be a better angler through confidence, then so be it. In actuality it's not the lucky object that leads to your success though, but rather you lead to your success. When it's all said and done at the end of the day, we are reasoned for the outcome. Weather can also have an impact on our fishing as well. So I guess it was necessary to incorporate some do's and don'ts into the book as well. Fish bite best when the winds from the west. You will not catch any fish if you



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see one jump on a rainy day. When the rain is slow and steady, the fish bite is ready. The list goes on, and some are quite amusing I might add.

On the other hand, I did come across a couple that actually made some sense and had some credibility. There were some old sayings that made reference to fishing at night under a full moon, and fish bite best prior to a storm. Oh wait; I can't end the article without mentioning this one. I know you've heard it before because it's been around a long time. The

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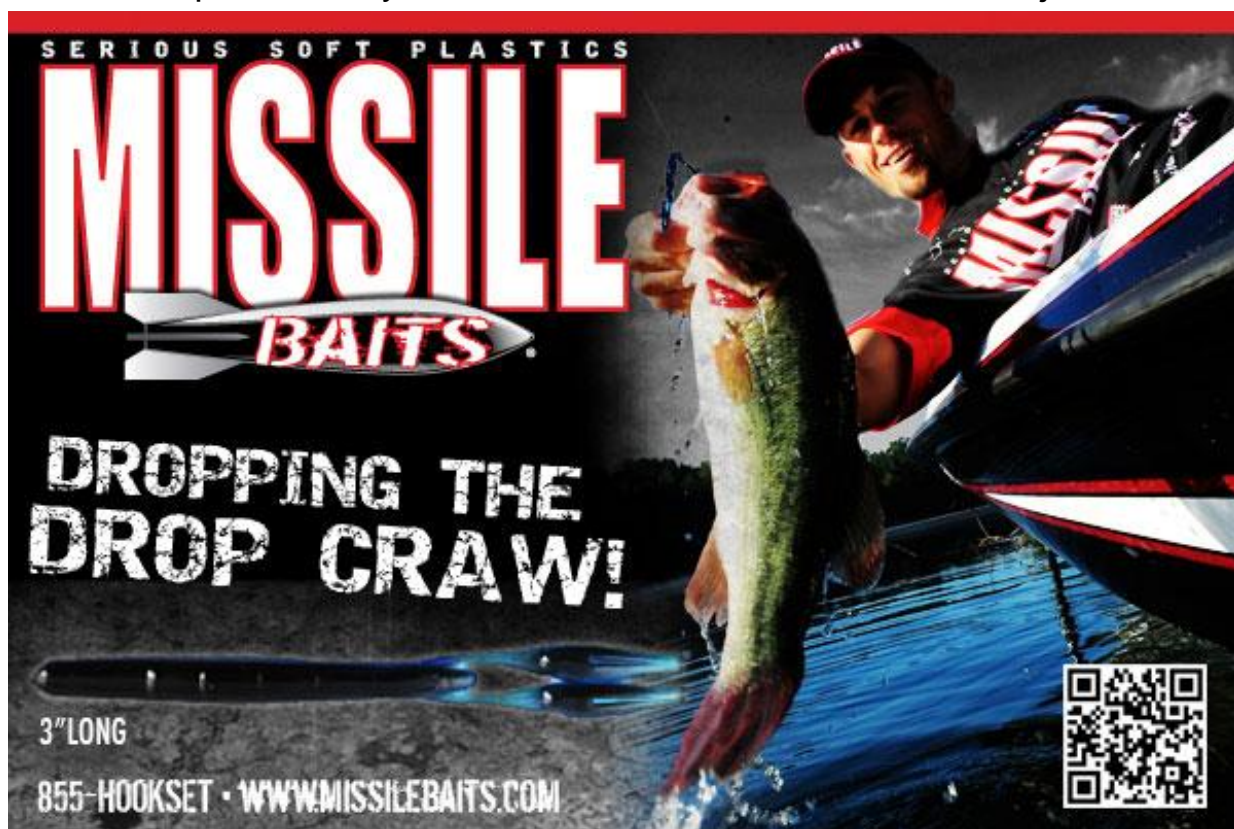
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superstition that refers to an angler “holding their mouth right”. If you missed the fish or the fish got away, you weren’t holding your mouth right. Not that anyone, including yourself knows the position of your mouth when it all went down, but just make sure you don’t do it



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again. And on that note my friends, I am going to throw a shiny coin into the wishing well and keep my fingers crossed that we see each other on the water soon.

To speak with Chris email him at
sowbelly.hunter@yahoo.com

Artificial sounds to activate fish. The Hydrowave actually works!

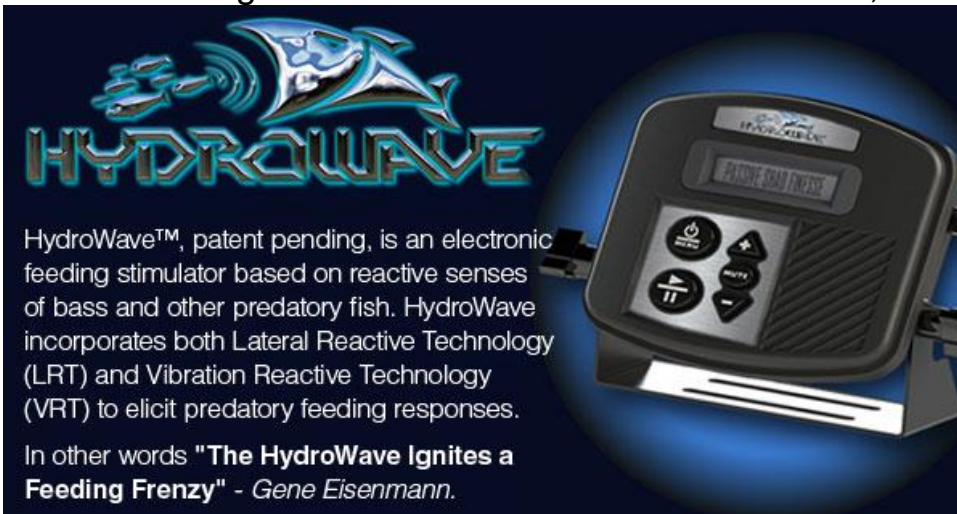
By Jake Bussolini

All the books that I have written about freshwater fishing have been unique in that they take a scientific approach to explaining fish behavior. When I first heard about the new Hydrowave that came into existence in 2010, I have to admit that I was somewhat of a skeptic. The concept behind this equipment is that schools of bait fish like shad, shiners and herring make different sounds as they scurry around the lakes and rivers. When the small fish are simply swimming around without being attacked, they emit a distinguishable sound. When they are panicked, they emit still another sound. The founders of the Hydrowave did their homework and somehow made recordings of these different sounds and claim that this equipment duplicates these sounds. When the Hydrowave is turned on and emits one or more of the available sounds, bass in the vicinity will get excited and activate their bite.



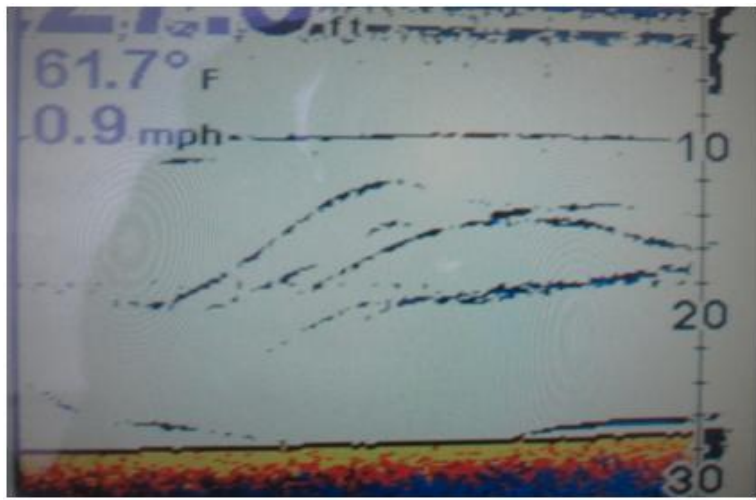
When I first heard of the Hydrowave, I reviewed the science behind it very thoroughly. That science is based on two rather basic technologies that we have known about for a long time. Lateral Reactive Technology emits frequencies that are highly detectable by the lateral line of all fish. Vibration Reactive Technology emits frequencies that are detectable by the inner ear of a fish. The Hydrowave combines a number of these frequencies to offer the fisherman choices of what sounds, he wants to create.

The idea originated with a Texas businessman, Gene Eisenmann, who enlisted the



engineering services of Robert Palmer. They contacted professional fishermen Jeff Kriet and Kevin VanDam, and together they evolved the concept and design of the Hydrowave. The unit sells for around \$400.

I have been studying sound as it pertains to freshwater fishing for many years. My studies, however, have focused on image recognition for fish finding sonar



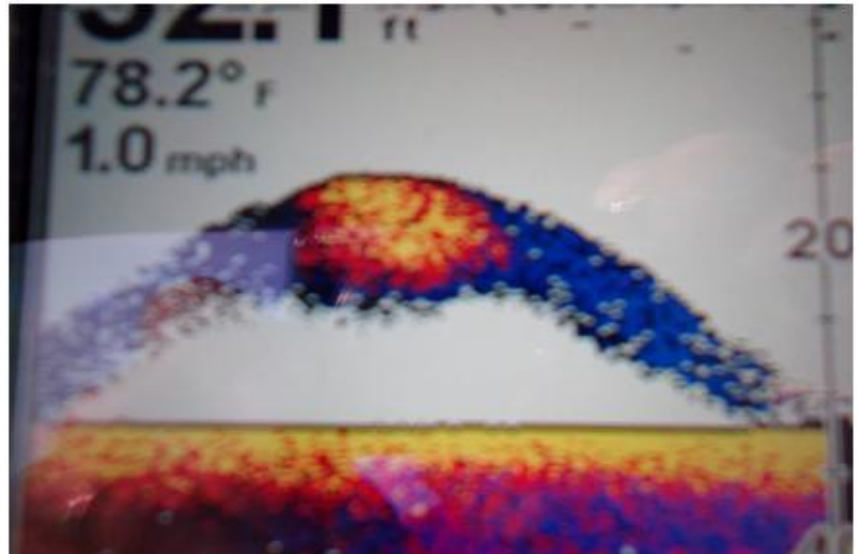
equipment. I know, as do many other fishermen, that a school of shad like the one shown in this photo of a sonar screen, create this type of sonar pattern from the density changes that take place as the sound wave passes through the school.

