

***Winter
Cracking***

***Suspended
Animation***

***What it
Means to
Fish
Transition
Spots***

***GENZ: How to
Pick a Good Lake***

***Happy
New Year
2015***



The All Mighty Detroit River, Pg 22

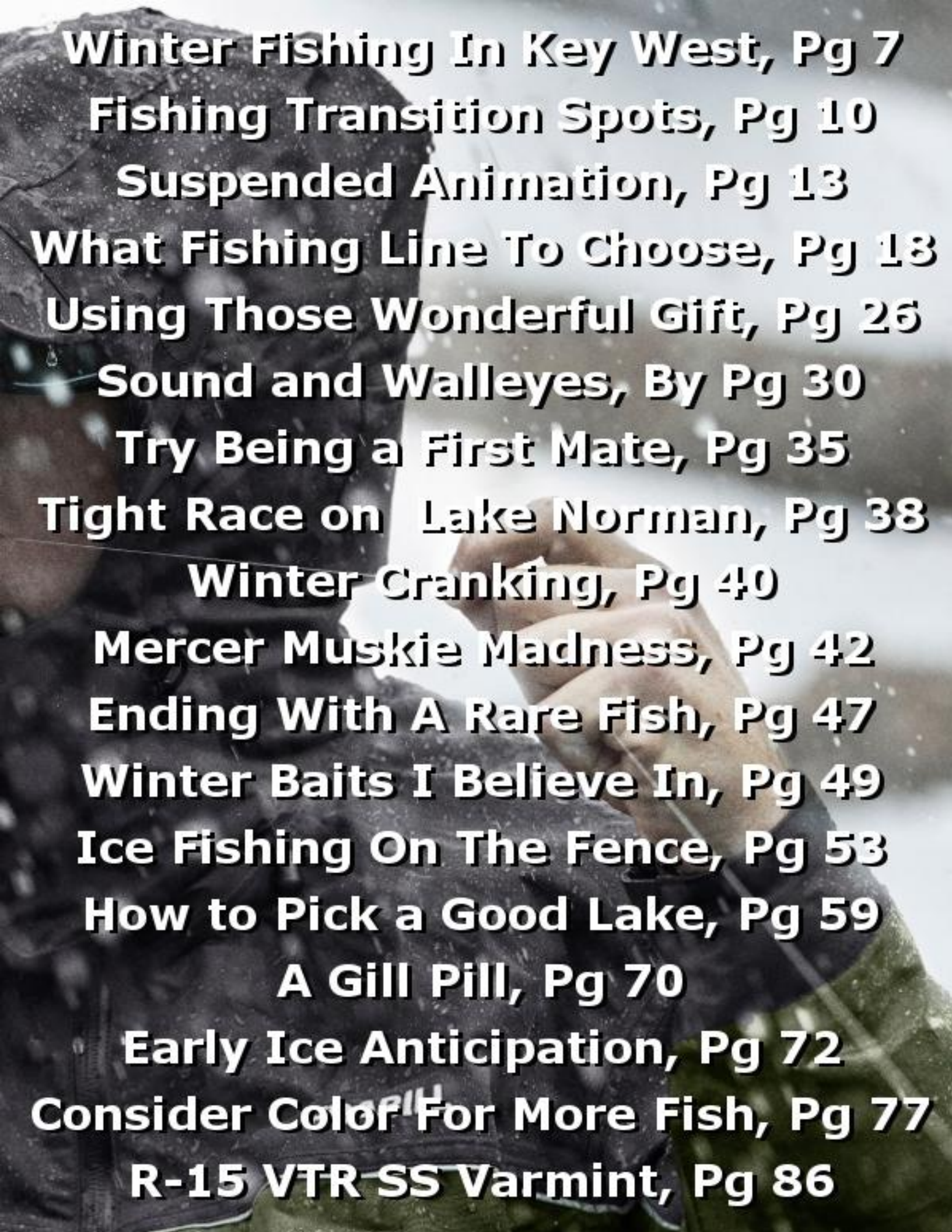


When Panfish Behave Badly, Pg 65



The Quest for Kudu!!, Pg 81





Winter Fishing In Key West, Pg 7
Fishing Transition Spots, Pg 10
Suspended Animation, Pg 13
What Fishing Line To Choose, Pg 18
Using Those Wonderful Gift, Pg 26
Sound and Walleyes, By Pg 30
Try Being a First Mate, Pg 35
Tight Race on Lake Norman, Pg 38
Winter Cranking, Pg 40
Mercer Muskie Madness, Pg 42
Ending With A Rare Fish, Pg 47
Winter Baits I Believe In, Pg 49
Ice Fishing On The Fence, Pg 53
How to Pick a Good Lake, Pg 59
A Gill Pill, Pg 70
Early Ice Anticipation, Pg 72
Consider Color For More Fish, Pg 77
R-15 VTR-SS Varmint, Pg 86

FIERCE...TOUGH...PROVEN™



Cuda 7.5"
Mono/Braid
Fishing Pliers &
Wire Cutters

Cuda 6" Titanium
Bonded Fillet Knife

**GET HOOKED
ON CUDA**

CUDA FISHING TOOLS

www.cudabrand.com



**TITANIUM
BONDED**



The holiday time is one of my favorite times of the year. Food, family, friends all top the list and with the added benefit of watching our children grow and enjoying the many holiday days, what else can I ask for?

2014 was a year of transition, growth and change

for OutDoors Unlimited Media and as we look forward to 2015 I know we have a lot to look forward to. OutDoors Unlimited Media, our website and our digital fishing magazines continue to grow in popularity not only with the number of outdoorsmen visiting the website monthly, but the time outdoorsmen spend on the site is also growing very well. We look forward to seeing this trend continue and looking toward 2015 for more exciting magazines and the story's they hold. All this while keeping up with national and regional fishing and hunting news that our readers look for daily.

2015 brings the outdoor hunting and fishing community a tremendous amount of opportunities for reflection, planning and change. Where do you see your impact? Gun laws continue to change in all different directions, access to our public forests and waterways seem to always be under attack and the conservation of our angling and hunting resources have challenges that are both good for us and many times bad.

It would be great if every angler and hunter made it a point this 2015 to introduce a youngster to the great outdoors who NEVER has had the chance. Show these youngsters how to really catch a fish, walk in the woods so they can experience wildlife, teach them what hunting is all about and take them on a boat or canoe ride. With about 33 million fishermen (Nooga.com) and 13.7 million hunters (CBS News) in our nation what an impact we could make in our

Thanks to all of our friends and relatives that had their thoughts and prayers go out to us when we needed them most. The loss of Larry was anticipated but not so soon. He would want the magazine to go on in whatever manner William Schwarz plans and we hope that all of you will continue to honor him with your readership in the coming years. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all and thanks again.

Sandy Thornhill and Family



collective voices and passing on our love of the outdoors. We hope this is one of your New Year's goals.

"To my business partner Larry Thornhill, you will ALWAYS be remembered and on my mind as ODU Media and Magazine takes its steps forward!"

To our readers, please enjoy this jammed back edition of OutDoors Unlimited Magazine and please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, a story to share, a new product you want featured or a chance at your own outdoor column. Use odumedia@odumagazine.com and we will be looking forward to the mail.

You can also follow us on [Facebook \(NEWEST PAGE\)](#), [Twitter](#), [Pinterest](#) and [Google Plus](#).

And please, enjoy the outdoors.

**Co-Founders of OutDoors
Unlimited Magazine**

Larry Thornhill and William Schwarz

207-310-3117

Editorial Team Leader: Bill Schwarz, Bill@odumagazine.com

Publishing Team: Bill Schwarz & Richard Barker

Photographer: Kathy Barker

Advertising inquirers for our fishing magazines, ODU Fishing and Hunting News should be e-mailed to:
odumedia@odumagazine.com

Contributing Writers: Bill Vanderford, Captain Mike Gerry, Brad Wiegmann, Mike Borovic, Glenn Walker, Ted Takasaki, Scott Richardson, By Jake Bussolini, Lou Mintzer, Scott Albrecht, Mark Strand, Jason Mitchell, Dan Galusha, Brian Koshenina, Bob Jensen and Paul Michele

Photos: Cover provided by TTI Blakemore and TJ Stallings. Pictured is Ron Stallings. A very good angler! Rear cover is from Plano/Tenzing of Mossy Oak pro Jonathan Turner.

Thank You All!

**[Register To Receive ODU Magazines
For FREE:](#)**



OUTDOORS UNLIMITED



Find us on
Facebook

NEW

**FISHING
NEWS
HUNTING
NEWS**

twitter 
ODUFishing

twitter 
ODUHunting

Get Connected With ODU!

Winter Fishing In Key West Can Be Spectacular

By Bill Vanderford

Fantastic fishing, occasional shipwrecks and spectacular sunsets are synonymous with Key West, Florida, and visitors often experience the complete trifecta! When most fishermen think of coming to Key West, they immediately picture battles with huge, acrobatic tarpon, speedy bonefish or powerful permit. In winter, most of those fish have migrated to warmer climates or deeper water. Nevertheless, the



Six Pack™

1660 MAG

SCREEN SHELTER

FEATURES:

- ▶ Water resistant roof with taped seams
- ▶ Triple layer corner pole pockets
- ▶ Picnic table fits inside
- ▶ Includes six deluxe tent stakes and tie down ropes
- ▶ Includes oversized carry bag
- ▶ Lab tested hub assemblies—largest in the industry
- ▶ IC TABLSOR-90-245 fire retardant
- ▶ Compliant in both USA and Canada

SPECS:

ITEM #: 9281
TOTAL SQUARE FEET: 94'
CENTER HEIGHT: 90"
HUB-TO-HUB: 140" X 140"
WEIGHT: 34 lbs.

**45 SECOND SET-UP
AND TAKE DOWN!**

**NO ASSEMBLY,
NO LOOSE PARTS,
READY TO USE!**



EXTRA LARGE,
HEAVY-DUTY
ZIPPER PULL



TEAR RESISTANT,
DURABLE
NO-SEE-UM MESH



EXTRA LARGE,
FLEX TESTED
FIBERGLASS POLES
(11 mm)



210 DENIER
POLY-OXFORD
FABRIC



AVAILABLE ACCESSORY:
PORTABLE WIND PANELS
ITEM #: 9294

fish that replace them during the colder months are also excellent fighters and much better to eat. The waters near Key West are teeming with marauding schools of mackerel at this time of year. Most anglers can easily catch their daily limit of three to five pound cero and Spanish mackerel, and many king mackerel exceed forty pounds. In addition, one may find huge schools of redfish that range from ten to twenty-five pounds, and tuna are often abundant in the twenty pound class.



Bottom fishing near Key West will net a variety of fish including several types of grouper, snapper and grunts. The majority of these fish are also very palate pleasing.

With more than five-hundred species of fish inhabiting the blue-green waters of the Florida Keys, fantastic fishing is experienced daily. Winter visitors experience a kaleidoscope of flora and fauna, including white herons, loons, pelicans, ospreys and numerous small animals.

Real adventurers often bring or rent a small skiff, canoe or kayak, which allows the exploration of many of the uninhabited keys or the opportunity to fish shallow flats within sight of Key West.



The Mardi Gras-style experience in the old downtown section of Key West every night, and the circus atmosphere along the wharf at Mallory Park during the "Sunset Celebration" at the end of each day makes Key West a warm, electrifying destination away from our cooler weather. This final island at the tip of the Florida Keys is certainly a fabulous tropical paradise, but it also ranks among the best places on the globe to get away from the cold, catch plenty of fish and escape reality for awhile!

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.georgiafishing.com.



*For additional
information about
reservations or
directions, contact the
Florida Keys Visitors
Bureau through
Stewart Newman and
Associates at 1-800-
FLA-KEYS.*



What it Means to Fish Transition Spots

By Captain Mike Gerry

There is probably no time of year where fishing becomes more difficult than the transition time from fall fishing to winter fishing. Most fisherman struggle because they seemingly cannot find the fish, they are not in the backs of the creeks nor are they located in their deep winter spots; they are somewhere in-between. These areas in-between are transition spots where the fish stage as they migrate out to the deep for the winter.

The key to these areas is the location to deep water, as the bass migrate their stopping spots generally have deep water close; areas that they can easily move up on top to feed in the warmer part of the day and quickly run deep if spooked. It is always full of bait fish as the cold water groups up the bait fish on the deep side of the in-between areas and the bass follow them for easy prey. Many times you can scan the bottom with your Lowrance Structure Scan around the deep side of the in-between spots and see the bait balls 4 to 10 ft. in depth and if you expand your vision around the screen you will see the bass staged sporadically around the bait fish.



These areas where the bait is gathered is generally these in-between locations like bridges, long under water points, back side humps to the river channel ledge, or creeks that wind around the proximity



areas to the river ledge. These transition locations are where the bass go as they migrate out to the deep water for the winter. The key is what will these transition fish hit so you can have a great day of fishing; I like flashy baits.

Jigging spoons, big willow leaf bladed spinner baits 1 oz. rattle baits jigged as a

presentation. These baits are flashy and they catch the eye of the bass as they move erratically around these transition areas. Transition areas hold the bass this time of year so if you're struggling try something different like transition fishing.

Fish Lake Guntersville Guide Service

www.fishlakeguntersvilleguideservice.com

www.facebook.com/FishGuntersville

Email: bassguide@comcast.net

Call: 256 759 2270



ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)



SONAR Phone™



Demo the
FREE
app right
now.

High performance
SONARPHONE hardware is
available in three models:



vexilar.com

T•POD
CAST IT - TROLL IT



SP100

T•BOX
PERMANENT BOAT
INSTALLATION



SP200

T•BOX
PORTABLE BOAT
INSTALLATION



SP300

Vexilar, Inc. • 6667 West Old Shakopee Road, Suite 101, Minneapolis, MN 55438 • 952-884-5291 • www.vexilar.com

For anglers across the Ice Belt, November's arrival spurs thoughts of the hardwater season ahead. But plenty of fine open-water fishing remains for the faithful who see the season through to the end.

Take crappies, for example. One of the year's best bites is still firing on all cylinders, and promises stellar slabbin' right through freeze-up. "It's undoubtedly worth getting your boat out a few more times to enjoy the late-fall crappie bite," says

veteran guide and noted fishing authority Scott Glorvigen. "The fish are ganged up in predictable places, and ready to hit baits with a vengeance."

Here's the deal. As autumn wanes and water temperatures fall into the 40s, crappies abandon withering weedbeds and shift away from near-shore structure. "The fish head for their winter haunts, which are typically deep, mid-lake basin holes," Glorvigen explains.

Here, large schools of hulking, hump-backed slabs roam the abyss in search of sustenance. Much of the feeding focuses on zooplankton and other pint-sized prey, but crappies eagerly snap up larger meals such as minnows and other baitfish.