I have also shown that as some fish swim at a rapid pace, they leave behind a trail of small air bubbles that show up on a sonar screen as a broken pattern which I have named a "Dentrail" or trail of density changes.

These dentrails appear on your sonar screen as shown.

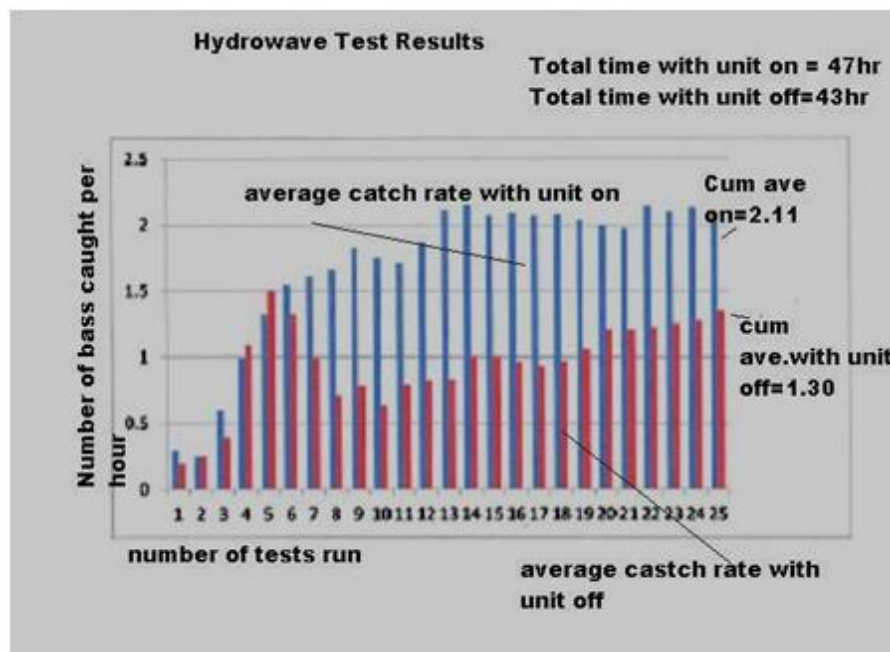
Lure manufacturers have known for years that the lateral line of a fish detects vibrations. That's why there are a number of artificial lures that produce vibration sounds that are detectable by fish.

Knowing all of this, I asked myself, why it might be possible for this Hydrowave equipment to stimulate a better fish bite by emitting different frequencies. The answer to me was very simple, it was very possible, if the sounds made by active bait schools could be duplicated, which is apparently what the inventors of the Hydrowave have done.



Lou Mintzer, a fellow writer and sometime fishing partner of mine, knowing my interest in

science, suggested they we contact the Hydrowave people and propose a series of tests that I would perform. My idea was to design a series of controlled tests to eliminate many of the variables that might influence the results, such as weather, pressure, sunlight, etc. I would test a Hydrowave unit for between two and four hours each day, alternating the on-off cycle of the Hyrdrowave. In this manner, all the conditions of each test would be identical, so there would be no external factors that would influence the results.



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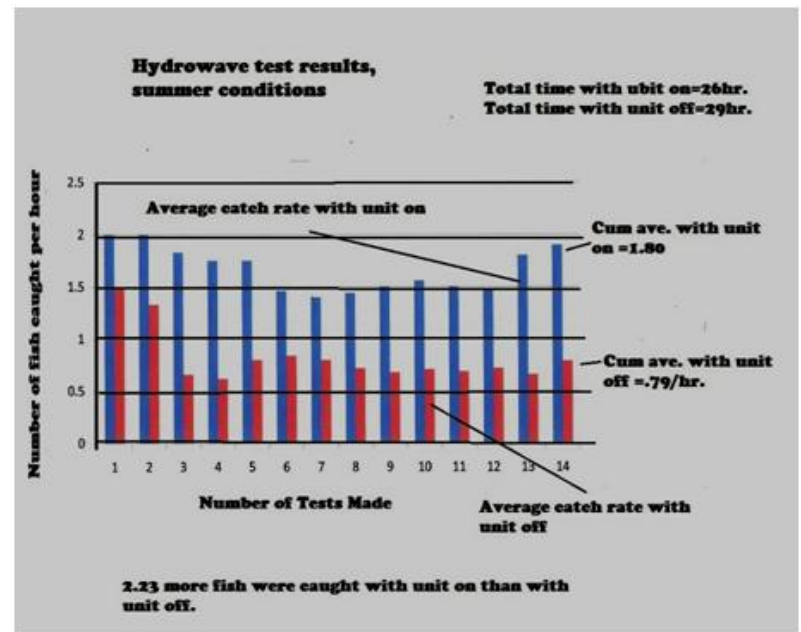
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I received a complimentary Hydrowave unit in December of 2011 and began testing immediately. The December weather was cold so all the initial tests were conducted under cold-water conditions. I knew that these conditions were not the conditions that the unit was designed to operate under, but I felt that the results would add credibility to the unit design. The results of the first 25 days of testing covering about 100 hours of fishing are shown.

During these cold-water tests, the bass catch rate was 1.30 per hour with the unit turned off and 2.11 with the unit turned on, an increase in catch rate of nearly 2 to 1.



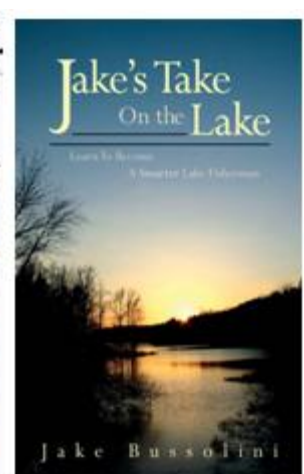
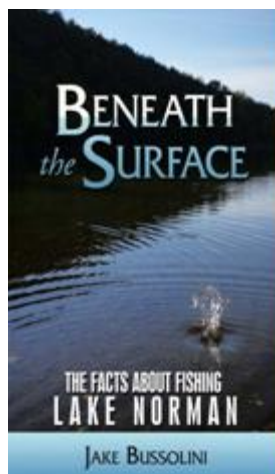
The results of the warm-water tests are also shown above.

Again in this warm water tests the results showed an increase in catch rate with the unit turned on. The off rate was 0.79 per hour and with the unit on it was 1.80, showing a catch rate increase of more than 2 to 1 using the Hydrowave.

Even a skeptic like me must agree that doubling your catch rate is a significant event. On the closing days of the cold-water tests, I invited my friends Lou Mintzer and Dr. Rich

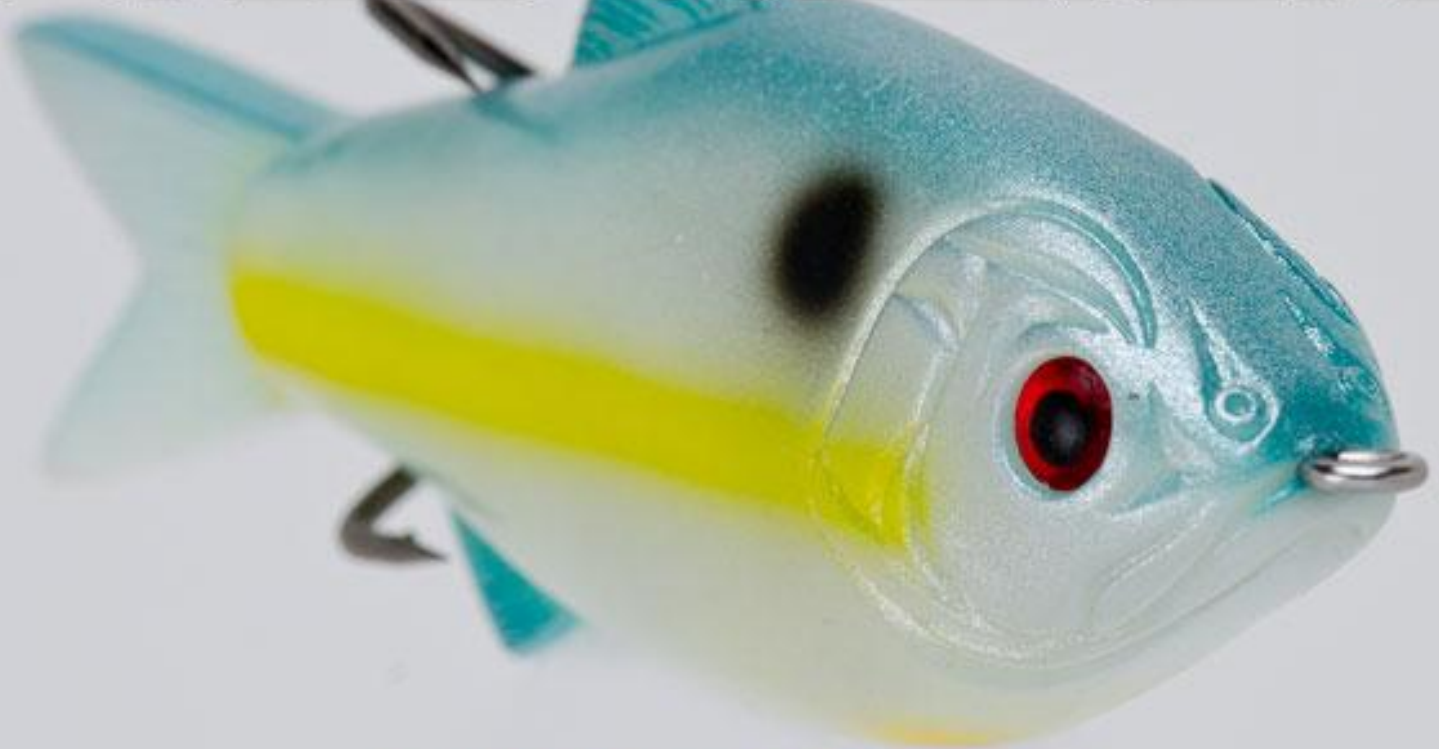
Doering to join me in the testing. A few of their results are shown below. This equipment really works.

Jake Bussolini is an author of several popular books about freshwater fishing. Jakes activities can be viewed on his web site www.jakestakeonfishing.com.





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Bass Fishing Hall Of Fame Announces 2013 Inductees

Mike Folkestad, Darrell Lowrance and Jack Wingate



For Immediate Release – At its recent quarterly meeting held in Cullman, Ala., the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame Board of Directors ratified the Hall's 2013 inductees. In recognition of their major impacts upon the world of bass fishing, tournament angler Mike Folkestad, fishing electronics innovator Darrell Lowrance and legendary guide, educator and lodge owner Jack Wingate will be formally inducted into the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame (BFHOF) during the 2013 Bassmaster Classic. The BFHOF Induction Banquet takes place on Friday, February 22, 2013 at the Hilton Doubletree Hotel in Tulsa, Okla.

Mike Folkestad (pictured to the left), who makes his home in Orange, Calif., is nothing short of a fishing legend, although his name isn't widely recognized outside of his native West Coast domain. However, he did fish back East in Bassmaster Invitationals in the late 1980s and later fished the Top 100s in the early '90s. Folkestad's accomplishments in the West are vast and unmatched. He's a three-time WON Bass U.S. Open champion with back-to-back victories in 2001-02. He holds major titles in all western circuits including WON Bass, EverStart, Western Bass, B.A.S.S., West Coast Bass and US Bass. He's fished one Bassmaster Classic and one Forrest Wood Cup. He holds the Bassmaster Invitational record for lowest winning weight, which he set at the Harris Chain in 1992 with a total weight of 14-10. And he's not done. In March 2010 he set a new Lake Havasu all-time one-day weight record of 26.63 pounds.

As an avid skin diver, Darrell Lowrance (pictured to the right) learned much about the schooling habits and preferred locations of freshwater fish. Along with his father, Carl, and brother, Arlen, he set out to design a portable electronic device that would help fishermen and boaters determine depth of the bottom and other underwater objects. The famous 'Little Green Box' was introduced in 1959 and it revolutionized bass fishing. As president and CEO of the Lowrance company, Darrell was responsible for many breakthroughs in marine electronics, including the first sonars capable of high-speed performance (1965), the first graph recorder (1974), the first integrated sonar/GPS unit (1995) and many others. During 1983 and 1984, Lowrance served as president of the American Fishing Tackle Manufacturer's Association (AFTMA), and was also director of the National Association of Marine Products and Services 1989. Lowrance retired in 2007 following the company's acquisition by Navico.



Wingate, who will be inducted posthumously, started out in the fishing business during Harry Truman's presidency. Well-known throughout the South, Wingate supplied the names of many bass anglers who fished Ray Scott's first tournament in 1967. He fished several of Scott's first tournaments and soon decided that he could make a living for himself and his family by guiding and teaching fishing. As the long-time owner of Wingate's Lunker Lodge, as well as a popular fishing guide on Lake Seminole, he helped promote both tournament and recreational bass fishing in its formative years. For more than 33 years he operated a summer camp on Seminole for youngsters, where he taught them the basics of fishing and outdoor appreciation. He taught fly-fishing and bass fishing to 12 kids a week. Wingate, who died in 2012, lived his entire life along the Flint River, except when he was in the Navy. As he said not long before he died, "My only wish is that I had more time on this earth to teach more young people the sport of just fishin'."

"Expectations are high for the Tulsa Classic, and we'll be going all out this year to make the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame induction dinner one of the highlight events of the weekend," said BFHOF president Sammy Lee. "Along with our program to recognize the new inductees, we'll again bring back our exceptional silent auction featuring bucket-list fishing trips, premium rods and reels, hunting gear and special fishing celebrity memorabilia."

Visit the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame web site -- www.bassfishinghof.com -- or call 888/690-2277 - for more details on the BFHOF Induction banquet. The Bass Fishing Hall of Fame is a non-profit organization dedicated to all anglers, manufacturers, tackle dealers, media and other related companies who further the sport of bass fishing.



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Snookery

By Rodney Smith

Looking back, the majority of us have fond childhood memories of the autumn. With fall came church and school festivals, where dunking for apples or climbing a greasy pole were annual customs, or perhaps your family's annual fall tradition included taking a drive to the country to witness a seasonal explosion of fall foliage. In our parts, fishing and hunting in a tad bit cooler weather was often the highlight I personally recall first and foremost.

So today, looking at the calendar, I'd be remiss not to discuss my favorite scaly, finned adversary, and one of the world's most provocative gamefish, the snook. While they can be as elusive as a greased pig, it is an unusual fish that can be caught in all three types of water; fresh, salt and brackish. Snook have long been known for having gained the romantic respect of many die-hard inshore anglers; not because of the fish's craftiness, but in spite of it! They have earned the reputation for being a mysterious, but enticing, fish, often seen lurking at the fuzzy edge of shadows cast by overhead lights, swimming out of reach under docks and piers, or in the tangled, twisted confines of red mangrove branches.

As a young Florida angler growing up fishing the Sunshine State's coastal piers, beaches and jetties, I dreamt of catching and taking home just one big linesider; I always considered them one of the grandest fishes, one seen far more often than ever caught. The snook is a smart angler's fish; it takes not only time and effort, but also brains, to figure out where, when and how to trick this gamester.

Like with anything else in life, timing's everything, and snook partially disregard their distinct reputation for being a closed jaw gamester as fall weather approaches and the sun drops lower in the southern sky. One of the world's elite gamefish, snook's tropical nature drives its instinctive urge to devour every available shrimp, mullet, croaker, or pigfish whenever they sense the cold, dark approach of Old Man Winter.

Twelve species of snook are found in American tropics and subtropics, with six of those most accessible and plentiful in Florida's semi-tropical waters. Each fall a slew of lucky anglers experiences some of the world's best snook fishing, there is when a number of curious factors, including, but not limited to, weather, moon phase, tides and water temperatures all come together in perfect harmony.

You don't need a flatsboat or overly expensive tackle to hunt snook. But you do need reliable equipment, secure knots and a lot of luck to catch a legal-size linesider. Follow the rules; go to: (<http://myfwc.com/fishing/saltwater/recreational/snook/>) to make sure you know the rules when it comes to targeting snook.

Here are a few snook catching tips. They're sensitive to steel or wire leaders, they prefer feeding at the edge of moving water, and strong tides often provoke a major feed. Being nocturnal, they love to feed on cloudy days, especially when a cold front is approaching, but once water temperatures drop below seventy degrees their metabolism slows considerably.



Since snook were such darn wearisome adversaries when we were kids, we always looked towards the fall for more dependable and less tiresome catches.

Flounder

With the first approaching cold snap, flounder arrive in greater numbers to the inshore coastal waters of the Gulf of Mexico and southern Atlantic Ocean. While these flatfish might not have the same powerful punch as the

snook, they are equally delicious.

Here are a few flounder catching tips. Use small baits, like finger-size mullet, mud minnows or shrimp; they work well when fished on the bottom, and for the best results' fish for flounder in sandy areas near pilings, rock jetties, piers and bridges. Small soft plastic or deer-hair jigs will sometimes work as well as small live baits if you fish the jig near the bottom of the water column, and when using a jig you can often cover more bottom. Using a net to land flounder is the fast, easy way compared to trying to grab their slippery thin bodies, but watch out for their sharp teeth!

Red and Black Drum

While red and black drum are species caught year round, you can bet the fishing for them will improve as water temperatures continue to drop. While they may not be as tasty as snook or flounder, or as flashy as a spotted sea trout, both red and black drum grow up to be mighty large, and both can be caught on bait or lures.

While some anglers hunt for them in shallow water using fly rods or light spinning tackle, others go to the more dependable route, soaking live or cut bait on the bottom. The majority of anglers prefer using clam, shrimp or cut crab when bait fishing for drum. For a great thrill, try your hand at sight-casting for tailing drum. Fly casters have experienced success using a

small black or brown fly on a light-to-medium fly rod with a nine-foot leader.

Fall's weather changes offer a wide gambit of fishing opportunities to enjoy.

Remember your roots; go fishing, and make it your tradition!



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WHAT'S SELLING?

By Ken Freel

Here's a spot check of what retailers, guides and manufacturers say is selling (and catching fish) in their neck of the fishing world!

Craig Johnson, customer service representative for D.O.A Fishing Lures, Stuart, FL; www.doalures.com; or call: **(772) 287-3843**

According to Craig Johnson, D.O.A's new Deadly Combo popping corks with 3-inch shrimp baits are a big hit with anglers who are seeking redfish, specks and snook. "It makes a bigger pop, and the fish seem to react well to it," says Johnson. Gold, glitter and night-

glow all seem to be popular patterns, he says. Also, all of D.O.A's shrimplike imitations are moving as fast as Santa on Christmas.

Jason Stephans, owner of Fish N Tanks Tackle in Palmyra, IN; **(812) 364-6179**.

It was 71 degrees (in December) in Hoosierland when I spoke with Jason Stephans. He says that Zebco 33s combos and Shakespeare Synergy combos have been moving quite nicely off the store's shelves of late. He experienced a good fall catfish run, where anglers were buying Eagle Claw, Lazer Sharp circle hooks in 3/0 to 6/0 sizes. Right now, saugeye and walleye anglers are buying Eagle Claw size 6 to 8 bait-holder-style snelled hooks. "Fishermen are after walleyes and saugeyes in Patoka Lake," says Stephans.





Fishing guide **Mike Smith** of Ft. Myers, FL;
www.mangroveislandfishingcharters.com
 ; or call **(239) 573-3474**.

Guide Mike Smith says that Buff's protective headgear, which protects anglers' from the sun's damaging rays, are real popular these days in his area; this clothing line covers vital areas such as the neck and ears. Also, he's excited about St. Croix's Triumph rod series in 6- to 7-foot lengths. "If you're looking for well-made, bargain-priced fishing rods, these Triumph rods are very good. You won't break the bank for an excellent rod," says Smith. Right now, his customers are catching redfish, snook, specks—and big jack crevalles!

The new Strike Kings 10XD, by **Chris Jenkins**

On countless occasions, I have tied on a crankbait only to look at it and think, "I just wish it was bigger". That's one of the reasons I was drawn to swimbaits. If a big bass is going to expend the energy chasing a meal, I think it first weights the probability of success, and the rewards it will reap. It just makes no sense to run all around the lake chasing minnows, bugs, and investigating every leaf that lands in the water. So for that reason, I am confident that big baits appeal to big bass. In my endeavors, I have I have attempted to build big crankbaits and failed miserably. As Clint Eastwood once said "a man's got to know his limitations". Well,

Strike King must have felt my pain because they recently introduced the new six-inch 10XD.