Glorvigen leans on cutting-edge electronics such as Lowrance's Elite-5 CHIRP Gold sonar-chartplotter to pinpoint pods of wayward panfish. "The fish are constantly moving around, which makes sonar a must," he notes. "Lowrance's new CHIRP units give you incredible target resolution, so you can verify the fish you're marking are crappies, and even pick out individual fish within a school."

A plotter primed with detailed mapping is another key component. "This allows you to identify likely areas and then search them effectively," he says. "Plus, if you lay down a trail of waypoints while following the fish, you can often predict where they're headed next. For example, if you know a school of slabs is moving in a counter-clockwise rotation around a deep hole, it's much easier to follow the herd."



Suspended Animation

Surefire tricks for late-season crappies!

In search mode, Glorvigen scans potential hotspots, which include depths of 50 feet or more. "Don't assume there are limits on how deep the fish will go," he cautions. "Many anglers mentally set a boundary of 25 to 30 feet, but crappies often suspend much deeper."

Once a school is spotted, Glorvigen takes an unusual tack for tricking the fish. "One of the hottest tactics for tapping the late-fall bite is hovering swimming jigs such as Rapala Jigging Raps and Northland Puppet Minnows within the school," he says.

"Horizontal jigs tipped with flavored softbaits such as Berkley PowerBait and Gulp! bodies also work well. "You can use spoons, too, but vertical baits aren't nearly as effective this time of year."



While many anglers wield tiny tackle for crappies, Glorvigen favors swimming lures in the 2- to 2¾-inch class, along with 1/8-ounce jigheads. Colors aren't as key as the bait's water displacement when fishing deep water, he

notes, though he has seen higher catch rates on UV patterns compared to standard color schemes.

Swimming jigs like the Northland Puppet Minnow and Rapala Jigging Rap are deadly on suspended crappies.

Gearing up, Glorvigen spools a light-action Lew's multi-species spinning rod with 10-pound Northland Bionic Braid mainline. The rod's quick tip engenders strike detection and solid hooksets, while the superbraid boosts sensitivity, which is a huge asset when fishing deep water. He ties a small swivel on the end of the line, to limit twist, and adds a 12- to 18-inch leader of low-vis 6-pound fluorocarbon.

Unlike traditional snap-fall tactics used for walleyes and other larger predators, Glorvigen applies a slower hand for suspended cool-water crappies. "It's not a standard jigging presentation where you're really working the bait," he says. "This situation calls for deadsticking. When the crappies see the lure's profile, they think it's a minnow mixed in with the zooplankton, and boy, do they smack it."

Thanks to his CHIRP sonar's target resolution, Glorvigen can watch his jig even as it descends into a crappie wolfpack. "This is really a breakthrough," he says. "It's not uncommon to run across massive schools 15 feet thick. With traditional sonar, there's no seeing into a tight school. Once the bait gets into the fish, it's off the radar. But with CHIRP, I can tell where my lure is and how fish react to it."

Get OutDoors Unlimited Magaizne Emailed To You Monthly For FREE. Bass, walleye, crappie, pike, trout, ice fishing, lake/pond fishing, river/stream fishing, ICAST, product showcases and much more are covered in all the editions of OutDoors Unlimited Magaizne,



**REGISTER NOW
COMPLETELY FREE!**

He cautions that once you find a school, it's important to keep moving to stay on top of it. By shadowing a deep-running gang of slabs, it's possible to pluck multiple fish from a single group. "Keep in mind that when you pull crappies out of extreme depths, the fish are likely unreleasable," he warns. "Plan on keeping what you catch for a late-fall fish fry. And if you get on a school of fish too small to keep, move along until you find larger ones."



Depending on the individual lake, your latitude, and what kind of weather Mother Nature dishes out in the weeks ahead, you might have a month or more of crappie action before winter draws the curtain on open water. "Good news is, as soon as safe ice arrives, the same areas are still going to produce fish," Glorvigen adds. Which is all the more reason to hit the water now to unlock the locational secrets of late-fall crappies on your favorite fisheries.

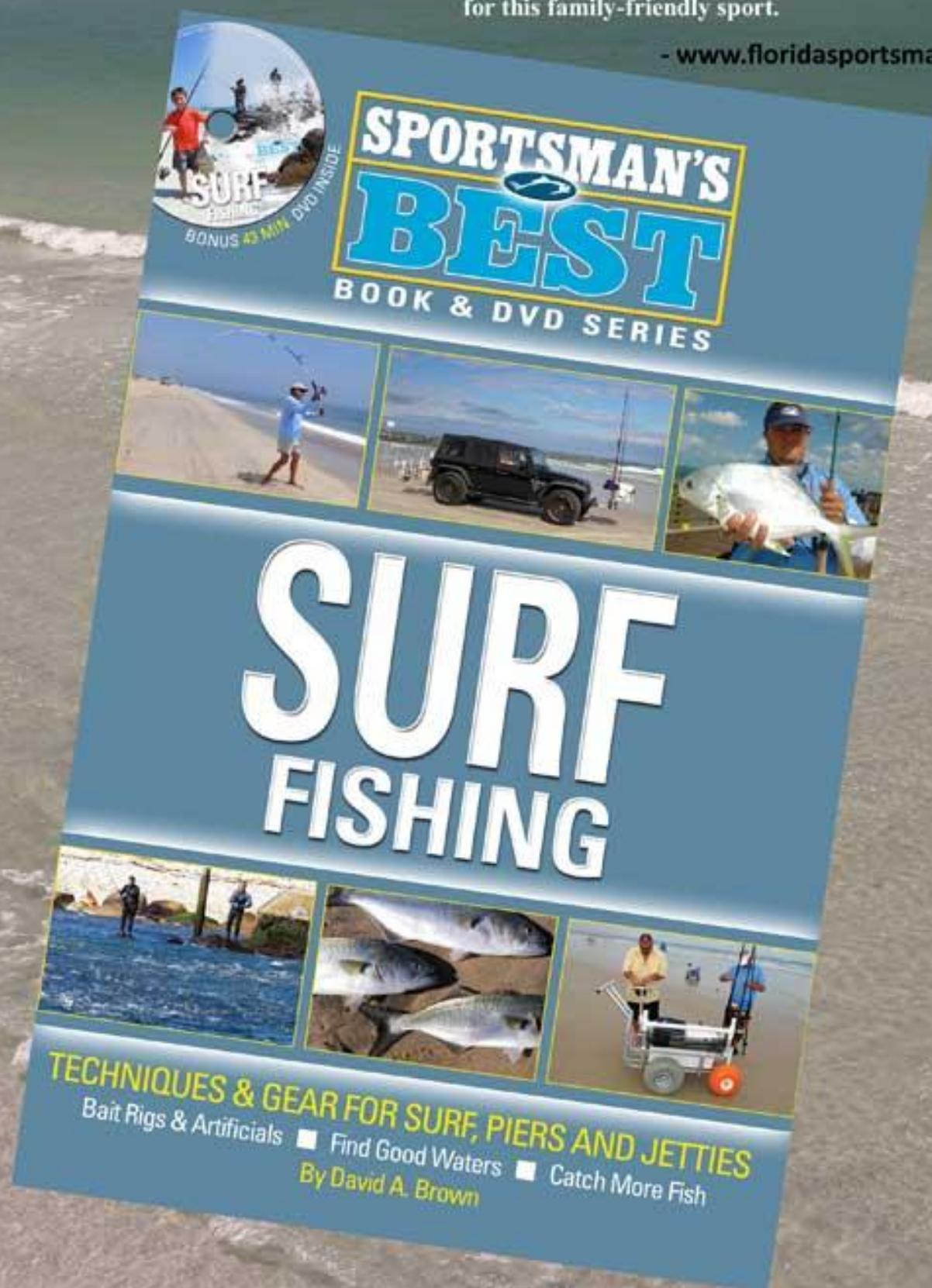
ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

SEE YOURSELF AT THE SEASHORE

Surf Fishing Welcomes Beginners and Seasoned Anglers Alike.

Learn the tools, tactics and performance tips
for this family-friendly sport.

- www.floridasportsman.com



What Fishing Line Should You Fish Be Fishing

By Brad Wiegmann

It's a simple, but a complicated problem for anglers. What type fishing line should you be fishing with on your reels? Advancements in fishing line construction and materials used to make fishing line have resulted in an overwhelming number of choices for anglers from monofilament, fluorocarbon or braid.



It all started with braided Dacron lines. Somewhat similar to Dyneema or Spectra, braided Dacron lines allowed anglers to cast and catch fish, but limited the angler when it came to presentation of lures. Along with backlashes, only a few anglers could untangle.

Everything changed in 1939 when DuPont started marketing a nylon monofilament fishing line. Change, however, was slow because the early monofilament lines were extremely stiff making it hard to handle or cast on baitcasters and especially on spinning reels.

Nylon monofilament fishing line did have its advantages over braided Dacron lines and a growing number of anglers using it. DuPont decided to capitalize on the new fishing line and designed a new and improved version in 1959 with the brand name Stren. The newly developed fishing line was softer and thinner allowing it to be used on baitcasters and even on spinning reels.

Other fishing line companies, not surprisingly, were quick to jump on the bandwagon and produced versions of their own monofilament lines. Overwhelmed by the demand for specialized fishing line for certain fishing conditions and situations, fishing companies began to design and construct fishing lines



from a number of other materials. Today, anglers can choose from monofilament, fluorocarbon or braided fishing line.

Although there are many choices the most popular fishing line today is monofilament. Its popularity comes from having an affordable price, availability, a wide spectrum of choices along with improved technology resulting in higher quality and performance. Monofilament is also

manufactured and available in several different colors like white, green, clear, red, blue, fluorescent, high visibility yellow and other colors.

Monofilament fishing line is manufactured by melting polymers and mixing the compounds together then extruding the mixture in tiny holes. The result is strands of line extruded from the holes that manufacturers spin on spools to sell anglers. A wide array of line diameter and line strength result from the mixing.

Anglers need to take in consideration several things when putting monofilament line on spinning reels. First is the line size appropriate for the reel. A small reel such as WaveSpin Reels Legend 250 (www.wavespinreel.com) is rated for 6 pound monofilament because it's capable of holding enough line with its patent WaveSpin Spool design to fish lightweight lures. On the other hand, the WaveSpin DH 4000z is designed for monofilament lines up to 12 pound test for heavy lures or bait fishing.

Another consideration is how monofilament is put on the spool. The preferred way to reel monofilament line on the spool is so it comes off counter-clockwise. Fill the spool to within 1/8- to 3/16-of an inch from the spool edge as having too little or excess line will result in poor casting performance.

Putting monofilament line on this way will reduce line twist, however, there is only one guarantee to reduce tangles when using a spinning reel. That's with



WaveSpin Reels and its patented "Wave" spool. The spool has waves on the rim's edge allowing the fishing line to skip from peak-to-peak letting the loops lie harmlessly down as line comes off the spool.

Other properties of monofilament fishing line include limpness, toughness, stretch, memory, diameter and strength. Fishing line manufacturers take all of these properties when designing and producing monofilament fishing line. What type of monofilament line you need on your spinning reel depends on lure size, water clarity and abrasion resistance.

Two important properties when it comes to fishing line is line diameter and line strength. Line diameter is usually described in millimeters or fractions of an inch. On the other hand, line strength is amount of pull it takes in pounds to break the line.

Fluorocarbon fishing lines are manufactured by mixing polyvinylidene fluoride and other materials together. Similar to monofilament fishing line, fluorocarbon fishing lines are extruded through tiny holes to get strands of line. Unlike monofilament line, fluorocarbon fishing lines have the same refractive index rating as water making them less visible especially in clear water.

Benefits of fluorocarbon lines include invisibility under the surface, lack of stretch, abrasion resistant and extremely dense. However, there are disadvantages to fluorocarbon lines like weak knot strength, lack of stretch and brittleness. Depending on conditions, fishing with fluorocarbon line can be beneficial to catching fish, but due to the stiffness of the line not recommended for spinning reels.

On the other hand, braided fishing lines aren't made by extruding a mixture of compounds, but by weaving or braiding fibers of Spectra or Micro-Dyneema together. Popularity has skyrocketed over braid line over the last few years. Although highly visible in the water, braided line popularity comes from having unbelievable strength in a low diameter line.

Braided line works well with baitcasters, but excels when put on spinning reels. The abrasion resistant, super limp line with a small diameter allows for longer cast while having ample line on. A good example is the WaveSpin Reels Legend 250. It's rated for only 205 yards of monofilament while it can hold 300 yards of 20 pound test braided fishing line with the line equivalence of six pound monofilament.

In the end, an angler's decision should be based on the conditions and situations when it comes to fishing line. There are benefits to each type of fishing line and using the right line will increase casting distance, reduce visibility, be more abrasion resistant and have better knot and line strength.





Blitz Lures™ is a family owned and operated business Located in Central Illinois. Our goal is to provide Anglers with the highest quality lures using the finest materials.



BLITZ PHROG™



[More Information](#)

BLITZ FIRETAIL™

Made In USA



[More Information](#)

BLITZ TAILSPIN™

Made In USA



[More Information](#)

BLITZ BLADE™

Made In USA



[More Information](#)

FINESSE

SPYDER JIG™

Made In USA

Basic BLITZ BLADE™

Made In USA

Receive \$5.00 OFF on purchases of \$15 or more!
Visit www.blitzlures.com Use Promotion Code: **ODUBASS5**
FREE Shipping on orders over \$30!

Get Blitz'ed ... I Dare You!

Dunlap, Illinois



[Facebook.com/blitzlures](https://www.facebook.com/blitzlures)

www.blitzlures.com

Online – 24 hours

The All Mighty Detroit River

By Mike Borovic

If you're a walleye-fishing fanatic then you have every right to be jealous. In fact, you should be foot stomping hissy-fit jealous! Because what I'm about to tell you should make you cry.



I live on the Detroit River.

That's right, and guess what's upstream? Big Erie and creeping up the rear is little St Clair. Now if that doesn't half slap you upside the head silly, then you should be just about done mowing the lawn. For those who know what I'm talking about, I know you got a smile on your face from one ear to the other!

Although there are fewer walleye from Erie to St Clair than in the hey-days of the





1980's, this corridor still provides some of the finest year-round fishing and the damn largest run of walleyes in both countries, the US and Canada.

Lake Erie is said to have an estimated 30 million eyes! And about 9 million of them make their way into the Detroit River each spring. Can you even fathom that? That's enough to make Canada's Jim Shockey shout "no guff!"