This deep diver has an obese profile and is capable of diving 25 feet on 14 lb fluorocarbon. This bait not only hits those hard to reach places, but appeals to that big bait theory. If you are not aiming to fish that deep, merely up the ante on line diameter, and you can target the mid-range water column without sacrificing lure size. The 10XD is available in 12 different colors and destined to be a big hit among anglers who are motivated to catch bigger bass.



TrophyCatch
 My trophy swims in Florida

Hard Track Candy

By Sandy Thornhill



tack candy has been a part of the preparations for the precious holiday of Christmas.

3 2/3 cups white sugar
1 cup water
1 cup Karo (light)
1 tsp. Flavoring oil
Food coloring

Prepare:

Mix first three ingredients in large, heavy saucepan. Stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Boil without stirring, until temperature reaches 300 degrees or until drops of syrup form hard and brittle threads in cold water. Remove from heat. Stir in flavoring and coloring. Pour into long cookie sheet that has been greased with oleo or pour onto pastry board that has been greased. Cool until you can start to bread the edges off with your hands or cut pieces with scissors. Store in airtight containers. Makes Two pounds.



Love for Lobster Fettuccine With Cream Sauce

By Rashid Mathis

This is one my favorite recipes to make when I have friends over that love Italian food and lobster. This goes great with a heavy pallet filing white wine. The lobster fettuccine is a rich dish but when you taste it is a light airy meal. Now my original recipe calls for homemade paste and within the pasta I add the lobster roe. If interested in the original pasta recipe email me at: anthonythechef@gmail.com. If you have the time I suggest making your own pasta the taste is unbeatable, so from my kitchen to you I give you my love for lobster fettuccine with cream sauce.



1 5lb lobster
8 quarts of water
1 10 quarts stock pot w/ cover
¼ cup of salt



1 whole lemon cup in quarters
½ onion cut in half
1 ounce unsalted butter
2 tablespoons of diced shallots
1 diced roma tomatoes
½ cup Italian parsley (split)
1 cup porcini mushrooms quartered
Salt and pepper to taste
Fettuccine noodles
½ pack of fettuccine noodles
8 quart stock pot
¼ cup of salt
Cream sauce
1 sauce pan
2 cups of heavy cream
½ cup whole milk
½ cup shredded gruyere cheese

Add cream and milk to pan on medium heat. Bring to a simmer. Add cheese and stir. This should not be a stringy consistency, but a thick saucy consistency. Remove from fire and let cool.

Prepare:

In 10 quart pot add 8 quarts of water, salt, lemon, onion and bring to a boil. Add lobster and cook for 10-12 minutes covered. Cook until bright red Cool lobster and then crack open

Best Wishes

for the

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A Joyful and

Prosperous New Year

from the staff of the American Sportfishing Association



the claws and the tail and cut into medium dice pieces and set aside. Then in a sauté pan add butter over medium high heat. Let the butter melt and then add shallots and cook until they are translucent then add mushrooms cook for 3-5 minutes. Add lobster and sauté for 3-4 minutes; add parsley and a pinch of salt and

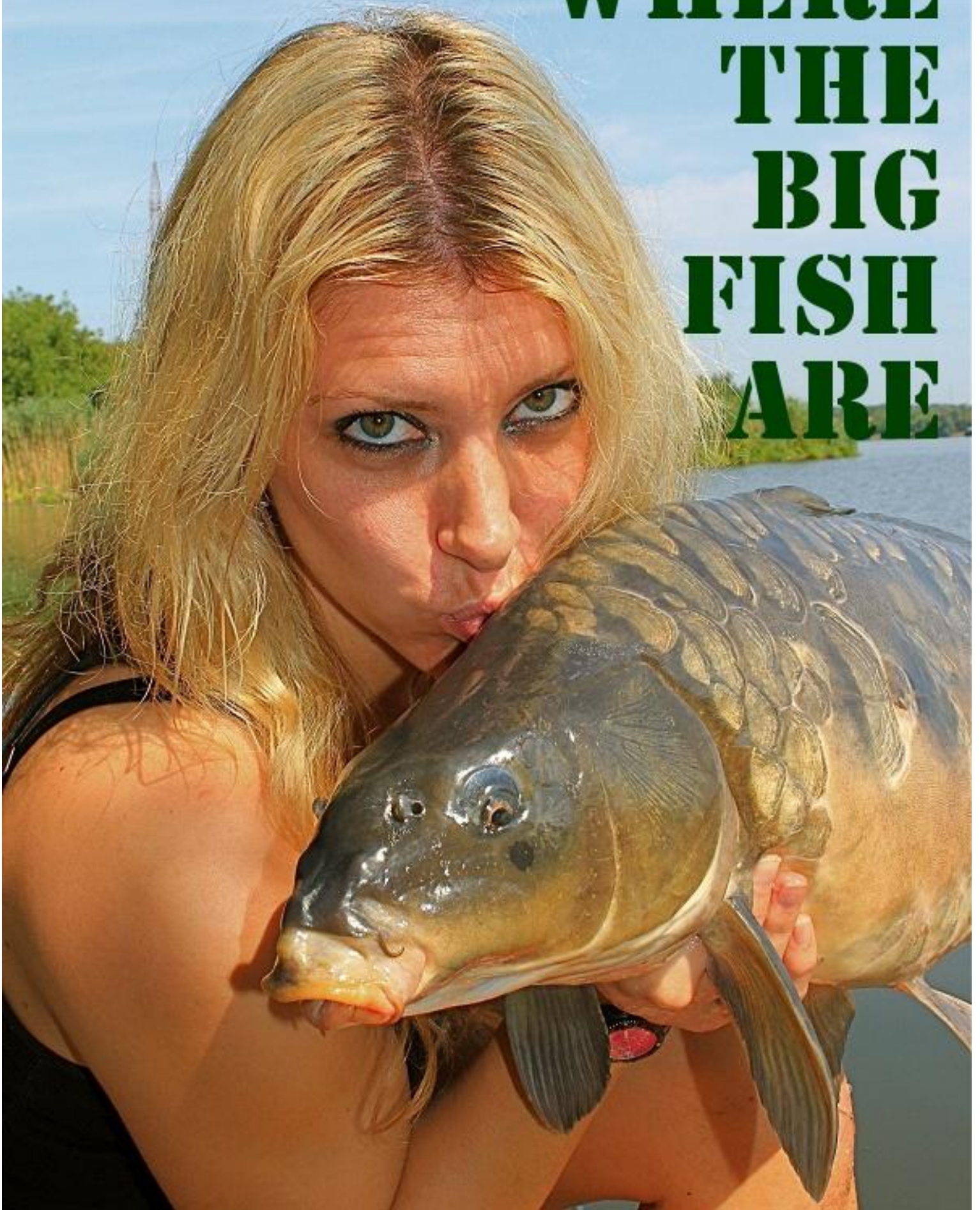
pepper (to taste). Add water to pot heat and bring to a boil. Add noodles and cook till they are al dente (about 7-9 minutes). Remove the noodles from pot and add them into sauté pan with lobster and ladle cream sauce into lobster and fettuccine noodles, diced tomatoes, and parsley toss to mix. Place in the center of plate and top with fresh grated parmesan cheese.



December 2012

WATER LOG

WHERE THE BIG FISH ARE





Ken "Carp Zombie" Keene author of Carp Fishing in America with a great carp catch and release.

Carp Fishing in AMERICA... Eight of the HOTTEST VENUES and STATES REVEALED!

Have you ever wondered about venues from around the world? I certainly have. However, before I start talking about venues, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Ken "Carp Zombie" Keene, and I am a carp angler from the United States. Enjoy part two of my article on great carp destination.

Carp Fishing in America is a two part article, this being the second of the series. In September we published the fish portion and we are happy to share the remaining top carp fisheries with you.

Texas has a nickname, "The Lone-Star State". Texas has been leading by example for some time now. One of the many accomplishments in Texas has been a result of the joint effort between carp anglers as well as the Texas Parks Wildlife department. They declared Lady Bird Lake official carp trophy water, which brings more recognition both nationwide and worldwide to the state, and will hopefully bring more interested anglers to the area.



*Photo of the “Three Shastas”. The Shasta Dam, Shasta Lake and Mt. Shasta.
- Photo credit to Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association*

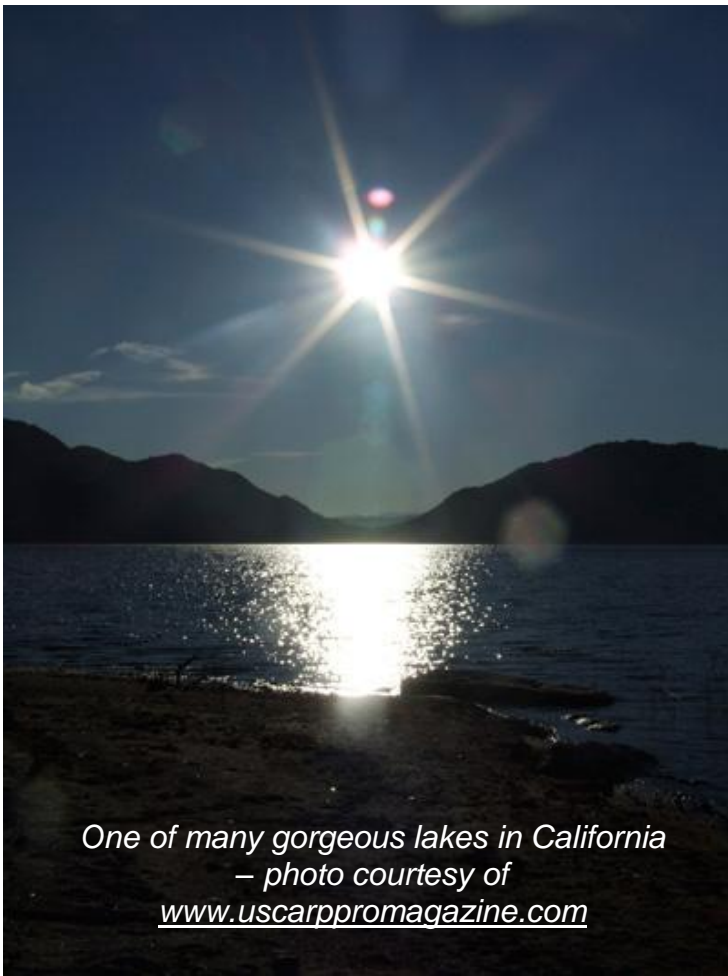
They have uplifted the reputation of carp fishing to heights higher than any other state has. Texas has certainly shown why they are “The Lone-Star State”.

For more information about the Texas waters contact Chad Edwards at badchade@yahoo.com (www.texasfishingforum.com)

Traveling about nine hours west of Texas, you will find yourself in the State of California. Here, the topography is very diverse and so is the climate.

Along the 1,200 mile (1,930 km), coast extends a series of mountains known as the Coast Ranges. The Coast Ranges receives heavy rainfall in the north, and the climate of these mountains is much drier in the south.

Behind the Coast Ranges, in the central part of the state, flows the longest river in all of California called the Sacramento. Starting in the north near Mt. Shasta and merging into the Suisun Bay, this river covers a distance of 447 miles (719 km).



*One of many gorgeous lakes in California
– photo courtesy of
www.uscarppromagazine.com*

The river harbors hundreds of species of fish, which the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge helps to protect. The Sacramento River is just one of many bodies of water that California has to offer.

One of the most distinctive characteristics that California is known for is the weather. All who have been here do not want to leave because it is extremely comfortable. Especially in southern California where the temperatures are usually between 15 degrees C (60 F) – 26 degrees C (80 F), sunny and the humidity is usually very low.

I am thrilled to say that there have been some serious lumps caught in California as well! Since 1968, the carp state record still stands at 52lbs (23.64 kg). There have been several carp anglers who cracked into the 40+lb (18.14+ kg) range but have yet to break the current state record. There are some very driven Carp Anglers in California who know the

potential many of these bodies of water possess. I would not be surprised if this year produces a new state record.

California has a nickname, “The Golden State”.

There are definitely GOLD in them waters!!!!

For more information about California waters contact:



*Karl Haymer holding a common
weighing 32 lbs (14.5 kg) – photo courtesy of
www.scorpiontackle.com*



*Chris Honeyman holding a
29 lb (13.2 kg) common*

Karl Haymer at
inquiries@scorpiontackle.com
(www.scorpiontackle.com)



The Cheyenne River
- photo by South Dakota Tourism

Depending on the venue, one of the rewards carp fishing provides is the presence of solitude. To be the only carp angler fishing an immense body of water is like being king of his own castle. This is exactly what the state of South Dakota has to offer.

Presently, the carp state record for South Dakota is a respectable 37lbs (16.78 kg). Why it's not more is because there are far fewer carp anglers in South Dakota than in most of the states in the U.S.

With the lakes and rivers available, there should be no problem surpassing the current state record.

One of the largest rivers in all the United States that flows through South Dakota is the Missouri River. In South Dakota, the Missouri River has four popular tributaries



The James River
- photo by South Dakota Tourism

John Kelley holding a 34 lb (15.5 kg) common
- photo courtesy of www.wildwestcarpadventures.com



that have very strong river carp.

They are: Cheyenne River – 295 miles(470 km), Grand River – 110 miles(177 km), James River – 710 miles(1,143 km) and Big Sioux River – 295 miles(470 km)

Aforementioned rivers flow through many desolate areas which provide endless opportunities and more bank space than you can imagine.

South Dakota is also home of some gorgeous lakes that hold BIG VIRGIN CARP. They are:

- Big Stone Lake – covers over 12,600 (20,277.73 km) surfaced acres. Is 26 miles (41.84 km) long and averages roughly 1 mile (1.61 km) wide.
- Lake Thompson – 20 ft (6.10 m) deep and covers 18,000 (28,968.19 km) surface acres.
- Waubay Lake – 9 miles (14.48 km) long and approximately five miles wide. Has a maximum depth of 35 ft (10.67 m).
- Lake Francis Case – 107 miles (172.20 km) long and surrounded by 540 miles (869.05 km) of shoreline.



There have been sightings from reliable carp anglers who claim to have seen carp well above South Dakota's state record of 37lbs (16.78 kg). In time these lakes and rivers will be surrendering state records and

awarding carp anglers with new personal bests.

Keep in mind, most of these carp have never seen a boilie before or even a hook. Only recently has there been a steady flow of 20+lb (9.07 kg) and 30+lb (13.60 kg) carp being caught, photographed and released.

Some true monsters have been spotted in these virgin waters; peaking the interest of carp anglers across the entire United States. Keep your eye on South Dakota in 2009. We have yet to see South Dakota's true carp state record.



John Kelley holding a 28 lb (12.7 kg) common
- photo courtesy of www.wildwestcarpadventures.com



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Over 2,757,971 visitors in 2006 traveled to South Dakota to see the famous attraction called Mount Rushmore. It's the greatest FREE ATTRACTION in the U.S.! This is just another reason to visit the "Mount Rushmore State".

For more information about South Dakota waters contact John Kelley at johnnyrockkelley@yahoo.com (www.wildwestcarp adventures.com)

This next state is almost entirely surrounded by freshwater and has the longest freshwater shoreline in the world. Welcome to the state of Michigan.

An interesting fact about Michigan is that all its residents are never more than 85 miles (137 km) from one of the Great Lakes, nor are they ever greater than six miles (10 km) from a natural water source.



*Sunset at Grand Haven lighthouse on Lake Michigan
– photo by Todd Marsee / Michigan Sea Grant*

Furthermore, Michigan is the only state to consist entirely of two peninsulas. Differentiating these peninsulas on the U.S. map is easy because one is located in the upper region and the other is in the lower region of the Great Lakes.

The upper peninsula is bordered by Lake Superior, Lake Huron and Lake



*The Saginaw River - photo courtesy of
www.thebaitstop.com*

Michigan. The lower peninsula rises between Lake Michigan, Lake Huron and Lake Erie.

The northern part of the lower peninsula and the upper peninsula have more severe climates. The summers are warm, humid and shorter. In some parts of the state, the winters are cold to very cold, reaching high temperatures below freezing from December to February, and into March.

In the lower peninsula resides Michigan's longest flowing body of water called the Grand River. The Grand River runs 260 miles (420 km) through several counties and cities before emptying into Lake Michigan.

In the lower peninsula are two more large rivers that are on each side of the Grand River. They are the Muskegon and Kalamazoo Rivers. The Muskegon River runs 219 miles (352.44 km) and the



*Nicki Sprinkle holding her personal best common
carp weighing 25 lbs (11.4 kg) - photo courtesy of
www.thebaitstop.com*



Andy Sprinkle holding a 36.08 lb (16.36kg) common- photo courtesy of www.thebaitstop.com

Kalamazoo runs 166 miles (257 km), both flowing into Lake Michigan.

Between the Great Lakes and available Rivers in Michigan, I can only imagine what these waters are holding. If I had to pick a state that is most likely to land the largest carp in all the United States, I would pick Michigan. Officially, Michigan holds the second largest carp ever caught in the U.S., weighing 61.08 lbs (27.70 kg). Now that's a BIG FISH!!

All across the United States, carp fishing is becoming more and more popular. In places like Michigan, there is tremendous opportunity for any carp angler to land the biggest carp this country has ever seen.

Michigan has a nickname, "The Wolverine State". While researching, I discovered the word "Wolverine" means glutton. Carp are perceived as gluttons because of their voracious appetites. So what's the difference??...The Wolverine State....The Carp State...same thing, right? I think we just found a new nickname for the state of Michigan.

For more information about Michigan waters contact Kevin Abbott at michigancarp@gmail.com (www.michigancarp.com)

This article was a brief introduction about some of the venues available here in the United States that I felt would be of interest to you the reader.

From your fellow carp angler who is abroad here in the United States,

Ken "Carp Zombie" Keene
Ken@TheOnlineKeepsack.com,
www.BigFourCarp.com

Inside feature cover is of Larysa Switlyk, check her out at <http://larysaunleashed.com>



Andy Sprinkle holding a 37.06 lber (16.81kg) common - photo courtesy of www.thebaitstop.com

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Fishing.....The Good Old Days Are Now

By Bob Jensen

I think my open-water fishing trips for 2012 are over. As I was storing some of my open-water equipment recently I got to thinking: This last season of fishing was pretty darn good!

Then I got to thinking more: The past few fishing seasons have been pretty good! In fact, I consider the fishing that many of us have been available to us now could, in many places, be thought of as outstanding! Here's what I mean.

I fish mostly in the Midwest states. When I think of fishing now, on the average, compared to fishing twenty-five years ago, there really is no comparison, especially for large and smallmouth bass,

walleyes, and muskies. We're catching more and bigger ones now than we used to.

I hear of places like Falcon and Amistad lakes in Texas, and the Delta in California, and on and on. Huge bass, and lots of 'em. I keep thinking that I need to get to those places, but then I think of a lake closer to home that's supposed to be good, so I go there instead.

There are a couple of reasons why fishing in many parts of North America is improving. The first thing is management. Implementation of progressive regulations has improved fishing in many, many areas. For instance, on a good number of waters, the minimum legal length to keep a musky is fifty inches, and in some places it's even higher. On those bodies of water, there are a lot of big muskies caught. Same thing with bass. There are a few lakes where you can keep one bass a day, and it must be over twenty inches. You don't take very many bass home, but you sure do catch a lot of nice ones.



The other thing that has helped fishing improve is the advancement in equipment and fishing knowledge. Simply put, there is a bunch more anglers today that are very good anglers, and they're using a lot better equipment.

Consider walleye knowledge and walleye catching: Twenty-five years ago most walleye anglers thought that walleyes were a bottom-hugging fish all the time. Now we know that walleyes will suspend, and if we run a spinner or crankbait behind a planer board, we can catch them.

The electronics we use today are marvelous compared to what we used twenty-five years ago. They draw a color picture of the bottom of your lake below your boat and out to the side. Through the use of mapping chips, they'll show you exactly where you are on the lake, and they'll show you the route to take to get back to the boat ramp.

Fishing rods are so much better and more affordable than they used to be. The first graphite rods I used were clubby and cost a hundred bucks. Now, you can get a much better rod for less money.

The boats and motors are safer and more efficient now, and they're a lot more reliable, which means we can go to areas that we didn't feel comfortable going to "back in the day".

There are some areas of concern in our fisheries, but I'm confident that we'll get those things figured out. I'm also confident the "good old days" of fishing are going to continue for quite a while.

To see all the newest episodes of Fishing the Midwest television, visit www.fishingthemidwest.com
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The Right Crankbait

By Steven Johnson

The crankbait is one of the most important tools in bass fishing, but they're a lot like screwdrivers – you need the right style to get the job done.