This spring phenomenon is entirely hinged on the weather and water temperature. At just about 39 degrees, that makes the walleye one of the earliest Great Lakes spawners. Despite the fact that ice out comes at different times in different years, you can generally launch your boat after the last flow of bergs drift by. I have caught fish as early as mid February and I know of a few who have in January, and I've seen some crazy cheese balls pushing their aluminium boats on the ice to get to the open water too!

The peak of the spawn is going to last anywhere from 2 to 3 weeks, and of course the weather will have everything to do with that. Generally, the entire spring run will last about 3 months (March, April and May), that including, pre-spawn, spawn and post. Now that is a fantastic window of fishing opportunity and for the most part, you'll even be able to juggle in work, family and the honey-do list.

But it's no secret that the fellas, who have their sweeties fishing with them, are some of the real happy campers.

By far, vertical jigging is the most popular method of boating walleyes on the big "D". Although I can't speak of walleyes on the Detroit River and not mention its own unique method created by local anglers, back in the 1920's known as handlining. It is a system that is almost exclusive to the Detroit River system and a religion amongst the old-time river rats still pulling wire today.

I've tried just about everything for nearly three decades now, bouncing jigs off the river's bottom is my go to presentation in this water. Keeping the jig a few inches off the bottom with a little tap here and there just to keep the relationship works perfectly most days. Every so often, I lift my jig a foot or so off the bottom and come back down slowly. I do mean slowly because nine times out of ten, they hit on the fall.



You must keep the line and jig vertical to feel the hits. Dragging the jig on the bottom will quickly lead to frustrating snags and cost you quality-fishing time. With some practice, you will be able to read the bottom's structure, differentiating between gravel, sand, muck and rock simply by feel. Do not allow the jig to free fall on slack line. Lowering the jig on a taut line is essential for detecting bites.

Most fishing will be done in the 10 to 30 foot range. Jig sizes will vary from $\frac{1}{4}$ oz all the way upward to $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. Some choose to tip with bait, such as emerald shiners or the more convenient plastic baits in 4-5 inch sizes. I've always used 6-lb mono but instantly switched to braided line since the day it hit the market. I've never jigged without my treble hook stingers either, because in the earlier part of the season, the

water is quite cold and sluggish fish never fail to bite short.

Now the most important thing to master is boat control. All the prescribed elements are crucial to one another but without boat control; you aren't catching fish. Most boats are gonna be 14-18 foot aluminum with an electric trolling motor. As the swift current takes you down river, all you need to do is point your electric into the wind and with short bursts of power, just re-align your boat so the jig is vertical. Some folks refer to it as chasing the line.

As a young'un, I bought my first boat before I even bought wheels. No kidding either, for years I used a 10-foot inflatable powered with an 8-horse motor. Of course I was limited to safely where and when I could go but yet I got to catch fish. Now this is exactly why I prefer a shorter rod today then most folks do. I like them short, 5 to 5.5 feet, medium to medium-light with fast action tips. Give me a good quality reel and I'm off to the circus.

The river is a fast flowing 44 km; 28 mi long and .8 km to 4.02 km (.5 to 2.5 mi) at it's widest with varying depths and a maximum depth at 52 feet on the north-east end near Lake St Clair. Just about every species of fish that are present in the Great Lakes exist in this river. Fishing opportunities on the river are unlimited. From walleye, smallies, musky, and winter perching in the many cuts and marina slips make it a fantastically productive fishery year-round.

The annual walleye run is an amazing spectacle and it is not something to be missed. Nowhere else are you going to have millions of walleye congregated in such a body of water as the all mighty Detroit River. Check out Mike's website at page link - www.thingsithinkiknow.com.





How Can You Use Those Wonderful Gift Cards After This Holiday Season?

By Glenn Walker

If you are still looking for that perfect gift for a family member or friend that is an avid angler, or looking to buy after the holiday season for yourself, than here are some helpful suggestions for you.

Not sure if you want to fish a soft plastic stick bait or Fluke, well with this bait you won't have to make that choice. This 5 inch long bait is a great finesse plastic that can be rigged in numerous ways, from weightless on a Texas-rig to drug along the bottom on a Carolina-rig or nose hooked on a drop shot the Fluke Stick Jr will put bass in your boat next season. Right now the Fluke Stick Jr comes in 11 of Zoom's most popular fish catching colors and comes in a pack of 10 for \$4.49.



Have a box of deep diving crankbaits or a plethora of jigs that you want to keep organized and protected from the elements when you are on the water? Then the Plano 3743 Deep Waterproof Stowaway is the

case you are looking for. The case has a possible 4 to 15 compartments and deep enough to accommodate deep diving crankbaits, large swimbaits or bulky jigs. The three locking cams and Dri-Loc O-Ring will ensure that moisture is kept out of the case and your lures stay dry and rust free. The Plano 3743 Stowaway has an MSRP of \$11.49.

If you are looking to upgrade one of your fishing reels for next season or give a great reel to a loved one to help them be fully equipped for next fishing season, then checking out the new Wright & McGill Victory Pro Carbon Casting Reel is a great option. The new reel is ultra-light, weighing in at a mere 5.4 oz, but yet is strong and durable with its carbon frame and side plates. It is available in a 6.4:1 or 7.9:1 gear ratio and features a new triangle line guide for increased casting distance.

The Victory Pro Carbon Casting Reel has an MSRP of \$159.99.



All bass fisherman love fishing topwater baits and seeing a big bass blow up on a frog is the gift that

keeps on giving all year-long! The new Snag Proof Gunterville Flash Frog features dual rattles and a nickel-plated blade to attract and call in bass from great distances. Whether you are working the frog over a dense mat or in open water it will create everlasting memories when that topwater explosion occurs. The Gunterville Flash is available in six colors and has an MSRP of \$11.00.



Having trouble finding that key rod in your rod locker, or maybe you are looking to your rods organized for easy grabbing in your garage or cabin, well Technique Tags from The Rod Glove offer you to easily label your rods. Made out of the same material as the popular Rod Glove, they simply slide over your Rod Glove allowing for quick identification of that rod. Thirty popular techniques are available and have a price of \$1.29.



If you are an avid bass angler, you know how often you stow and deploy your trolling motor and that the cord needs to be replaced from time-to-time. With the MKA-49 Cable & Handle you will only need to change your cord one more time, as this abrasion resistant, coated stainless steel braided cable will withstand the rigors of countless stows and deploys. An ergonomic soft grip handle allows you comfortable stow and deploy your Minn Kota trolling motor. The Minn Kota MKA-49 Cable & Handle has an MSRP of \$49.99.

I hope all of you have a great Holiday Season and spend it with your friends and family reliving the memories of this past fishing season and making plans for next!

Glenn has been fishing tournaments for over ten years, spreading his passion and knowledge of the sport via articles and videos. He keeps busy fishing events across Minnesota and on the Mississippi River. Glenn's sponsors include: Ducky Products, Humminbird, Jeff Belzer Chevy, Mercury Marine, Minn Kota, Plano, Rayjus, RC



Tackle, Seaguar, Simms, Snag Proof, The Rod Glove, TroKar, Wright & McGill and Zoom Baits. Follow me on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GlennWalkerFishing#!/GlennWalkerFishing>



Arctic Ice™

PRESERVE AN ARCTIC REFUGE IN YOUR COOLER



1°C (33.8°F)



-15°C (5°F)



-2°C (28°F)

Camping, boating, hunting or fishing—wherever you bring the cooler—rugged, reusable Arctic Ice™ cooler packs can keep your food and drinks cold or frozen throughout your outing.

Use Alaskan Series to keep a cooler at a cool 35°-40° temperature.

Use Chillin' Brew to turn a cooler into a 28°-30° “Beer Cave”.

Use Tundra Series to turn a cooler into a 5°-10° temporary freezer.

Use the same weight of Arctic Ice™ as bagged ice for better results without a wet mess, or supplement your ice with Arctic Ice™ to keep it frozen up to 50% longer!



Arctic Ice Inc.
1313 Western Avenue
Brookings, SD 57006
605 696-2500



www.facebook.com/bitterlycold

www.Arctic-Ice.com or www.ChillinBrew.com

Sound and Walleyes: Good or Bad?

By Ted Takasaki and
Scott Richardson

Do you remember the days when your dad told you to be quiet whenever he took you fishing because you will spook the fish? Well, forget that noise. Dad was only half right. True, there are actions and sound that can spook fish. Their instincts warn them of danger when they hear an anchor banging on the bottom of a boat, the pounding of footsteps on shore, a rock tossed carelessly into the water or even the vibrations created by the approach of your boat. The fish react to survive and quickly dart for deeper water, away from the boat, or to nearby cover.

When fish are spooky, smart anglers have learned to adapt by using tools that help spread their lines and dive deeper. Offshore Tackle has developed tools that help you do exactly that. Its in-line planer boards will take your lures/bait out to the side, away from the boat. Add Lil' Guppy snap weights and your lures dive deeper. This combination will get you to where the fish are.

It's important to note that some sounds can attract gamefish. Some sounds work like magnets to draw largemouth and smallmouth bass, walleyes and even muskies to your bait and help them zero in for a quick meal. Under certain conditions, learning to make sound work for you means the difference between fish or no fish. Yet few anglers consider its value. Here, then, some sound advice.

How fish hear

Try to envision the watery world that fish inhabit, in order to realize how important hearing is to them. Go swimming in a lake and experience the darkness which surrounds you as you dive deeper.





Depending on water clarity and cloud cover, sunlight can penetrate only so far during the day. At night, the sole illumination is the soft glow of moonlight, and that only happens during a portion of each month. Even during the full moon, water turbidity often limits moonbeams to the upper portions of the water column.

The problem for fish is that they rely heavily on their sight to feed and this ability decreases dramatically when the water muddies. Since this situation may occur for days at a time, it's obvious why evolution favored species that developed keen 'hearing.' A fish starves if deprived of nourishment long enough.

Fish can 'hear' in three different ways. First, they have ears called otoliths. Their otoliths are located in much the same place as human ears, one on each side of the head. But, they differ greatly from humans in that they do not have openings to the body's surface. Instead, sound waves travel through the skin and flesh of the fish's head to the otoliths. Hearing done in this manner is directional just like ours.

Secondly, scientists have discovered a link between the swim bladder and their ears. Covered by an elastic membrane, the swim bladder vibrates like a drum head or a microphone to amplify even the faintest signals that reach it.

Third, fish also have sense organs called lateral lines. These are channels that begin on either side of their heads. These channels merge as a thicker horizontal line extending down each side of their bodies. They can be easily seen on some types of fish. The lateral lines' purpose is to pick up close

sounds and pinpoint their origin. Lateral lines are the ones that fish depend on most to detect noise or vibration created by nearby schools of baitfish or other tasty morsels, like a crayfish or worm.

In combination, the otoliths, the swim bladder and the lateral lines give fish the ability to detect even slight displacements of water as far away as several body lengths. They can sense when a nightcrawler wiggles, a leech swims, or a wounded minnow struggles.



ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK (www.odumagazine.com)

Like us, fish can measure whether sound is getting louder or softer, so they know if prey is coming closer or going away. Individual, smaller fish may have a stealth advantage over bigger fish. Little fish disturb less water as they swim so they make less noise/vibration. But, the racket caused by schools of baitfish is cumulative. Studies have revealed that individuals of some species know when a meal is close. This is because they can identify the noise that others of their kind make as they feed.

Silence: Not Always Golden

So how does all this noise apply to fishing? The general rule is this: the darker the water, the deeper the water, or the more aggressive the fish, the more you can rely upon sound, an angler, to attract those fish. We have talked to scuba divers who have clicked rocks together on the bottom only to find fish swimming in close to investigate. Our theory is that these fish are approaching the source of the sound in order to feed on the perpetrator.

Testing and experience on the water have discovered several ways to add sound to a variety of live bait presentations and lures.

For example, spinners of all kinds use sound as well as flash as their primary attributes. Whether attached to spinnerbaits for bass, inline spinners for northerns, muskies and trout, or spinner rigs for walleyes, a turning blade transmits vibrations to call fish close like a dinner bell and to help them locate the bait in murky water. Colorado blades are best when visibility is poor. Their shape

broadcasts more noise than the slimmer willow leaf style, which is better suited for occasions when water is clear. Hatchet or chopper style blades were designed to be noisy even at slower speeds. Rattle chambers, such as rattling beads or tubes, can be added to some live-bait presentations. For rigging, try adding one colored rattling bead in front of the hook for walleyes and smallmouth. Exchange standard pencil weights for a slip sinker that has rattles built in, or use it as the sinker for the dropper line of a three-way rig, or in front of a Carolina Rig for bass.

Try using sound while jigging as well. Bass fishermen have the option of buying jigs with built-in sound chambers. When water is dirty, they flip one into heavy shoreline brush. They shake it, then pause, and shake it again, repeating the process several times to allow largemouth bass to hone in on it. They can also insert commercially made rattle tubes into soft plastic baits like worms or lizards for the same reason.



Walleye anglers can use similar tactics. Muddy water forced Tom Keenan to add rattles to his 1/8-ounce yellow glow jigs during a big tournament on his home waters of Lake Winnebago, Wisconsin. He flipped them into pockets and along edges of cane

beds. But, as noted before, sometimes sound turns fish off. Walleyes wouldn't bite for Keenan after the water cleared on Day Three... until he took off the rattles. He ended up winning the event.

There's a wide variety of crankbaits on the market that have built-in rattles. These noisy lures will often work for almost every species of gamefish, from largemouth to smallies and walleyes. We would prefer to pick out a crank with rattles vs. no rattles to start with. Keep changing up until you find out what the fish want.

Rattles and spinner blades may not sound like much to you. But to gamefish, there are days when they sound like music to their ears, swim bladder, and lateral lines.

FishingWithBillMiller.com



Sunday - 7am and 4pm
Wednesday - 7pm
Thursday - 10am

Grand Master Angler
Captain Bill Miller
host of "Fishing with Bill Miller"
seen on the World Fishing Network

Salt Life
—SPORT OPTICS—



Bill Miller Show Open



<http://youtu.be/RZOTx3RiKjQ>



Awesome angling action balanced with detail-rich lessons on tackle selection, rigging, bait presentations and finding fish – that's what Fishing With Bill Miller is all about.

Hosted by Grand Master Angler, Capt. Bill Miller, this combination of entertainment and education exists to optimize your angling experience.



You Want Hard Work? Try Being a First Mate

By Jake Bussolini

I was raised in a small New England town where most of the residents were immigrants who worked hard at a trade. I understand a hard work ethic and I know what makes up a good days work. I have made several off shore fishing trips from the Outer Banks of North

Carolina and I developed a keen interest in observing how hard the first mate works on a typical fishing boat. Over a period of three years I talked to several mates in order to better understand what draws them to this very difficult job. Last Spring I came in contact with a mate that had just joined the ranks of the hard working class. Carey Foster had recently graduated from UNC at Chapel Hill with degrees in both history and political science. Why, I asked myself, would an apparently smart college graduate take a job as the mate on a fishing boat?