Most bass fishermen know that crankbaits rank among the most productive and user-friendly lures in existence. Various cranks look mighty similar in tackle trays, though, so picking the best lure to use can get confusing. Retrieve is another variable that defines whether you get the job done. B.A.S.S. pro Terry Butcher has depended on crankbaits for many of his wins, and has an advanced approach to selecting and fishing crankbaits.

A two-time B.A.S.S. winner who calls Oklahoma home, Butcher spends a lot of time with a crankbait tied to his line. He cranks through the seasons and in a big range of situations.

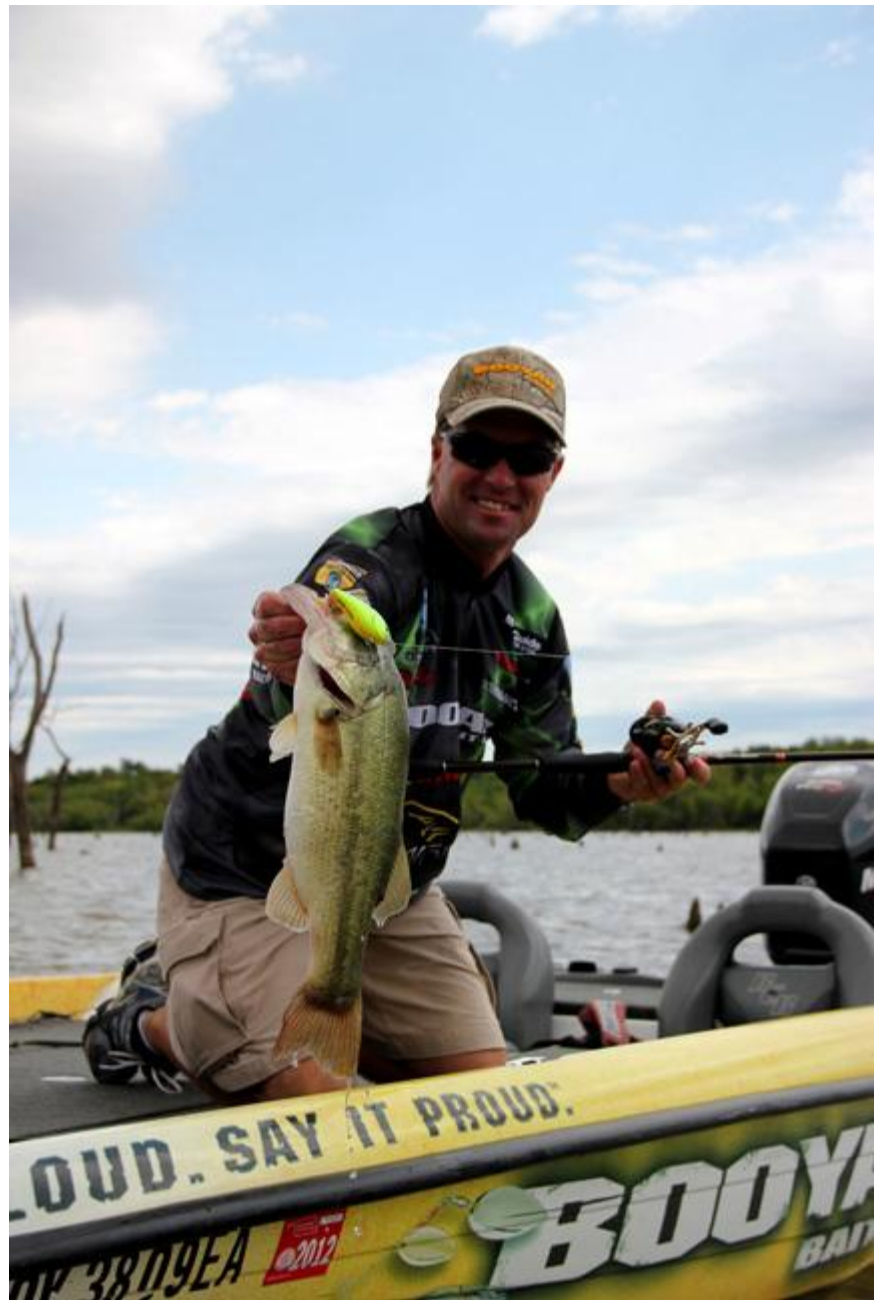
"I try to learn something about a lake and its tendencies for the time of year when I'll be fishing," Butcher said. "Generalities about the lake and the time of the year, when combined with specific observations about conditions, tell me a lot about the kinds of areas I will fish, and consequently, the best crankbait to choose."

Favorite Cranks



The biggest factor that plays into Butcher's crankbait-selection decision is the depth of the water or the cover the fish are using. Generally speaking, he has favorite crankbaits for various depth ranges. That said, the ranges overlap, and at times he might choose a particular crankbait because of its wobble or a lure that runs too deep for the range because he really wants to grind the bottom.

"Sometime I might have three different crankbaits tied on and be switching from one to the





For super-shallow water, he likes the XCalibur Square Lip Xcs. It comes into play any time bass are in less than a couple of feet of water and using cover near the bank, but Butcher might choose it for water as deep as 4 feet if he expects the fish to be active. He uses a Square Lip the most from late spring through early fall when the water is warmer and active fish like a hard-kicking lure.

To get just a little deeper, down to about 6 feet, Butcher will opt for the legendary Bomber 4A. He'll sometimes use a 4A to fish in only a couple of feet of water when he expects fish to be shallow but want a little tighter wiggle. He says he's found that bass like that action early and late in the year. During the middle of the winter if the water is really cold, Butcher might choose a Bomber Flat A, which has a super-tight wiggle and a narrow profile to imitate winter-slowed shad in shallow water.



For water that's more than about 6 feet, Butcher's bait of choice is No. 6 Fat Free Shad, which is one size smaller than the original Fat Free Shad and doesn't dig quite as deep. That bait covers his needs down to around 12 feet and is normally his first choice for

medium depths. A Bomber Model 6A also comes into play for the same depth range and allows him to offer a little different profile and wobble. It's just one of those things that he has to let the fish tell him what they want on that day, he says.

For deep cranking, which encompasses most offshore applications and can be a factor any month of the year for Butcher, his go-to crankbait is always a full-sized Bomber Fat Free Shad.



Bomber Fat
Free Shad

Presentations Are As Important As The Lure

Butcher absolutely loves throwing a crankbait in shallow water, and he starts off fishing with an aggressive attitude. He fishes it fast and smashes it into as much wood, rock or other cover as he can.

"That's what's going on in shallow water," Butcher said. "The shad are racing around trying to get away from the bass, so I want that bait up there hitting and deflecting off things. Same thing with the crawfish. If you ever see them up around the shallow rocks, they move around pretty erratically."

For deeper presentations, Butcher believes in allowing the fish to dictate how they want the bait. In most cases he's hitting the bottom or some type of cover at least some of the time. However, sometimes he wants his bait to barely tick the structure while other times he wants a crankbait really grinding and kicking up sediment. Retrieve speed varies a lot, as does the frequency (or existence) of pauses or rod tip sweeps.

"Some days you just have to reel steadily. Other days, whenever you hit something, you have to pause and let the bait float up a bit," Butcher said. "I'll experiment a lot and adjust based on what the fish show me."



Butcher has enjoyed tremendous success with a standard rattling Fat Free Shad BD7, so that remains his primary bait for deep cranking. It's his deep-diver of choice when he's searching for fish and his normal first pick when pulls up on a spot.



Once he has worked a ledge or hump thoroughly, though, and has pulled what fish he thinks he can from it, he often picks up a rod rigged with a silent version of the same crankbait. “Sometimes you’ll catch another fish or two from a spot just by making that change,” he says. “The one with the rattles is my first choice, but there seem to be some fish that prefer the silent one.”

Another adjustment Butcher commonly makes before abandoning a spot is to work the same structure from the opposite side. “If I started out positioned just off a ledge and worked my crankbait down it, I’ll move to the shallow side and try working up it. It’s a presentation fish don’t see a lot.”

Still another way Butcher varies his crankbait approach is by keeping the same model and color of crankbait tied to more than one rod, but each is spooled with a different line weight. Any given crankbait fished on lighter line runs deeper, so trying a couple of combinations over a structure or along a stretch of a bank helps him zero-in on just the right amount of bottom contact for triggering strikes any given day.

Butcher’s Block of Cranking Colors

Bomber Fat Free Shad/Bomber Model A
 Foxy Shad – Any Time
 Chartreuse Blue Back – Any Time
 Dance’s Citrus Shad – Extra Clear Water
 Dance’s Tennessee Shad – Extra Clear Water
 Foxy Lady – Dingy Water

XCalibur Square Bill Xcs
 Foxy Shad – Any Time
 Oxbow – Dirty Water
 Mossback Craw – Bass On A
 Crawfish Bite
 Creek Craw – Bass On A Crawfish Bite

“Simple Techniques”..

Cold Water Swimbaiting

By William Schwarz



With all the lures available to catch largemouth bass, it is no wonder that anglers walk into a Cabela's or Gander Mountain wide-eyed. Surely, they are telling themselves this lure looks great, but how can I make it work. Ask yourself how many

bait styles there are for bass fishing and how many different ways can you utilize each. The answer is close to endless.

Simple Techniques, is just that, less talked about ways to use the baits you already have or want to have, to improve your time on the water and produce more hook ups.

Now let's get real, swimbaits are a lure that many anglers avoid because they have had no success or have heard they only work under specific conditions. Then throw in the fact that swimbaits are spoken about as a warming or warm water bait and the average angler will walk past them on the shelves in late fall and winter. Don't!

Cold water is just that, cold water nothing else, unless it's hard water, then that's another story. So slow down your presentation. One of the most challenging features to find in a soft plastic swimbait is its action when you are barely moving it. Tail action needs to happen and if the bait is too stiff or the paddletails don't move forget it. I have used Owner Ribeye, Reaction Innovations Big Dipper and the Netbait BK, but found that the Keitech Swing Impact FAT to work best in cold-water conditions, 55 degree or less. The 4.8 and 5.8-inch baits are dynamic, plus you get the added benefit from the many ribs the baits have that release added vibration.



Keitech Swing Impact FAT



Which head works best? For the horizon swimming presentation, I use either a Davis Bait X Swim Weighted SS Screw Lock or a Lake Fork Swimbait Hooks. Nevertheless, for a vertical presentation, I use the unique application of the Picasso Shake-E-Football.

Horizontal Presentation: With either the Davis or Lake Fork hooks it is important to keep the nose screw centered.

When you drive the hook through the Keitech Swing Impact FAT swimbait ensure that the paddle is centered downward, and the bait is perfectly straight from the eyelet to the hook end. Sink the very last portion of the hook tip in the plastic to keep it weedless. Targeting flats and remaining weed edges, run the bait as slowly as possible along the bottom, stopping the bait from time to time to settle on the bottom and restart with a twitch. This is a great way to cover water and keeps the bass interested in a bait that will not run from them. Hits typically come when the bait either stops or starts.

Vertical Presentation: I match the Shake-E-Football head color as close as possible to the bait color in this presentation. Screw the nose of the Keitech Swing Impact FAT swimbait into the Shake-E-Football and then set the hook through the bait as with the other presentation. In this presentation, you are targeting humps, drop-offs and sloping points, positioning the boat at the top of each. Cast out deep and let the bait settle, feed line to make sure the rig falls vertically!! On the retrieve your are bouncing the bait up the structure. With the Picasso Shake-E-Football the bait will rest with the tail point up or at a slight angle. When the bait comes to rest at the end of a bounce rock/shake the bait ever so slightly, and the hit will come.

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Fishing as a Pro

By Marty Brown



Fishing as a Pro on the Bassmaster Southern Opens trial will test the best of anglers on a variety of waters. The rewards can be great. For full-time professional anglers, they can qualify for the Elite Series by being in the top 5 in points at the end of the year. If the winner of each tournament fishes all

three events they also qualify for the holy grail of bass fishing, the Bassmaster Classic. The majorities of the anglers are vying for a shot at the classic. Most of us are pros at something else and probably couldn't fish the Elites if they qualified anyway. My eyes are set on the classic so playing it safe and fishing for points is not an option. After a respectable 11th place finish at the Harris Chain of Lakes in Tavares, FL, we moved on to a totally different type lake.

The Bassmaster Southern Open #2 was held at Lake Norman in Charlotte, NC April 5th-7th. Lake Norman is a lake that is highly developed with thousands of boat docks and a mix of spotted bass and largemouth's. I had been there once before as a co-angler on the FLW Tour in 2009. That tournament was in late April, and I finished in 59th place catching most of my fish on a shaky head and jerk bait. I arrived the Saturday before to start fishing the lake out of my Skeeter boat for the first time. My first thought was to go looking for bedding fish in the clear water. The only fish left were a few males still hanging around so it was time to figure something else out. Knowing that there is usually a largemouth bite up the river I spent a couple of days practicing upstream. I could catch a few pretty decent fish but did not think I could win with them. On the last day of practice, I stumbled across a pattern on the lower end of the lake. I found fish hanging around in a couple of the marinas. They had bait fish, cover and deep water, which made for a perfect post spawn hangout. Even though the bite was slower, the quality of the fish was better than that of the ones I had caught upriver. This was where I was going to spend the tournament. My main weapon of choice was a Strike King KVD jig head rigged with a Green Pumpkin Zoom Swamp Crawler. I was fishing it on Bass Pro Shops, 8 lb fluorocarbon line and a Castaway Skeleton spinning rod.

The weather had been stable with clear to partly cloudy skies all week. Come tournament day it took a turn for the worse with overcast and rainy skies. Even though I knew it would

change the bite some, I stuck to my plan. The fish still were biting but the size just was not there. After the first day, I was in 140th place with five fish weighing 6.13 lbs. This was very disappointing since I was pretty sure I could have caught around 10 pounds upriver. For day two I started out in the marina I had spent most of the first day in. After a couple of hours and not getting a bite, I decided to head upriver. When I arrived in my first area, I quickly began to catch fish. The secondary points were still holding fish that were willing to bite. I was throwing a Carolina Rig with a Green Pumpkin Zoom Trick worm on an 18" leader of 10 lb Bass Pro Shops Fluorocarbon line. This pattern produced four fish before I had to head back to weigh in. They weighed 6.8 lbs and left me with a total weight of 13.5 lbs and in 130th place for the tournament. Even though I was not thrilled with the outcome, I know that sometimes you have to take chances to win fishing against some of the best anglers in the country. It was time to head back to work as a professional Firefighter/Paramedic and reflect on this event as a learning experience.

The third and final Bassmaster Southern Open was held on Lewis Smith Lake in Jasper, AL. Once again we were fishing a different type. Lewis Smith is a highland type reservoir dominated by spotted bass in recent years. The majority of the lake is very deep and clear with steep rocky banks on the lower-end turning into a river with some shallower pockets and creeks up the river. The lakes' deep channels are filled with trees that were left in place when the lake was impounded. Since I had never been on the lake, I decided to take a trip over a few weeks before the tournament to see the lake. Much to my surprise it looked a lot like a cross between Carters Lake near my home and Lake Lanier. Both are premier spotted bass lakes with deep water abound. The lake was about ten feet low exposing many of the shallow points that drop off into the abyss. With the tournament, still several weeks away I decided to spend most of my time idling around looking for potential areas. My Lowrance

HDS10 with Structure Scan earned its keep on this trip. I was thinking that the fish would be in deep brush or tree tops similar to Lanier and Carters' lakes. For two days, I kept my Skeeter boat on the move marking way points on trees and brush piles mostly around the lower end of the lake. Occasionally, I would pick up a rod and fish for a while just to see what happened.





After returning home, I took my Skeeter ZX225 to Boats and Motors of Dalton to get some much-needed maintenance done before I returned to Smith Lake for the tournament. I have been a customer of theirs since the 1994 when I bought my first new bass boat. In the late 1990's they became a Skeeter dealer

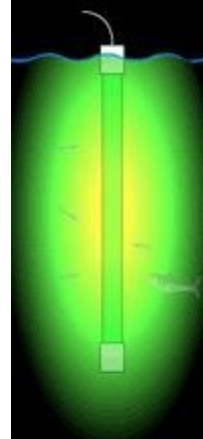
and offered me a spot as a Skeeter Team member. I gladly accepted and have been fishing out of Skeeter Boats since.

As time rolled around to go back for the tournament, I attempted to clear my work schedule to get in as much practice as I could. The Friday before the tournament I was scheduled to teach part of an Advanced Medical Life Support class at the fire department. Even though it was out of my way I loaded up the truck and boat, so I could drive over to Smith Friday afternoon. When I arrived there was enough daylight left to get the boat wet and look around a bit. The water level had dropped a couple of feet, and the cool nights had brought the water surface temperature down several degrees. This had me thinking there was going to be a strong top water bite from the big spotted bass. That night we all stayed in motel rooms because the house we had rented was not available until Saturday.

Saturday was my first real day of practice. I spent most of the day running and gunning points looking for the top water bite. To my surprise, I only managed a few fish doing this. My immediate thought was that I did find the right area of the lake for it to be productive. Sunday brought in partly cloudy skies, and it started raining that evening. Knowing that the top water bite usually slows down in clear water when it clouds up, I continued looking for the top water bite keeping in mind that it will get even better when the sun reappears. As my luck would have it, the weather forecast was way off. It rained all day Monday and Tuesday leaving only a half-day of practice with the sun peeking out Wednesday. So far, I had not been catching a lot of fish, but I had a couple of

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areas where I had some quality bites and some schooling activity in the area.

The first day of the tournament started off chilly with blue bird skies. My plan was to fish three main lake pockets that have been holding fish and bait all through practice. I was gambling on the clear skies to bring those big spots up to the surface eating. My first area was almost within sight of the launch. It was a fairly small pocket with a couple of secondary clay points that dropped off quickly. There had been some schooling activity the day before. I started off throwing a Sebile Magic Swimmer up shallow and bringing back out over the deeper water. As we progressed through the pocket, there was not any surface activity, and we had not had a bite. It was time to head to my next area. It was a larger pocket with deep water all the way to the back. It had steep rocky banks dropping off to a shelf at 40' then into 100' and more towards the middle. There is standing timber in the deeper water topping out around 40'. This area has been holding fish since the first trip, I made to Smith a few weeks prior. Shortly after shutting my Yamaha outboard down we notice fish busting the surface. It wasn't the feeding frenzy we were hoping for but activity none the less. My first lure of choice was a Heddon Super Spook since I had caught several fish over two pounds in this area on it in practice. After throwing it a while with no takers, I switched to the Sebile Magic Swimmer (pictured). On about the third cast a fish nailed it and became my first keeper of the tournament. As we progressed through the area without any more bites I picked up a drop shot rigged on 8lb Bass Pro Shops Fluorocarbon line with a Robo Worm. This produced three smaller keepers off boat docks in the area. Even though I had four fish in the bucket I was pretty disappointed at the size. The next area was just back downriver and was also a deep cove, but it had some shallower banks that dropped off quickly into about 60' of water right off the river channel. Just looking at the bank you would think it was a shallow flat cove with clay banks. Under the water, the banks had a small shelf with scattered boulders that dropped off quickly. It was a perfect area for fish to pull up and feed without getting away from the deep water. On my first pass, I picked up a solid keeper on the Super Spook. I filled my limit at around 10 o'clock and we never put another keeper fish in the boat the rest of the day. We made another lap around my planned milk run without success. Afterwards, I went

to a cove that had some submerged brush near the ramp that I had caught a good fish out of in practice. Still coming up empty it was time for weigh in. My small limit weighed 6.2 lbs and





in 94th place.

For day two I had to make a change. I started out in the cove where I had caught three keepers the day before.

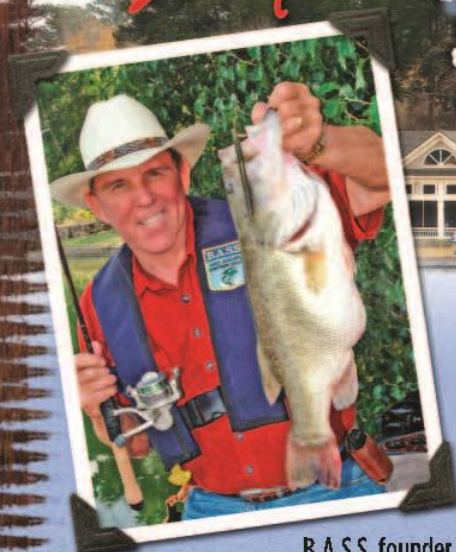
After coming up empty it was time to head up the river to try something different.