Of course Carey's first answer was that he needed a job, but I knew that was only the standard answer. There must have been more but I decided to wait until the end of Carey's first year as a mate to probe deeper into this mystery, and probe I did. Carey first signed on with Captain Buddy Hooper on the 54 foot Hatteras Fever II. Hooper was known at Hatteras as a very seasoned and experienced

Captain but also one who was tough and demanding. Carey had been friendly with Hooper's son as they both grew up together in the Outer Banks area. Carey explained that he knew that serving as a mate to Captain Hooper would allow him to learn from the best seaman in the area.

Carey's family did not work as career



KKB KETTLEBOTTOM™
OUTDOOR PURSUITS

COX SAT 12:30PM
Channel 5 or 1005 in HD



fishermen but his father did spend a lot of time on the water. Carey's father told him at a very young age that the difference between a good fisherman and a great fisherman was that a great fisherman helps others become better fishermen. This apparently struck a nerve with Carey because it was one of those few things in life, handed down by your parents that you remember forever. Carey apparently was that kind of guy who wanted to help other become better at their efforts. Being a mate was hard work but it would teach Carey things that he didn't know about off shore fishing, and with that knowledge he could help

others become better anglers. But first Carey had to learn the trade.

"Working on a fishing boat is a rewarding but also a very hard job" Carey told me. We both recalled the first trip that we had made together where we caught two billfish. Carey was not aware that flying his first billfish flag when entering the dock carried with it a mate's tradition. He was dunked into the water at the dock not once but twice after that trip.

Knowing that Buddy Hooper was a demanding boat Captain, I asked Carey how he handled the nearly constant direction that he received from Hooper especially when the boat was on the fish and things got hectic. "I learned more in college from the teachers who were tough and demanding so I just learn from every scolding that I get from the Captain." "I think I am a better mate today after a year of this type of learning than I would have been with a less demanding boss."

His first season with Captain Hooper kept him busy nearly every day of the summer. The Hatteras Fever II made more than 100 fishing trips during Carey's first season.

A typical day for a mate starts with a wake up no later than 4 am. He reaches the boat every day about 4:30 am and he doesn't leave at the end of the day until about 6:00 pm. During the mid-season months it's a seven day week with trips each day. There are times when there are no scheduled trips but those days are reserved for working on the boat or readying the equipment.

Most of Captain Hooper's fishing trips are far offshore and the mate is required to work every minute of the travel time both to and from the fishing waters. A typical 2 hour trip to the waters of the Gulfstream finds Carey preparing bait and rigging the various lures that are needed for the different types of fish that may be active. Sometimes after a hard catch, there is even time for a picture pose with a proud catch like this white marlin with Howie Anger who caught two billfish that day.



Taking a short break for a photo is about the only relief for a good mate during a long day of fishing.

I asked Carey what he did with his time off. He indicated although rare, a day off lets him sleep late and then he goes out fishing for fun. "During the summer season there is some

social life in the Hatteras area but during those times we are fishing every day and there is no time for socializing. During the winter months when there is no fishing, everyone disappears from the area except for the few residents who scrape for a living during those times. I do the same, picking up odd jobs here and there,” Carey said.

I couldn’t help wondering if working as a mate provides enough money to survive throughout the year. I asked that question and got this answer. “I receive a small salary from the Captain but that certainly will not sustain me. I depend on tips from the customers. Mates would like to get tips of 20% of the trip cost but during the hard economic times that we have been experiencing, that level of tip is rare. I feel that my strength as a mate is my ability to relate to the customers and give them the service that they deserve. The more I learn about this type of fishing, the better service I can give to them. This is where I practice the habit I got from my Dad, trying to make every customer a better angler. That is very satisfying to me.”

Carey indicated that he has been invited to stay on another year with Captain Buddy and he is inclined to do that. With a good college education and a great work ethic he feels that as times get better he will look for a more stable career, but until then he will simply continue to learn and grow as a first mate on the Hatteras Fever II

Jake Bussolini is a freelance writer who has published several books including six about freshwater fishing. His books can be reviewed and purchased on www.jakestakeonfishing.com and www.booksbyjake.com.

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

Does a home field advantage make a big difference even in a bass fishing tournament? It just may if you look at the statistics from last week's Bass Pro Shops Southern Open #3 presented by Allstate, on Lake Norman, Huntersville, N.C. Six of the 12 pro finalists call Lake Norman their home lake and fished for some of the \$150,000 on the line.

This was the last Southern Open for the 2014 season. Anglers came from 24 states and as far away as Italy, Japan and Australia.

One hundred and forty-six bass boats with 292 pro anglers and co-anglers began their quest Thursday morning, October 2nd, for the chance to win cash prizes and bass fishing boats. By the way, a co-angler is an angler that pays, in this case \$450, to fish from the back of the boat with a pro angler running the show from the front. Lots of weekend anglers get to cross such an experience off their bucket list!

It was a tough tournament. Weather was a big factor; warm, clear and calm on Thursday, foggy, then rain on Friday, and Saturday was sunny but very windy. Only 86 pros weighed fish on Thursday, 78 weighed fish on Friday and only 8 of the final 12 pro anglers brought fish to the stage on Saturday.

The final weigh-in was held at The Bass Pro Shops parking lot in Concord. Lots of fans and families of the anglers were on hand to cheer on their favorites. Vendors and sponsors were on hand to entertain the fans and show off the latest fishing accessories.

David Williams, Maiden, N.C. led the field Thursday and Friday with 27 pounds, 6 ounces but had a tough day Saturday and ended up in 8th place.

The big winner, Andy Montgomery, Blacksburg, S.C., came from second place, took home about \$6000 in cash and a \$40,000 SkeeterZX200 fully rigged bass boat with a three day total of 37 pounds 10 ounces.



Tight Race in the Bass Pro Shops Bassmaster Southern Open on Lake Norman

By Lou Mintzer



With his family cheering and crying just feet away, Montgomery was overcome by emotions when he knew he had won. Happy and all choked up he told the crowd, "It was on my bucket list to win a big tournament on Lake Norman and now I've done it!"

Montgomery has already qualified for the Bassmaster Classic 2015, the world series of bass fishing, by fishing in the Elite Series.

Richard Howes, Oviedo, Fl., took second, winning \$14,795. This was his first time fishing on Lake Norman. Third place and \$11,000 went to Rock Hill, S.C., angler

Ronald Farrow. This was his first Bass Pro Open Tournament. Fourth place went to a recent UNCC graduate and Charlotte, N.C. native, Shane Lehew. Shane was a star angler on one of the UNCC college bass fishing teams. He took home almost \$10,000. Shane and his family have developed a great version of the popular Alabama Rig that can be purchased locally.

Here's how the other local anglers fared. Drew Montgomery, Denver, N.C. was 5th, Shane Lineberger, Lincolnton, N.C. was 6th... David Williams, Maiden, N. C., who led the field Thursday and Friday ended up in 8th and Hank Cherry, Maiden, N.C. was in 11th place.

College student, Tyler Boyle, from Sterret, Al, won the co-angler division. He was one of only four co-anglers to weigh a three bass limit all three days. The 19 year old attends ITT Technical Institute and is studying to be an electrical engineer. His family came from Alabama to cheer him on

Boyle won a Triton 17 Pro bass boat with all the accessories worth \$25,000. Tyler told me, "The only time I ever won, I won \$160. I told my school I had to do this tournament and I was going to be gone for the week." What will you do now? "I will be on the water fishing every day I can," answered Boyle. Not bad for a second win.

Lake Norman continues to improve as a competitive bass fishing lake. Last year fishhound.com had the lake listed (#44) as one of the best 100 bass lakes in the country and BASS also had our lake on their top 100 list at #91.

Lou Mintzer is a freelance writer from Mooresville, N.C.



Winter Cranking

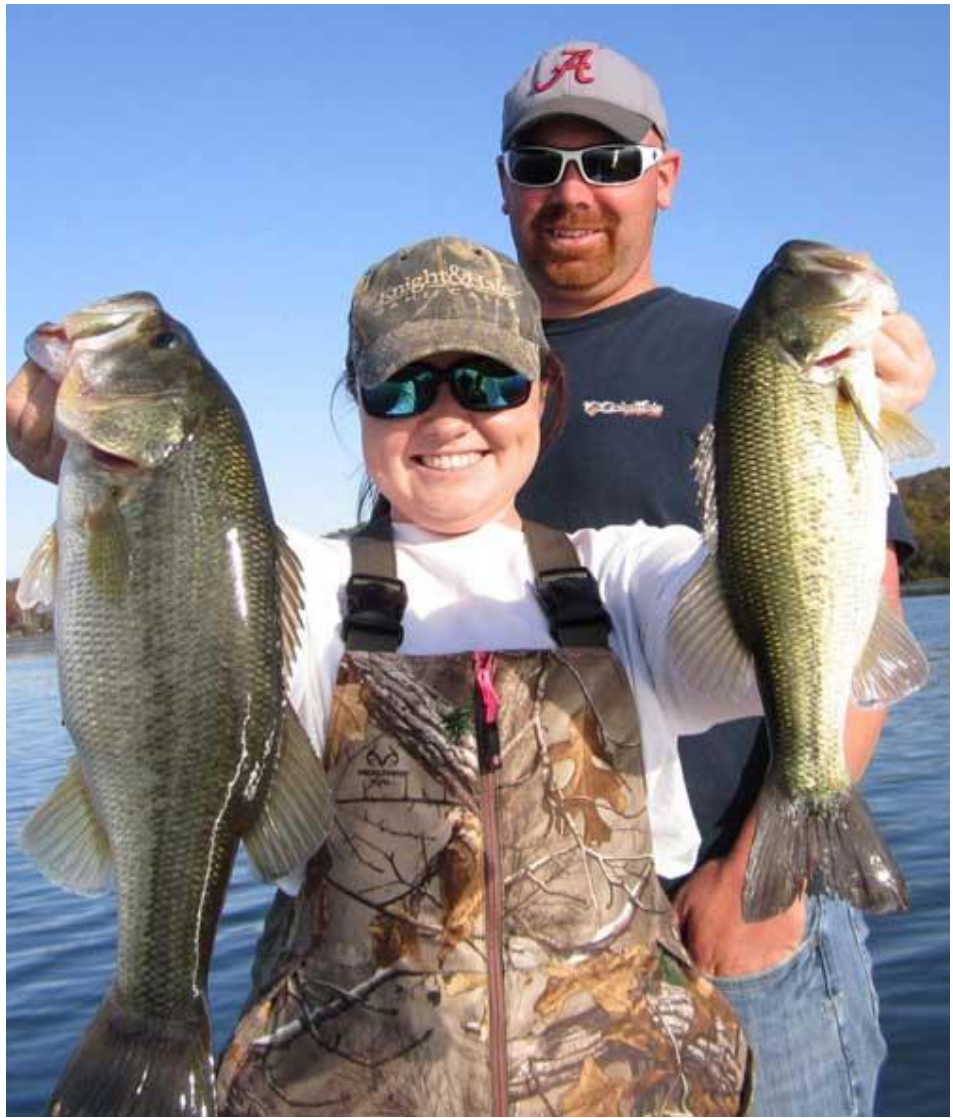
By Captain Mike Gerry

As we transition from the fall bite to the winter bite there are some key beliefs that I have about catching fish on crank baits in the winter; here are my keys to winter cranking. First and foremost I believe that the slower the metabolism of the bass the more they like a tight-wobble in the crank bait. So as the water temperature falls into the 50's the type of crank bait you fish with becomes the key to catching fish with crank bait.

If you examine crank baits you will find that many of the crank baits have a different angle in which the bill protrudes out from the body of the bait. The steeper the angle of the bill the more wobble a crank bait has, so look for a crank bait that the bill is more of a straight line off the body like the SPRO Little John series crank baits. The angle off the bill is just at a slight angle downward allowing the bait to move side to side with a tight wobble.

It is also important that you understand in the winter time what the fish are keying on as far as structure and bait as your presentation can be a big factor in catching fish. I look for steep yet gradual drops that allow you to fish the different depths off the drops as sometimes the fish may be in the first 7 to 8 ft of depth or down deeper and finding the correct depth can be key to catching fish. You do this with boat position, if you position your boat at about a 20 degree angle with the point drop or bank your fishing, you can fan cast the area until you find the depth the bass at holding on. This allows you to position your boat for the next cast and be in the strike zone once you have determined where they are at. Once you've determined their depth and position you turn from fishing to catching and the fun starts.

It should also be said that equipment can be key, fish with a medium cranking rod and a slower retrieve reel so you're getting the best action and retrieve speed from your equipment.



Fish Lake Guntersville Guide Service: www.fishlakeguntersvilleguideservice.com,
www.facebook.com/FishGuntersville, Email: bassguide@comcast.net and Call: 256 759 2270

Want to kiss more fish like this?
Then switch to
Daiichi Hooks!

Jimmy Houston



There is more to
Daiichi than just
being "sharp".

High carbon steel
and scientific
tempering means
your hooks will
stay sharper,
longer.

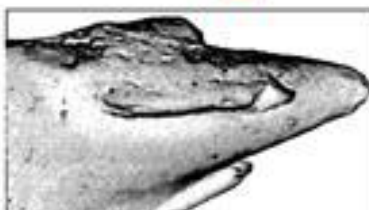


Daiichi®

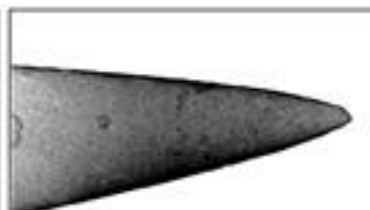
World's Sharpest Hooks



Brand "A"



Brand "Z"



Daiichi!



Outdoor Writers Crowned Third Annual Mercer Muskie Madness Challenge Champions

57 passionate muskie anglers converged on the tiny town of Mercer in Wisconsin's north woods last weekend to compete in the Third Annual Mercer Muskie Madness Challenge, an open muskie tournament sponsored by the Mercer Area Chamber of Commerce, The Turtle Flambeau Flowage Association and Gateway Lodge to benefit Wounded Warriors In Action (WWIA). The event challenged 29 two-person teams to catch, photograph and release as many muskies as possible from any of ten Mercer-area lakes over the two-day tournament. Scoring was based on a total point system, with eight points awarded for a 36-38" fish, ten points awarded for a 38-40" fish, and 25 points for any muskie over 40" plus one point per inch or portion thereof above the 40" mark. The rules allowed each angler to fish with two lines – one artificial bait and one live bait per angler.

The month of October typically brings some of the best muskie fishing of the year to the upper Midwest, as rapidly falling water temperatures trigger increased feeding in the big predators. The



visiting team of Josh Lantz (New Buffalo, Michigan) and Kristen Monroe (Elkhorn, Wisconsin) had fished several Mercer area lakes early last summer, but knew they'd need to change their game plan and look for a new lake with more dramatic structure if they had any chance of competing with the throngs of local guides and area anglers in the tournament field.

"Once the weather forecast came in, I knew we'd need to fish as many deep breaks and as much vertical structure as we could find," says Lantz, who carefully studied the high definition detail of all available lakes on in his Humminbird sonar/GPS unit and

ended up selecting Spider Lake on the upper section of Iron County's Turtle River system. "Even though we'd never fished it before, Spider appeared to have the best combination of deep water breaks and other key structure that we expected to be appealing to big muskies during the fall transition," concluded Lantz.

The first day of competition brought a 15-degree drop in temperatures, soaking rains and 20 mph northwest winds to the Mercer area. With water temperatures hovering around 49 degrees, Lantz and Monroe launched from Pine Forest Resort and headed to the first of three key spots on Spider Lake that they resolved to fish for the entire tournament – all of which had the steepest breaks on the lake, were between points, and also had boulders or stumps. Lantz and Monroe's strategy was to cast and deep jig heavy soft plastics like Buldawgs and Medusas along the breaks while soaking large live suckers on fluorocarbon quick strike rigs beneath the boat.

The action started quickly, as a dark form shadowed Lantz's Bulldawg to the boat just before 9:00 am.

Both anglers began frenzied figure eights, but the fish disappeared immediately. Minutes later, however, the telltale clicker on one of the team's sucker rods began to scream. Lantz plucked the rod from its holder and waited for the fish to stop its initial run.

"When a muskie takes a sucker, she usually grabs it sideways and moves away with it," says Lantz. "When she stops, she'll reposition the fish to eat it headfirst," he continues. A few seconds after the muskie stopped moving, Lantz brought the line tight and set the hook with all the power he could muster from the 8'-6" St. Croix Mojo



ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK (www.odumagazine.com)

Muskie rod. After a brief fight and flawless net work by the petite Monroe, the big muskie found its way into the couple's Frabill Conservation Series landing net.

Measuring over 41" on the tournament-issued bump board, the fish was photographed and released just two hours into the two-day tournament. After a brief celebration, the team reset their lines and began fishing again, confident in their good start, but totally oblivious to the true importance of the fish they'd just released.

The remainder of the day brought mixed results, with two additional sucker bites that were not converted. "One fish took the sucker, dropped it, and never came back," said a disappointed Monroe. "Another took the bait and broke Josh's main line on the hookset," she continued.

Lantz and Monroe continued fishing hard throughout the cold, wet and windy day one. "While we felt good about the fish we measured, we couldn't get the two fish we'd lost out of our minds," Lantz says. Suddenly, there came renewed optimism, as Monroe's St. Croix Premier doubled over.

"I was casting a gold and white, walleye-colored Medusa along a deep weed edge when it hit," says an excited Monroe, who only began muskie fishing earlier this summer and had yet to land her first fish. "She did an awesome job," says Lantz, who in addition to working as the Executive Director for the Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers (AGLOW), a freelance outdoor writer and media relations representative, was also a fly fishing guide for muskies and other species in Northern Indiana and Southwest Michigan for nearly fifteen years.

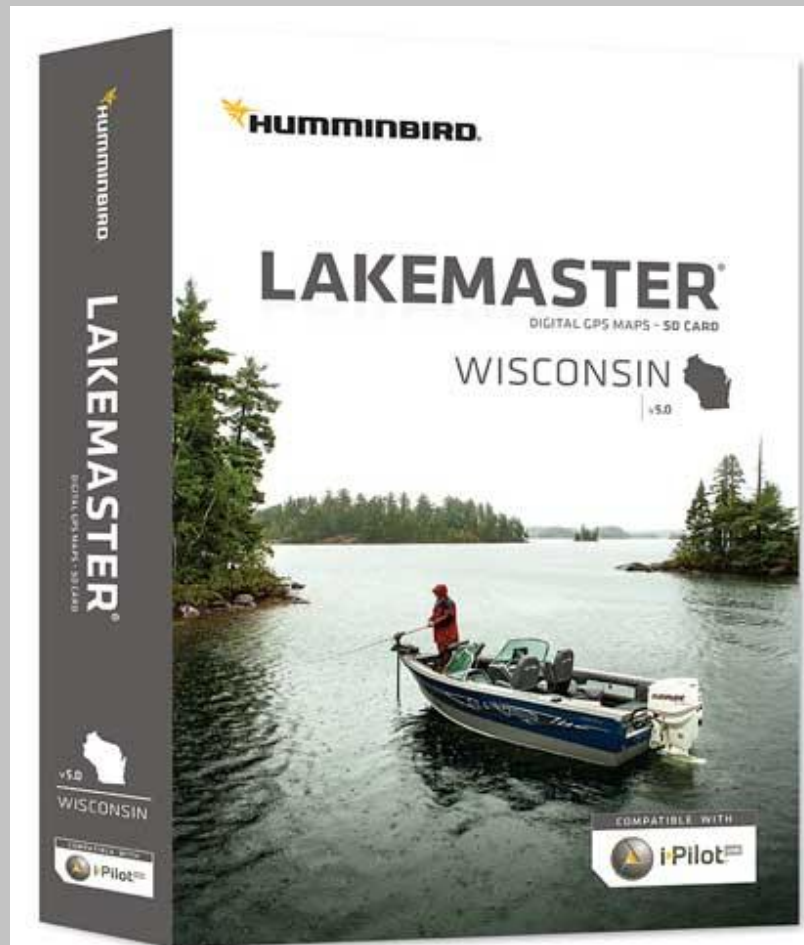
When the healthy muskie was brought to the boat, the 32" fish was too small to earn the team additional tournament points, but was a landmark fish, nonetheless. "I had opportunities on two muskies earlier this season," says Monroe, who in addition to selling advertising for the popular Illinois and Wisconsin Outdoor News publications, also writes popular stories and columns for Outdoor News and a variety of other outdoors and shooting publications.

"I actually wrote an article about my previous muskie fishing trip to Mercer in Wisconsin Outdoor News a few months ago," says Monroe, who resolved to come back to fish in the Mercer Muskie Madness Challenge and hopefully put her first muskie in the net. "Regardless of how we'd end up in the tournament, I was so happy to have caught that fish," she continues. It would be the last fish of the day – and the tournament – for Lantz and Monroe.

With no tournament rule requiring day-one reporting by competitors, Lantz and Monroe were unsure of their position in the standings going into day two. Rumors about a Facebook post of the team's 41+ fish, however – combined with chatter from the field about tough fishing conditions during dinner at the Gateway Lodge tournament headquarters that night – gave the duo more than a glimmer of hope that they might still be in the running, especially if they could produce on day two.

The team returned to Spider Lake on the second and final day of the tournament, only to be greeted by even colder temperatures, stronger winds and snow squalls. Despite fishing tirelessly all day, Lantz and Monroe didn't see a fish all day. "That's muskie fishing," says Lantz, who joked that the pair should have gone grouse or duck hunting instead. "While we didn't move a fish, we still had a great day in a beautiful place," adds Monroe. "The sun came out and the wind died down during the afternoon and we saw eagles, deer, loons and otters. Even if the muskies aren't biting, a day outdoors in Mercer beats just about anything I can think of!"

Tournament competitors gathered at Gateway Lodge that evening for an awards ceremony and program, celebration dinner, and a silent auction of donated muskie gear and other outdoors items to benefit the Wounded Warriors In Action (WWIA) Foundation, a non-profit organization with the mission of serving our nation's combat wounded, Purple Heart recipients by providing world-class outdoor sporting activities. After an informative program delivered by Wisconsin Fisheries Biologist, Zach Lawson, Mercer Area Chamber of Commerce Director and MMM Challenge Tournament Director, Tina Brunell, introduced wounded warriors Tony Pemble of Mercer and Doug Alderton of Rhinelander, Wisconsin – both Purple Heart recipients who served multiple tours of duty in Afghanistan. Alderton gave a stirring speech, enlightening the crowd on the array of challenges our soldiers



face when returning home from service. “When our wounded warriors come home from such traumatic circumstances, they long for a return to ‘normal’, but struggle to find it,” says Alderton. “Our organization and the important help you sportsmen give us shortens and softens that journey,” he continues.

Overall, a total of 12 scorable fish were caught and recorded over the tournament’s two-day duration. An additional eight muskies under the 36” minimum size were also reported. When the awards ceremony got underway, Lantz and Monroe were genuinely surprised to learn that their lead had held out. With the torment of the two lost fish finally behind them, the team of visiting outdoor writers earned 27 points for their big, day-one muskie, which was good enough to take first place overall and big fish honors for the tournament. Mercer area angler William Litke caught three scorable muskies fishing without a partner, totaling 26 points and earning second place. Avid Northern Wisconsin muskie anglers Mike Wichman and Tom McDonough took third place with two fish scoring a total of 18 points.

“Catches were down a bit this year due to the weather,” says Brunell, “but we certainly had a fun time raising money for Wounded Warriors In Action and made a bunch of new friends.” Of course, given her position with the Mercer Area Chamber of Commerce, she also hopes the event will continue to spread the word about the great muskie fishing and other



outdoor recreational activities available in the Mercer area. Brunell continues with a wink and a smile: “We figure the fact that a couple of popular outdoor writers won this year’s tournament can’t hurt.”

ABOUT MERCER, WISCONSIN: From the backwoods waters of the Turtle Flambeau Flowage or one of 214 lakes, you are sure to find a top notch fishing adventure in Mercer, Wisconsin. Mercer also has plenty of other outdoor activities such as snowmobiling, ATV/UTVing, hiking, biking, skiing, hunting, bird and wildlife watching all within our 377,000 acres of public forestland. Visitors will find a variety of lodging and camping options, fantastic dining and north woods watering holes, plenty of places to shop for amenities and gifts, and a range of services for your convenience. Plan your north woods adventure at www.mercerccc.com.

ABOUT WOUNDED WARRIORS IN ACTION: Established in 2007, the Wounded Warriors in Action Foundation (WWIA) is a national 501(c)(3) non-profit organization headquartered in Apollo Beach Florida. The WWIA serves our nation’s combat wounded Purple Heart recipients by providing world-class outdoor sporting activities as a means to recognize and honor their sacrifice, encourage independence and connections with communities, and promote healing and wellness through camaraderie and a shared passion for the outdoors. Learn more at www.woundedwarriorsinaction.org.

My next book is going to be titled "Fishin Different" where I will attempt to present a lot of fishing experiences that few anglers have experienced. I'm always looking for material for my books, but my recent trip to the Outer Banks was not supposed to be one of those times. My regular fishing group from Mooresville North Carolina made the trip to Hatteras to close out the fishing season there. Our regular guide Captain, Buddy Hooper and the Hatteras fever II were getting ready to close out the summer season and we were providing him one of his last charters.

The weather for the last week of October was unusually warm and the schedule that we picked provided unusually calm seas, which is not normally a good sign for outstanding fishing. But on this occasion we had beat the odds, both in terms of the weather and the fishing.

Fishing the west edge of the Gulfstream we started the day by catching three nice tuna in the 25 pound range. The tuna catch was followed by boating three nice wahoo. We eventually found some thick floating grass which was the signal for being alert for a school of mahi mahi. It didn't take us long to spot a small school of mahi and with a frantic 15 minute bail, we boated about fifteen fish before the school disappeared.

One unusual event occurred as we were bailing the mahi's. A chum basket from another boat had evidently fallen overboard and it floated directly behind our boat. I noticed immediately that there were several



strange looking fish feasting from this basket. I quickly dropped my baited line near the basket and almost immediately hooked one of these strange fish. At the same time, the mate dropped another baited line near the chum basket and he also caught one of these odd looking fish. We had boated two very unusual fish, at least rare in these waters. The mate immediately identified the two fish as triple tails. They were not very big, one weighing about five pounds and the other about three pounds. Captain Hooper indicated that he had never caught a triple tail on his boat in these waters. The fish is normally caught off the coast of Florida in warmer waters. Something brought these fish to the Carolina coast and the lost chum basket was our good fortune, permitting the catch of two of these rare fish.



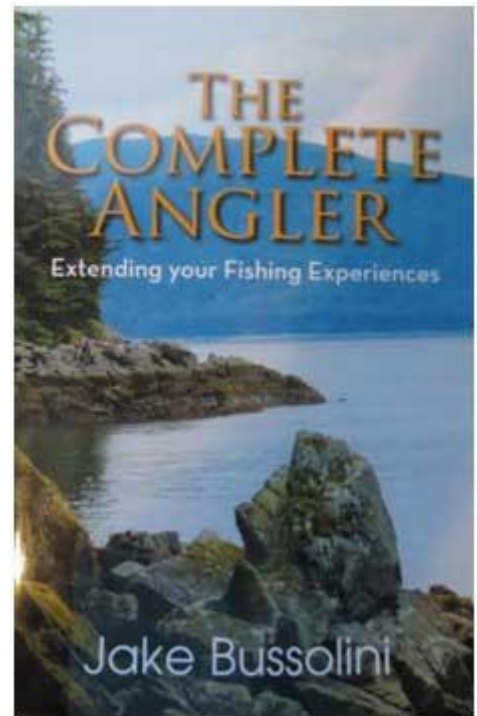
Closing the Season at the Outer Banks With a Rare Fish

By Jake Bussolini

Carey Foster, the mate on the Hatteras fever II is shown here holding one of the triple tails.

The fish got its name because it appears to have three tails. This is caused by a long rounded dorsal fin and anal fins that extend almost to the tail. The fish has a sloping head and very small eyes. The reason that the fish looked so strange to me when I spotted it in the water is because it often floats near the surface on its side and could be mistaken for a flounder.

The coloring is a gray color but the color will change depending on the habitat. The triple tail can grow to weights of nearly 40 pounds, much larger than the two that we caught but the average size is much smaller than that. The fish imitates floating objects such as leaves or other debris and is normally seen lounging around the surface of the water.



The triple tail is a fine eating white meat fish, often having a taste similar to grouper or red snapper. This species is not normally considered a sport fishing target. It is widely fished commercially using haul nets and gill nets and it is often found in drift net catches of tuna.

Jake Bussolini is a freelance writer who has published six books about freshwater fishing. His books can be reviewed and purchased on www.jakestakeonfishing.com.

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)



Winter Baits I Believe In

By Captain Mike Gerry

There is without a doubt a different mindset that you take with you into winter fishing, the aggressive days of the fall are over and thinking and acting with patience is very important. The change though doesn't necessarily eliminate power fishing like a big Zara Spook or a swim bait it just requires you to put more intelligence into your winter presentation.