During practice, I caught a lot of keeper size fish up there on main lake points on a buzz bait. After going around two points without a bite on the buzzer, I switched to my Sebile Magic Swimmer and picked up a small keeper. With all the rain, we had during practice the water level had come up a couple of feet but the fish on these points did not seem to have come up with it. I started seeing fish beneath the boat in 20' of water and could catch them on my drop shot. Yet again they were just small limits of keepers. By this time, my partner caught three keepers to fill his limit also. With a couple of hours left to fish I decided to head back downriver to where I had caught my best fish the day before. We started out on the main lake point and worked our way in. I was hoping for a school of fish to come up, so we could upgrade our limits. After fishing half way back into the cove without a bite, I slowed the boat down, and we picked up our shakey head worms and drop shots. It didn't take long for my partner to latch into a three pound spotted bass and upgrade his limit. Unfortunately, that was the only decent fish put in the boat before it was time to head in. My limit weighed 5.3 lbs and left me in 94th place with 11.5 lbs. My partner George Hirapetian fared a little better with a little over six lbs for the day and in 27th with a total of 8.9 lbs on the co-angler side.

This was not the way I wanted to finish off the year but sometimes the pieces just do not come together as planned. After the first day of the tournament, I knew most of the good bags of fish came out of Ryans Creek on deep points. They only practice time I there was during torrential rains on Tuesday. Since I didn't fish the area on the first day I didn't want to go in there and take a chance on interfering with someone who might be in contention to win. I had confidence that the areas I was fishing had the potential to win the event but they just never really started eating on that part of the lake.

Ray Scott's

Trophy Bass Retreat



*You're invited to fish
America's most famous
private bass waters*

Noted outdoorsman and B.A.S.S. founder Ray Scott is making a long-time personal dream come true. As a proud supporter of his home state's new initiative — Alabama Black Belt Adventures — he is opening his personal lakes, his home and guest accommodations to a limited number of anglers to enjoy great fishing and gracious southern hospitality.

Guests at Ray Scott's Trophy Bass Retreat will fish in the wake of presidents, first ladies and fishing superstars like Kevin VanDam, Rick Clunn, Bill Dance and Roland Martin — all amidst 200 acres of live oaks, Spanish moss, whitetail deer and blue herons. And they will

also enjoy many outstanding amenities as well as the opportunity to visit with host Ray Scott.

Ray Scott's Trophy Bass Retreat is located just south of Montgomery, in the heart of Alabama's Black Belt, a land of rich history, rich traditions and rich black soil that is credited with contributing to the outstanding fishing and hunting that has been treasured by so many generations of outdoorsmen.

Whether you're with your best fishing buddies, son or father, or important business clients or employees, your Ray Scott Trophy Bass Retreat will provide an exclusive, one-of-a-kind fishing experience to be remembered.

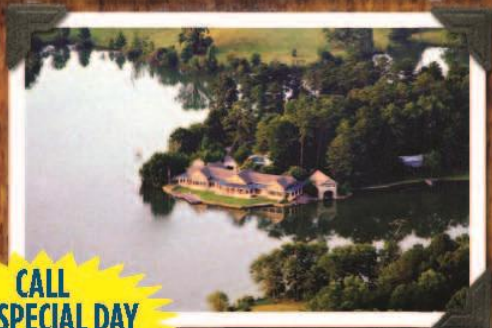
Named "Best Bass Lake" in America by "Outdoor Life" Magazine

Availability is very limited. Bookings on first-come, first-served basis.

Your all-inclusive Trophy Bass Retreat package includes:

- 3 nights lodging
- 2 full days of fishing
- Airport pickup
- All meals provided with relaxed family-style dinners
- Comfortable accommodations with private baths
- Boats available or bring your own
- Two miles of private, scenic jogging road
- Secluded pool
- Lodge area with large fireplace and big screen TV
- And many other amenities

**CALL
FOR SPECIAL DAY
RATES**



Bookings

All lodging is based on double occupancy with private baths. Booking and fishing is in pairs only. There is a maximum of eight guests. Booking groups of four in the Presidents Guest Cabin is a recipe for fun and fellowship.

Bass is good business:

The guest cabin for four — or the whole facility for eight — is perfect for incentive and reward trips or tax-deductible corporate team building.

Be sure to inquire about the limited number of Ray Scott's trademark marketing seminars, "From a Fishing Hole to a Pot of Gold" personally conducted after fishing hours by the Bass Boss himself. Or call to book the whole lodge and customize your own tax-deductible marketing and motivational agenda with Ray.

Call 800-518-7222 | Visit us on the web at www.rayscottbassretreat.com

An Alabama Black Belt Adventure

Holiday Gifts For The Nature Lover

By Bob Wattendorf

Holiday season is upon us. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa or simply enjoy having a few days off to celebrate with family and friends coming up with appropriate gifts is a challenge for all of us.

The key to gift giving is matching the present to the individual, while making sure it is something they'll enjoy, is hopefully good for them and not too expensive. And if it helps Mother Nature too, maybe that's the perfect gift. With that in mind, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) have several suggestions for last-minute gift giving.

How about an offering guaranteed to create a happier, healthier and more productive lifestyle? Richard Louv, chairman emeritus of the Children Nature Network and author of "The Nature Principle" and "Last Child in the Woods," has made a solid case, supported by years of research, that connecting with nature results in those benefits. Whatever your age, being able to spend time in nature brings us back to our true roots – the ones that connect us with the earth and nurture us.

In a time when frantic schedules, enclosed spaces and constant noise tend to drive us a little crazy; it is a real gift to take some time to commune with nature and relax. Getting outdoors with family and friends not only gets you moving and burning off some of those excess holiday calories but can open the door to better communications.

So the trick is how to give the gift of the great outdoors to yourself, your family and friends. Fun and recreation sounds like a good place to start, so how about planning a fishing trip or nature hike? The Outdoor Foundation published a special research report this year that stated:

"Perhaps more than any other form of recreation, fishing and boating are critical to the health and well-being of America's outdoor heritage. By boat and on land, the first outdoor



experience for many Americans is fishing, introducing tens of millions of people each year to the wonders of nature. Fishing also serves as an important bridge and top 'gateway' activity that leads participants to other outdoor passions."

So why not invite your family and friends on a fun fishing trip, right here in Florida – the Fishing Capital of the World (FishingCapital.com)? An annual resident fishing license is easy to obtain. Simply go to license.myfwc.com, call 888-Fish-Florida, or visit a local retailer who sells fishing tackle and licenses. A five-year freshwater fishing license makes an especially great gift. While you are purchasing the license, you will also have the opportunity to make a donation to the Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network to help the FWC with "Creating the next generation that cares."

An annual freshwater fishing license costs just \$17, but because the average angler fishes 17 times, a year (U.S. Census Bureau research) and enjoys four to five hours on a typical trip, the cost is less than a quarter per hour of fun and healthy recreation. When you purchase a license, you are also providing a gift to nature and future generations of anglers and outdoor enthusiasts. For 75 years, the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program has guaranteed that all across the country fishing license fees are protected by law so that they can only be used within the state where they are sold for fish and wildlife conservation. Moreover, fees collected by the federal government on fishing tackle, pleasure boats and motor boat fuels provide additional funding for recreational fishing and conservation based on how many anglers buy fishing licenses in each state.

While putting a fishing-related gift pack together, you can find lots of information about fishing tips and gear at www.MyFWC.com/fishing and find fishing sites and up-to-date forecasts. One of the most fun tips is to have everyone register for Florida's freshwater angler recognition programs, including TrophyCatch and Big Catch at www.TrophyCatchFlorida.com. Just for registering, people are eligible for a Phoenix 619 Pro bass boat and trailer, with a Mercury outboard and Motor Guide trolling motor. That drawing will be in October 2013.

Big Catch recognizes anglers with certificates and discounts for catching fish from any of 33 different freshwater species in Florida that simply exceed a specified length or weight. The program has reduced sizes for youth under 16 to help them get recognized for their developing prowess as



anglers. For those seeking additional challenges, there are specialist (five Big Catches of the same species), master (five Big Catches of different species) and elite angler (10 Big Catches of different species) certificate levels. There are even black bass, bream and exotic slams for catching multiple species within a specific time frame.

However, for the hard-core freshwater anglers who travel from all across the world to fish Florida's fresh water, the penultimate catch is a trophy largemouth bass. The FWC and corporate partners are now rewarding anglers for reporting those fish and then releasing them to challenge another angler and keep the fishery thriving.

Trophy Catch includes three tiers to encourage reporting and live-releasing bass heavier than 8 pounds that are caught in Florida waters. Bass 8 to 9.9 pounds (Lunker Club) or those 10 to 12.9 pounds (Trophy Club) that are caught, documented and released can be reported online at www.TrophyCatchFlorida.com any time of the year. All that is required to qualify for prizes is a photo of the fish on a scale with the weight visible, and one on a tape measure or ruler showing the length. Bass heavier than 13 pounds that are caught between Oct. 1 and April 30 each year must be checked by FWC staff to enter them into the Hall of Fame Club.

The angler who enters the biggest bass of the year into TrophyCatch will earn a Super Bowl-like ring, from the American Outdoors Fund. If it is caught in Osceola County, the Kissimmee Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) will award the angler \$10,000. In addition, if the angler is on a guided fishing trip, the guide will receive \$2,500 from the CVB. This challenge is heating up with several great bass already reported from Osceola County. To keep informed, please "like" us at Facebook.com/TrophyCatchFlorida.

Another great gift for anglers that will help them boast about their sport while supporting the future of conservation is to buy a "Go Fishing" Largemouth Bass license plate, which can be displayed on vehicles or trailers. Simply go to Buyaplate.com, or a gift certificate may now be purchased at an authorized motor vehicle office. Enjoy your holidays and a lifetime of active nature-based recreation: Get Outdoors Florida!

Instant licenses are available at MyFWC.com/License or by calling 888-FISH-FLORIDA

(347-4356). Report violators by calling 888-404-3922, *FWC or #FWC on your cell phone, or texting to [Tip@MyFWC.com](https://Texting.Tip@MyFWC.com). Visit

www.MyFWC.com/Fishin and select "more news," or scr.bi/Fish-busters for more Fish Busters' Bulletins. To subscribe to FWC columns or to receive news releases, visit www.myfwc.com/Contact.





GAMBLER
GO FISH!

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