I find myself fishing consistently with some old fashion winter baits that require me to be mind full of my presentation. First and foremost I have been slow rolling a big 1 oz. Punisher Spinner Bait over deep grass for many years; it is a great bait to work deep in the winter as it kicks up the bottom as it moves slowly and is very enticing in 25 plus feet of water. It is also bait that bounces off most deep structure rather than getting hung as many deep types of bait do.



I also seem to migrate to fishing a SPRO jerk bait the ability to get great movement then be patient with your pause is a super fish catcher in cold water. The key to me is working the jerk bait as there are many ways to work it and tip action is everything. It is a slow moving patient bait and it will draw fish out of 20 plus feet of water even though it only runs to depths of this than 10 ft. Years ago there was a jerk bait made you could count down as it dropped slowly to bottom

depths; I would love to find some of these again.

Lastly winter time to me means bottom fishing and no bait works the bottom better than a Tight-Line jig football head jig with a Missile bait D-Bomb

crawler. This life like bottom crawler represents crawfish and can be literally dragged on the bottom and get great results in deep water. Whatever your presentation winter requires thought, slow movement and patience to be successful.

Fish Lake Guntersville Guide Service
www.fishlakeguntersvilleguideservice.com
www.facebook.com/FishGuntersville
Email: bassguide@comcast.net
Call: 256 759 2270



ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)





Ice Fishing On The Fence In Ohio

By Scott Albrecht

If you are on the fence about ice fishing, are looking to ice fish in the state of Ohio, or just looking for some insider tips on catching crappie through the ice...this article addresses common basics, Ohio ice fishing facts, and tips for catching my favorite fish under the ice, crappie!

How did you get started in ice fishing?

When I was a teenager, I was a lazy couch potato. When others chose to play outside, I chose to eat candy and watch TV. I stumbled upon TNN fishing shows on a Saturday morning and my life changed. My Mom saw that I started to have an interest in fishing and connected me with a mutual family friend, Harry Wald, who jumped at the



opportunity to show me everything he knew, including how to ice fish.

What is your favorite part about the pass-time?

1974

2015



TOM GRUENWALD
"Tom Gruenwald Outdoors"

WE'VE BEEN THERE.

Started in a basement shop over 40 years ago, HT products have truly weathered the test of time! Our proven track record of quality and durability, and our passion for ice fishing has enabled us to offer the largest selection of ice-fishing products available at industry-best prices. See over 1000 ice fishing items or find your nearest HT retailer www.icefish.com.

www.ICEFISH.com | 920-533-5080

HT  
WWW.ICEFISH.COM



I love ice fishing because it helps me connect with God, is a great way to enjoy the outdoors in the winter time, and is fun walking on water to catch fish through a hole in the ice.

How much does it cost to get started?

The saying goes, "It takes \$100 to get into this sport and \$10,000 to get out." Like bass fishing, there is a whole lot of

money to be made in the ice fishing industry. Studies show that anglers are spending more money today than they did even ten years ago. However, like bass fishing, you don't need to spend a ton of money to catch fish through the ice. Effective rods can be purchased at anywhere from ten to fifteen dollars and ice line from www.Vicious-Fishing.com for less than five dollars. Jigs are marked up a bit. A tungsten jig that is sold for twenty-five cents overseas can be sold for up to five dollars here in the USA. Buying from local bait shops, small businesses, and sites like www.SportsmensDirect.com can provide jigs at fair market value. The biggest cost incurred is the auger. A good hand auger can be purchased for around \$80, or less if buying used on local forums like www.icefishohio.com. Total cost of the above plus bait, a bucket to sit on, and basic safety gear will cost you \$150.



How can I start ice fishing this season?

There are millions of options out there for ice fisherman today, but not every option is good for every situation. For instance, I've seen a newbie go out and buy a power auger for drilling on Ohio lakes. I would have recommended a different option unless his goal would be to fish Lake Erie only (which it wasn't). A mentor can help with gear selection, safety information, and general ice fishing principles. A new ice fisherman needs to know how to get on fish, stay on fish, and most importantly catch those fish.

When Does Ohio get First Ice?

Ohio usually gets first ice in December just before Christmas. This ice is typically only good for a couple days or a week and then melts before forming again. First ice is very dangerous and safety precautions need to be taken seriously.

My first time on the ice each season is both social and scientific.

What is Social Ice Fishing?

Social ice fishing is all about the gathering of friends and family on ice. Ice fishing is about catching fish, but it is also about the community of anglers that fish closely, share information, and help a neighbor out if they are struggling. I can't help but high-five other anglers when we are standing on the water for the first time that season. I have even been known to lick the clear black ice on first outings out of sheer joy.

What is Scientific Ice Fishing?

After high-fives are shared, my "lets catch fish" gear kicks in and stays in control for the rest of the trip. I use a scientific method when catching crappie on ice. First, I make observations about my surroundings, such as looking for structure like downed trees, observing weather conditions, and

searching for groups of local, knowledgeable anglers. Next, I hypothesize about how that structure, those conditions, etc. will affect the crappie. Based on my observations and hypotheses, I predict what lures or presentations will work best. The true test is to see if they bite. Finally, I analyze how my methods are working and, if need be, change my hypothesis to stay on actively biting crappie.

Where in Ohio can you ice fish?



REINVENTING SONAR



FLX-28 ULTRA PACK FISHING SYSTEM



Built on a foundation of performance and reliability.



FL-20
Ultra Pack



FL-18
ProPack II



FL-12
ProPack II



FL-8se
Genz Pack

Vexilar, Inc. • 6667 West Old Shakopee Road, Suite 101, Minneapolis, MN 55438 • 952-884-5291 • www.vexilar.com

I-70 runs through the middle of Ohio, through the capitol city, Columbus, where I call home. Most bodies of water North of I-70 get cold enough for ice fishing while most bodies of water south of I-70 do not. Buckeye Lake is slightly south of I-70 and would be one major exception to that rule.

My favorite lake to ice fish is Indian Lake. Due to the high altitude, shallow water, tree cover, and low current, this lake freezes before most inland bodies of water. It is also a short drive from home and typically provides the best available ice in Ohio. The big fish we are sure to catch just happen to be a huge plus! On any given day you can catch HUGE blue gills, perch, saugeye (a DNR-stocked cross between a sauger and a walleye), white bass, and (my favorite) savory and slab crappies!

What colors work best for crappie in Ohio?

Choosing colors is always tough. One tip is to use weather conditions to inform your decision. On days with lots of sun and light penetration, flashy presentations can trigger reaction strikes. In clear water, jigs and lures that don't "stick out" too much (like browns or natural patterns) may get more bites, whereas the opposite can be true in murky or stained water conditions (which we often see in Ohio lakes). Some of my favorite colors for crappies in Ohio include black, purple, and blue – I'll go to these if nothing else is working. Regardless of which colors you decide to use, don't be afraid to change it up to get on that hot bite!

How many people ice fish for crappie in Ohio?

Ohio fishermen respect the crappie and responsibly harvest their catch, savoring the meal it provides. Despite its plate fare, I prefer to catch and release and also teach others to selectively harvest crappie. This allows us to grow more and bigger crappie for future generations to enjoy. In my opinion, about 50% of the anglers fish for panfish and have crappie ranked #1 on their shopping list. I guess you can say we are crappie crazy in Ohio!

What's your favorite technique for catching crappies through the ice?

Although it is a technique that tends to go against what we naturally do, I prefer to play "keep away" with crappies. Natural food sources don't swim towards their prey but instead try to escape. A successful imitation of this natural reaction can prove to be very successful in landing crappie.

Ice fishing in Ohio is a treat for anyone to indulge in. Be careful however as I have seen every angler I take out absolutely love it and come back for more. When ice fishing in Ohio, it's easy to get hooked.

Scott Albrecht is a media contributor and sponsored angler who lives in the state of Ohio and is an ice fishing enthusiast. He spreads his infectious passion as he travels from state to state conducting seminars and on ice demos. He can be reached at iceprofromohio.com or icefishohio.com (forum name Banker)



How to Pick a Good Lake

All waters are not equally productive!

By Mark Strand

Looking out upon a frozen-over body of water, how are you supposed to know whether your time would be well spent drilling holes and dropping down a bait? Of all the topics ice anglers ponder, this one rarely, if ever, gets treated in depth. But especially if you live in an area blessed with multiple lakes, choosing one to attack is a huge piece of the puzzle.



In other words, what's swimming down there? What's the average size fish you can expect to catch? Is there a chance for a trophy? Or is the place overrun with tiny, stunted, aggressive fish that will steal your bait and leave you wishing you'd stayed home?

As usual, Dave Genz has spent years thinking about this and has formulated a solid plan that he uses when deciding where to go. Also as usual, he wants to give the plan to you, so you stand a better chance of catching what you go after.

Finding Good Lakes

To begin with, says Genz, you have to keep in mind that lakes are living, breathing, changing, evolving.



ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK (www.odumagazine.com)

And you don't have to wait a generation to see complete reversals of fortune, particularly when it comes to 'good' lakes becoming heaping bowls of frustration.

"Even lakes that were good two years ago," he says, "might not be good right now."

There are multiple factors at play, some natural, some delivered by the hands of man.

To start with, consider the size of the lake. As you might expect, bigger lakes stand up to fishing pressure better than smaller lakes, all other things being equal. And they tend to be less vulnerable to natural factors.

"If you have the choice," says Genz, "start by looking at lakes that are maybe 3,000 to 5,000 acres. The shape and physical makeup (relative complexity of structural elements) is an important consideration as well. "With a lot of those small, round lakes that don't have many features," says Dave, "the size of the fish has been fished down. They're full of stunted fish and they'll never come back unless there's a freeze-out."

Don't forget the freeze-out factor. We'll come back to it.

When he's looking through a stack of contour lake maps, one of the important considerations for Genz is this: "I look for lakes that are irregular in shape, meaning there are lots of bays. Those lakes are

WE ARE ICE FISHING.



PROUD SPONSOR OF



BRING IT.™

Same jig. Bigger, wider-gapped hook. When the Drop™ pounded onto the scene last year, the ice fishing world fell in love with it. You already know the tungsten craftsmanship, killer colors and angled hook orientation for better hooking percentage. But sometimes the hook itself can be a bit on the small side, when you want to bulk up with waxies or maggots or a Maki™ plastic. We needed Drop™ jigs with bigger hooks, so we made them. This is a big deal. It opens up a whole new world for the Drop™ Jig.



NEW FOR
2014-15

Drop Jig XL

SEE IT IN ACTION!



CLAM™

Find us on
f Facebook

CLAMOUTDOORS.COM

more likely to hold bigger fish. Those are the places you can go and continually catch nicer fish year after year. They have havens that don't get bothered."

Water clarity is another factor. Stained or dirty water systems tend to have good fishing at midday, making those lakes easier to fish, making it more likely that a high percentage of big fish get caught. When big fish get caught out of smaller lakes, they tend to go home in people's buckets, and that impacts the quality of fishing in short order.

"The clearer the water," says Dave, "the harder those fish are to catch. That makes a difference. If people get frustrated trying to catch the nice fish, and they can go to a dirtier-water lake and have better fishing, guess where they're going to go? So the clear-water lakes can produce nice fish more consistently, if you know how to fish them."

Partial Freeze-Outs Create Quality

How could something that's considered a bad thing become a good thing? If freeze-outs kill fish, how could they be beneficial to a lake? It's all in the severity, according to the Genz theory, and the net impact.

"We know that a lake can only hold so many pounds of fish per acre," Dave says. "Let's say you have a relatively small lake with nice fish in it. The word gets out, lots of people are on the ice, and most of the big fish go home in people's buckets. It doesn't take long for the size structure to be out of whack, for the lake to be full of small fish.

"The pounds-per-acre are there, but the size isn't. If you could kill half the fish in that lake, all the remaining fish could grow twice as big. But if you keep





taking all the big ones out, the little ones don't have enough to eat, and they tend to stay small."

This is the classic problem of stunting, which occurs in panfish populations and with species such as northern pike as well. "Once a lake gets like that," says Genz, "it won't change unless something happens to remove a huge number of those small fish."

Enter the 'partial freeze-out' factor, something you won't hear about but Genz believes is a huge deal when it comes to helping lakes make a comeback.

"In observing which lakes consistently produce nice fish,"

says Dave, "I believe a partial freeze-out can be responsible for that."

A freeze-out occurs when oxygen levels in an iced-over lake go low enough to wipe out most or all of the fish. Freeze-outs take place most often in small, shallow lakes that develop thick ice and snow

cover, which remains for more than about a month.

Oxygen-producing sunlight is snuffed out long enough that massive fish die-offs occur. Total freeze-outs, if they are followed by restocking, can result in excellent fishing until the balance of fish sizes is again impacted, usually by fishing pressure. But a lake that goes through partial freeze-outs on a fairly regular basis, Genz theorizes, regulates fish size naturally and the result is good fishing that goes on and on and on.

WELCOME TO THE BIG LEAGUES

WWW.FISHBUMOUTFITTERS.COM



Small lakes of fairly uniform shallow depth are vulnerable to total freeze-outs. Larger lakes with complex features, including both shallow sections and deeper water that can sustain life under potential freeze-out conditions, can go through partial freeze-outs that reset the lake in terms of fish size.

“It has to happen,” maintains Genz. “After the oxygen levels start to get to the danger point, there’s no way all the fish in the lake could swim out to one area. So a lot of small fish get trapped in the shallow bays and die, but other fish survive and have a chance to grow big.

“You can have a lake that’s full of small pike and small panfish, and the pike are in the shallow bays chasing these panfish. They’re not all smart enough to swim into the main lake once the oxygen levels drop. Some do, especially if they’re out on the edges. But they don’t all make it. It’s genetic straining. I’ve been on big shallow bays where you drill a hole and minnows come up in the hole, showing that they were all up sucking air at the surface. They didn’t know enough to swim out through the channel and into the main lake.”

Choosing the right lake comes down to fishing hard, being observant, and watching for conditions that can cause partial freeze-outs. Then, checking lakes that are candidates, based on their physical makeup, to have gone through a size restructuring.

“Everybody has a more consistent lake,” says Genz, “that you go to because it has nicer fish in it. Finding those lakes is what our system is all about.”

Note: Dave Genz, known as Mr. Ice Fishing, was the primary driver of the modern ice fishing revolution. He has been enshrined in the National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame and Minnesota Fishing Hall of Fame for his contributions to the sport. For more fishing tips and to order his new info-packed book, Ice Revolution, go to www.davegenz.com.

★

ICE SAFETY

★

GENERAL ICE THICKNESS GUIDELINES

[FOR NEW, CLEAR ICE ONLY]

2" OR LESS	STAY OFF!
4"	ICE FISHING OR OTHER ACTIVITIES ON FOOT
5"	SNOWMOBILE OR ATV
9" TO 12"	CAR OR SMALL PICKUP
12" TO 15"	MEDIUM TRUCK

SELF RESCUE IF YOU BREAK THROUGH THE ICE:

1. TURN IN THE WATER TOWARDS THE DIRECTION YOU CAME FROM

2. DIG THE POINTS OF YOUR ICE PICKS INTO THE ICE AND WHILE VIGOROUSLY KICKING YOUR FEET, PULL YOURSELF ONTO THE SURFACE BY SLIDING FORWARD ONTO THE ICE

3. ROLL AWAY FROM THE AREA OF WEAK ICE. THIS WILL DISTRIBUTE YOUR WEIGHT TO HELP AVOID BREAKING THROUGH AGAIN

4. GET TO SHELTER, HEAT, AND WARM DRY CLOTHING IMMEDIATELY

ALWAYS CARRY ICE PICKS WITH YOU

TRUSTED GEAR

FRABILL

SINCE 1938

When Panfish Behave Badly

By Jason Mitchell



A common mistake some anglers make is thinking the world below the ice is static. The mistaken belief that nothing changes. We have all probably been lulled into a great bite where we set up on a location and the fish basically make us look good. The fish accelerate towards your presentation, rise up and then greet you. The reality is that you can use several different presentations and fish those presentations several different ways and get bit. We go home with a bounce in our step and a grin. We also go home with confidence.

Confidence however must be seasoned or you are going to get into trouble as an angler. You have to believe and have confidence in order to mentally succeed on the ice. You have to believe that you are going to find fish and then

figure out how to catch them. The trouble is when we have an over confidence in a spot or presentation because of one great moment and make the mistake that when we go back to "Lake X" everything will be the exact same as when we left. I am willing to bet that if you fish a lot, you have made that mistake as I know I have. The reality is that conditions are changing from day to day and especially from year to year.

The biggest mistake I have ever made as an angler is getting so confident in a particular presentation, mentality or location that I quit learning. Don't get locked into something so bad that you beat a dead horse. When people make comments with fishing like "always" or "never," I know they are confident but not as seasoned. If you fish enough, you will come to the conclusion that fish don't "always" bite on Lake X or a particular lure "always" works. Perhaps a particular location "never" holds fish. When you start believing yourself and get rigid, you are heading towards humility.



Reduces Line-Memory
Reduces Icing
on Line and Guides



With panfish, the biggest trend over the past few years might be how anglers have embraced soft plastics. There is much to like about soft plastics. You can change colors and descent rate easily. The plastics move water and vibrate in a fashion where they can pull aggressive fish from great distances. You can catch several fish on one tail eliminating time spent out of the water reloading bait. Often, it seems like a quivering or gliding soft plastic will trigger more aggressive strikes from crappie, bluegill and perch. On many bodies of water, I start out with plastics and don't take them off all day. We have filmed countless shows using soft plastics and have written several articles explaining the merits of soft plastic. Once you arrive to the conclusion however that you "never" have to rely on live bait you are heading towards trouble sooner or later. The reality is that the tougher bites still force my hand and require tipping with traditional live bait options like minnow heads, Euro Larvae, wax worms or wigglers. The best anglers are flexible and have a fluid mindset that allows them to adapt.

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

One of the most common situations where I see traditional live bait often trumping soft plastics are on fisheries with out of balance forage. Fisheries with high amounts of forage and lower densities of fish. Some perch fisheries for example have huge numbers of freshwater shrimp for example. The fish grow big and are in great body condition. Because of the endless forage that is present, getting these fish to bite can seem like brain surgery. On the prairie lakes of the Dakotas, we often see this cycle. Typically when the water rises, the fish get less concentrated and the decomposing flooded terrestrial vegetation spikes invertebrates through the roof. Lots of stuff to eat for the fish but not necessarily the best situation for finding fish that make you look good. What is interesting is how some of these lakes can cycle. A particular lake might get a reputation for a winter or two as a tough lake for fishing.

You work hard to catch a few fish and you mark many fish that won't eat. Then a few years go by and the lake level either stabilizes or drops. Once the fish crop down the edibles to a certain point, the fish miraculously begin biting good. Many lakes go through these highs and lows where fish bite really well one winter and require pulling teeth the next.

When you encounter lakes that are in this forage slump, live bait often reins as king and the reasons become more obvious when you watch these fish with an underwater camera like the Vexilar Scout. What you see when using a camera while fishing for fish that have too much to eat around them is that these fish are not as motivated. Typically when you watch a panfish hit a lure or jig, they peddle up to the offering and suck the jig in. Usually, the fish only suck enough to get the jig about half way in. The second effort is when the entire jig disappears. Sight fishermen can relate to this. When fish are more motivated, these suck ins are more powerful and happen closer together. That is why on a better bite, soft plastics work so well. On tough bites, you sometimes don't get the second effort and the first effort is often lacking effort.

Imagine a ten inch bluegill or twelve inch perch in an environment where there is little competition amongst other fish for the available forage and there is a never ending opportunity to eat something that can't really get away. The result is a fish that is comparatively lazy, unmotivated and methodical. There might be windows where these fish will become more aggressive for short periods of time. Much of the time however, these fish can be very temperamental. They often have an extremely short ceiling where they will rise up through the water column to chase. These fish also often back down from any aggressive movements. These bites often call for a more stationary presentation

where the rod is gently quivered or bounced subtly before hanging still.

The reality is that live bait still taste better than any soft plastic. I have an aquarium in my office that has perch, bluegill and crappie. I can drop a minnow or wax worm in the aquarium and the fish eat it. If I drop a soft plastic tail into the aquarium, the fish will still hit it and suck it in but they always spit it out. No fish in my aquarium has ever swallowed or digested a piece of soft plastic. On the toughest bites where fish appear extremely unmotivated, live bait gives you an edge because the scent will still pull fish over



devils
lake
North Dakota

Mille Lacs
LAKE AREA TOURISM COUNCIL

THE WALLEE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD
LAKE OF THE WOODS
MINNESOTA





when you have to hold the presentation still and the fish will hold on to the presentation just enough longer to both distinguish the bite and set the hook.

A deadly tip for really tough fish that just come up to the bait unmotivated and only give the bait one light suck in and don't want to hold onto the bait is to use a dangler. A dangler is a tiny treble hook that gets slid onto the hook of the jig so that it dangles behind the bait. I really like to use dangles with wax worms. Wax worms ooze out a lot of scent and taste. Thread on a wax worm on to the jig hook. Slide the small treble hook on to the jig hook so that it dangles behind the wax worm and then thread on another wax worm over the top. When fish grab at the back of the jig and mouth the wax worms with little effort, the treble hook gets caught on the mouth of the fish. This little trick will help your batting average and allow you to detect really tough fish and has saved my tail many days when I have had to pull my hair out trying to catch tough fish.

On bites where you have to let the jig hang still or tough bites where distinguishing the

bite takes concentration, traditional live bait can trump soft plastic options. Besides using dangles, another trick that can surprisingly help you catch more fish in these situations is to adjust the angle that the jig is hanging. Many ice anglers preach using a palmer knot for horizontal jigs. Most horizontal jigs do indeed fish much better if they are truly hanging perfectly horizontal. What happens on a really tough bite however is that the fish often hit the wrong end of the jig and don't have enough force as they move water to turn the hook end of the jig towards the mouth. As a result, the fish nip on the wrong end. A way to counter this situation is to adjust the angle that the jig hangs so that it hangs more hook down. Adjust the knot so that the hook hangs slightly lower than the head. As fish approach the jig, they typically rise up and they have a habit of hitting the closest end of the jig, typically the hook end if the jig is cocked that direction. Cocking the head up and hook down slightly can help your batting average on tough bites where you have to practically dead stick as the fish approach.

These little tricks can help you catch a lot more fish when the bite gets really tough. Fish that won't speed up towards you or won't rise in the water column are usually tough fish to catch but with a few tricks and the right strategy, you can still scratch together a good day on the ice.

DAN'S FISH 'N' TALES®

A Pill For The Ice Fishing Blues

By Dan Galusha

If you get the “ice fishing blues”, and are having problems convincing panfish to strike, then take a pill – perhaps several pills if they are Custom Jigs & Spins Gill Pills. This small, “half-moon” head ice jig has been a big plus in my fishing success for bluegill and crappie, along with an occasional bass.

these, my most productive has been the size 10 Glow Brite.

Rarely do I use a float. My fishing is “straight line” so that depths can be changed quickly to follow active fish seen on my Vexilar unit. While the Gill Pill works well under a float, because of the weight and design it is the perfect choice for the angler using the “straight line” method.

As previously mentioned, the head is a “half-moon” design, with the line tie on the top-front and perpendicular to the hook, and a flat bottom. This design allows for an excellent fluttering action, which I use to the fullest when fishing a pick up and drop method, especially for fish suspended in deeper water. For example: If I’m fishing 20 feet of water, and fish are holding at depths between 12 and 16 feet, I’ll lift the jig a little above the 12 feet mark, and let it drop (flutter) to 16 feet. If this doesn’t produce a strike after two or three drops, then I’ll work slower with shorter lift-and-drops, foot by foot until I find the best pattern.

Another helpful part of the design is the ultra sharp hook at a 45-degree angle. This helps with better, and easier hook sets.

The Pill, by not having a body, is the perfect jig for using trailers –

Fishing for crappie along a drop off near deep-water trees, can be an ideal time to use the Gill Pill.





A Glow Brite Gill Pill tipped with a Gulp Waxie, and a wax worm, which is the alternative live bait setting along side.

live, prepared or artificial. In the live category the two best have been wax worms and spikes. For artificial I've used Custom Jigs' Finesse Plastic, and Berkley's Honey Worm and Wiggler, and Gulp Alive Waxie. One of my most productive baits is in the prepared category – Berkley's Crappie Nibble, which is the perfect fit for the hook on this jig. I alternate Nibble colors between white, chartreuse and rainbow until I find the "choice of the day", which can change frequently, and from location to location.

Custom Jig's Ratfinkee and Ratso are still favorites, and will always remain so in most situations.

However, the Gill Pill has found a special place in my arsenal, especially for fishing deeper water, when wanting to get to the area of fish quicker, and in the later season, when these other two factors can play a major role in fishing success.

Gill Pills aren't a "cure-all", but they sure can help some non-productive "ice fishing blues".

For more information on the Gill Pill visit Custom Jigs & Spins website at www.customjigsandspins.com.

If you have any questions about this or another fishing question, drop me a line through the Dan's Fish 'N' Tales® website at www.dansfishntales.com, or the Dan's Fish 'N' Tales® Facebook page at www.facebook.com/dansfishntales where you click on the "like" button and follow some of my fishing reports and tips. There is also a link that will connect you with the ODU Magazine website.

Until next time, get out on the water, and enjoy a great day of fishing.



A Glow Brite Gill Pill tipped with a Gulp Waxie, and a wax worm, which is the alternative live bait setting along side.

EARLY ICE ANTICIPATION

By Brian Koshenina

Nervousness, Anxiety, anxiousness, sweating, restless sleep, panic, crabbiness, irritability. If you have these symptoms don't worry, you are not sick. You might be suffering from "EIA", Early Ice Anticipation.

Every fall around November it starts. The leaves have changed color, the temperature has dropped, docks on the lakes are sitting on shore and one by one boats disappear. You have winterized your boat and put away your summer gear. There is no going back now and for a month or so we are left with the inevitable question, "When will the lakes freeze out"?

That's when it hits us like a ton of bricks. That's when we start to get the symptoms. For me it is the fact that I suddenly have nothing to do. Well I actually have a lot to do but I really can't wet a line. This is when I get crabby and Irritable! I find myself looking at all my ice fishing gear



ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK (www.odumagazine.com)

with the realization that I won't be able to use it for awhile. Then I start to go through my gear. I take an inventory of what I have, what I have lost and what I need to fix. I make a list of the items I "need" to buy. Well "Need" is a strong word that many of us use all too often. I will admit it "want" is a more appropriate word. I will make a list of what I "want". I then find myself a little less crabby and irritable. I take my focus off of the fact that I can't yet wet a line and I put that energy into shopping!

After I have put yet another Mills Fleet Farm employee through college, I go home and go through my bag of goodies. I go through each and every new lure, gadget and contraption like a 10 year old goes through presents on Christmas day. I restock my tackle box, re spool old line and change out the blades on my auger. This is when the symptoms start to return. I find myself starting to panic! I have spent my budget and I haven't even tested my electronics or my auger. What if my auger doesn't start? What if I need a new battery for my Hummingbird? I just spent my money on the latest and greatest gear. If I spend one more dollar my wife will kill me! I put my battery charger on my battery and I run up to the gas station to get some oil and new gas. I race home from the gas station. Anxiety has set in. I mix my gas and oil, and I pour it in. I give her a few pumps on the primer bulb, set the choke and after a few pulls she starts. Ah, relief! But then I focus my attention to my electronics. Anxiety again sets in after I check my charger and find the light still red. I will have to wait another 12 hours before I see that beautiful, bright green light!

A few weeks have gone by. The temp has dropped to the teens at night and I know we are starting to make ice. I have tested all of my equipment and I am ready. This is about the same time when Ice

reports start to flutter in at the bait shops and on social networks. It's late November and I just can't take it anymore! This is when "EIA" is at its worst. This is the time when smart people suddenly become dumb people. This is when people start to venture out on the ice to see if it is safe. You know these people. You read about them. Stories roll in and sometimes they even make the news. I used to think they were crazy but after suffering from "EIA" year after year, I now understand that for some, the symptoms become so overwhelming that they just can't help themselves. They are drawn to unsafe ice like a mouse to cheese. After I read about these people or see them on the news my symptoms start to reside.

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

It is early December and the ice reports are good. Four to ten inches are being reported on some lakes. I have suffered enough! I have seen way too many pictures on social media of people getting their limits already and now it is my time to venture out! I decide that tomorrow is the day. I try to get some sleep but there are too many things to think about. Where to go, where to fish and what are they going to bite on? After a night with no sleep I wake up early, pack my gear, load my portable and head out to the shell station for some bait. I suddenly find myself sweating. Anxiousness has set in. I have everything I need. I can't get to the lake soon enough. I get to the gas station and I suddenly realize that it doesn't even open for another 45 minutes! What now? Do I take a nap? Do I pass the time looking at Facebook? Do I play a game on my phone? No, I call and wake my buddy up to see if he is going out today. Not that it really matters, he lives 80 miles away but this is what "EIA" does to us. Our brains turn to mush! I woke my buddy up for no reason just because I am anxious.



The bait store opens and Mike greets me with his patented question, "Where are you headed out to?" I reply as always, "I thought you knew"? I ask him where the hot bite is and what the fish are biting on. A bait shop is like extra strength aspirin for "EIA", it calms you down to the point where you start to make sense of all your thoughts going through your head. A bait shop is a means to an end for "EIA" but it's

still not a cure. After I got the bait I took all the information that I got from Mike and I started to process it. I started to feel less anxious, less irritable. The black cloud that filled my brain for the last month suddenly lifted. I picked my favorite lake and I knew exactly what spots I was going to go to.

I got to the lake and unloaded my gear. I walked out to the spot that I knew would have safe ice. This was it. After all the anxiety, nervousness, panic, sweating and restless nights, I had been cured. Ice fishermen from all over were also cured that day. So the next time when you start to get these symptoms, just know that you are not alone. There is a cure for "EIA". Be patient, talk with others and keep yourself busy and you will find "EIA" just a little easier to deal with next year.

Sources - Humminbird
<http://www.humminbird.com/fr>
[eshwater/home/](http://www.humminbird.com/fr), Burnsville
Shell & Bait

Brian Koshenina is a
professional fishing guide in
Minnesota,
<http://muskiesandmore.com/>, a
radio host
<http://knsiradio.com/>, a
volunteer
<http://simplyoutdoorexperience.org/>, and a certified mentor
with the State of Minnesota





JOIN THE TEAM™ ICETEAM.COM

The True Center of the Ice Fishing World™

- LOADED WITH PRO TIPS AND TACTICS
- AUDIO REPORTS, VIDEOS, FORUMS AND INTERACTIVE TV

 Find us on
Facebook



Go to IceTeam.com to learn more
and become a member for **FREE!**



Consider Color For More Fish

By Bob Jensen

appealing. Give them something different and they're more likely to eat it. I don't know what fish are thinking, but I do know that sometimes in clear water they like natural looking baits and sometimes they like baits that look like nothing that swims in that lake or river or pond.

Color can be especially important in ice-fishing. Fish can really check a bait out when you're ice-fishing. The bait is only going up and down, and usually pretty slowly. In open water, if you're casting or trolling, the bait is moving, and often pretty fast. The fish in open water need to respond quickly. Under the ice, they can take their time, and if that bait isn't exactly what they want, they don't eat it. Lure action and size certainly make a difference, but so does color.

Whether you're fishing in open water or through the ice, the color of your lure can affect how many fish you catch. That is especially obvious when an angler is fishing through the ice and is watching a depth-finder. You see everything that goes on directly below that hole. If a fish comes in and looks at your bait but doesn't eat it, you know about it. If that happens too often, and three or four times is too often, something needs to be changed. One of the things that should be considered for change is color. There are times when fish are very color conscious. Following are some ideas on color that apply to open water and ice-fishing.

The general rule-of-thumb that many successful anglers use when selecting a lure is to go with a bright bait, something with orange or chartreuse in it, in stained or dirty water. However, some choose to start with black or purple.

In clear water, natural or subtle colors are often preferred. Some like baits that resemble the primary forage fish in the body of water being fished, but some anglers prefer a bait that looks nothing like the dominant baitfish. The theory there is, if the predator fish are seeing and eating the same thing day after day after day, something that looks completely different will be more appealing. Kind of like the person who eats hamburgers day after day after day. After a while, hamburgers lose their appeal and a hotdog looks more



vexilar **SONAR Phone**
 iOS Android

**Demo the
FREE
app right
now.**

High performance SONARPHONE hardware is available in three models:

QR code: vexilar.com

T-POD CAST IT - TROLL IT
 SP500

T-BOX PERMANENT BOAT INSTALLATION
 SP200

T-BOX PORTABLE BOAT INSTALLATION
 SP100

Vexilar, Inc. • 6467 West 6th Street, Suite 101, Minneapolis, MN 55428 • 952-884-5291 • www.vexilar.com

We all have our favorite colors. For walleyes, I really like baits that have some orange or chartreuse in them.

When largemouth or smallmouth are the quarry, crawdad or watermelon colors are go-to, and I also like white for smallmouths.

I like something with pink for crappies, and black for bluegills.

And then again, I've seen plenty of times when something completely different worked better than those colors, and that's what makes fishing both fun and challenging. You just never know. It often works well to start with the color you caught'em on last time. If they're still eating that color, good deal. If they're not, you need to try something else.

Some folks believe that the only reason baits are offered in different colors is so the lure-makers can sell more lures. The truth is, if that color doesn't catch fish somewhere at some time, it won't be around very long.

Next time you go fishing and aren't getting bit as often as you would like, try a different color. Sometimes color will be the difference between action and no action.

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
 (www.odumagazine.com)







THE QUEST FOR KUDU !!

By Paul Michele

When my friend Keith called and explained that he needed someone to go with him on a trip of a lifetime to Matsuri Safaris in Africa for hunting, how could I not jump at the chance!! I've often heard tales of many an expert hunter go after the trophy kudu, or more "affectionately known as "the grey ghost". This would be an amazing opportunity to try and get one myself plus to hunt in South Africa itself would be a big cross off on the bucket list.

Our trip began in Miami to Johannesburg and then to Polokwane on a small local plane. We were picked up and took the two hour drive into the Matsuri Safari wilderness. An incredible camp, facilities, plenty of animals and the food was outstanding. Eating what you've killed a couple days

before, just added such an experience to it all especially when cooked on the bonfire at the end of the day while the owner, Van, kept us highly entertained. In the first day I had already shot my first impala and gemsbok. Day two provided my 400lb wildebeest. No kudu sightings as of yet but of course I knew the time would come, all animals one shot and done. Could my luck hold... well.....



Day two in the afternoon, the first kudu appears, or more like disappears. I couldn't see that camouflage bugged just 30 yards away from me in the brush and poof he was gone. Day three in the morning, two more kudu spotted, both bolted before I could even raise my gun. That evening, three kudu within kill shot which one literally was 20 feet away standing there eating off a tree while we



drove by it but much to my chagrin, the owner and my guide, Van, stopped me each time saying too small. Argg... I want one so bad! On the way back to camp we see a true trophy in the distance. Van and I hop out of the jeep and stalk him. It's about a 130 yard shot. We throw up the shooting sticks and sling the gun in. Three seconds to site him in and about to pull the trigger... poof... like he just



wanted to tease me at the last moment, turns and into the thick forest. Not fair!

Day four, and my friend Keith shoots his zebra which runs off. We search for what seemed like an eternity (I want my kudu) but never found it after two miles of tracking. We give up only to get six hours later a phone call from another guide who went for a ride to a remote area not visited in weeks and finds Keith's Zebra laying on the road 1.6 miles from where he shot. What are the chances??? Hopefully this is a sign that my luck should soon be complete!

Day four in the afternoon, FINALLY we spot my would-be kudu and he's the right one. A 100 yard shot and I know the five second clock is ticking. Four seconds go by and BAM right at him facing me. The kudu spins and hobbles off. SCORE!!! We cross the ravine in search of some blood to track. We find it, not much but some blood. To be safe, we call the other guides to bring the dogs. With amazing trackers we set out on the search. The dogs start barking and an animal rustles, Van and I bolt like lightning (well in my mind I'm that fast) to the sound, rifle at the ready for shot #2 only to see a bade up wildebeest. Nope, not my kudu. Back to the blood trail and the dogs off the wildebeest and back on the scent. Another ¼ mile of tracking and there go the dogs! This has to be my animal! Running through the thickets and getting shredded by thorns with total disregard, rifle raised here it comes.... The warthog. Damn it. Another 30 minutes of tracking and still finding small drops of blood. I've never seen tracking like this in my life, the eyes and experience of these trackers is unreal. We get to another ravine. Somehow they find a track and note the kudu crossed at that point. We walk across the rocks and venture into the thick vegetation. After 10 minutes I'm about to

lose hope when they find a couple drops and a medium area of blood where it stopped and dripped for a while. He must be close. Finding a trail of rubs and leaves with some blood we gain ever closer to... the approaching storm. Really? Non-rainy season and it's going to storm? Sure enough, here comes the rain. Good bye blood trail, good bye kudu. You win this game. Maybe I should have stolen Keith's hat or whatever luck he had on that zebra. Crack out the wallet, there goes my cull and heart along with it.

Day five arrives and the morning goes by entirely too quickly with not a sign of a kudu. Did I miss my only chance? Hopefully the evening will produce as I still have that and one more day. A little lunch break with some impala sloppy joes and back out. I see a kudu!!! Rifle raised but just a young one, have to let it go. Day five passes, only one more day.

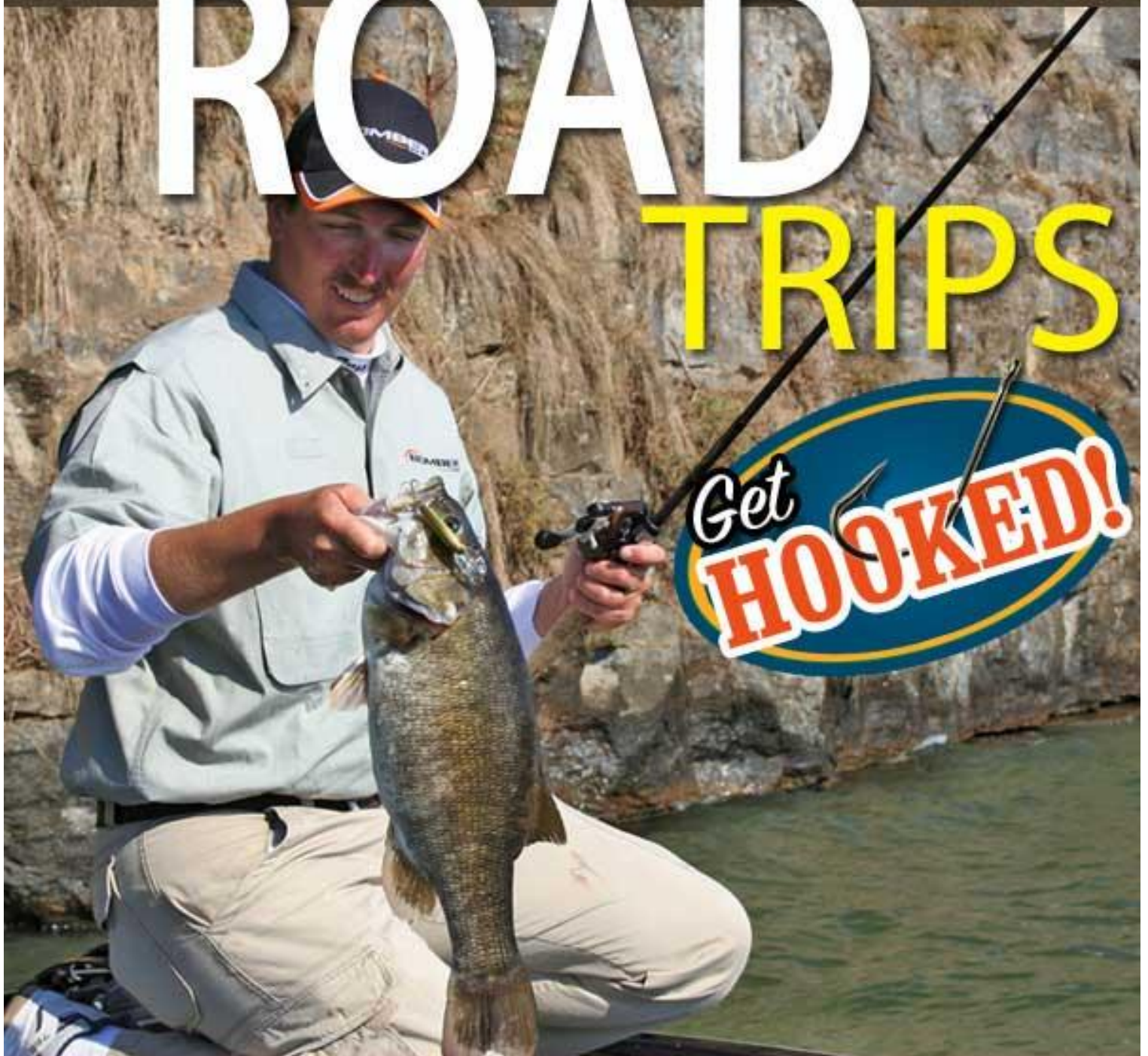


Day six and my final day. Van and I trek to where we have seen the most kudu along a ravine. Every day we have seen one there (and my escapee) so why not today! Why not indeed as the morning produced ZERO kudu signs. The grey ghost continues to elude me of course. The main animal I really want, it can't come easy. We call it a morning and decide to head back but take the long route and go up a mountain pass

through thick vegetation. While we are chatting Van spins his head... "Back up, back up!!" A quick reverse and there he stands, a magnificent kudu. Could the 10th kudu sighting finally be mine? 30/06 raised quickly with the internal clock going off for five seconds, a free hand shot at 80 yards... 5-4-3-2-boom! Shot center chest!! The kudu hobbles off. We wait a moment giving it a chance to lie down. Around an hour elapses and we again grab the dogs and some lunch before heading to look. The blood trail is thick and steady. I track this kill on my Navionics app usually designed for boating but works perfectly without a signal in hunting (especially here as roaming rates must be ridiculous). We track the trail in a small semi-circle when the dogs bark. Van and I run!! There he is, through the trees, fire off the second shot and 200 feet later, my trophy is there!!! Not just a big kudu but a 57" horn, 901lb BEAST!!! By far the biggest kudu ever shot at Matsuri lodge. Of course now I have to hear Van harass me on how many kudu he made me pass up as I whined each time but, it is my last day so at least it's just 12 hours of "told you so". My patience and Van's guidance finally pays off with a true trophy. Lady luck didn't abandon me in my quest for the kudu, she just made me earn it.

Credit to: <http://www.matsurisafaris.co.za/>

NORTH ALABAMA ROAD TRIPS



800-648-5381 • NORTHALABAMA.ORG

Remington Model R-15™ VTR™ SS Varmint

Remington created an unrivaled combination of precision accuracy, blazing-fast follow-ups and hunt-specific features. The new R-15 VTR™ modular repeating rifle was born of the most advanced design aspects of AR-15-style rifles available today with a strong emphasis on optimizing form and functionality for the modern predator aficionado. The results are astounding – with very serious implications for every coyote, fox or bobcat that crosses its path.

For peak accuracy, the R-15's 0.680" OD barrel is precision-crafted from Chromoly steel. It's free-floated within the machined-aluminum fore-end tube and given a recessed hunting crown to ensure gasses escape evenly around the bullet for the ultimate in shot-to-shot consistency. Six longitudinal flutes forward of the gas block promote rapid barrel cooling and increase rigidity while reducing weight, further contributing to this rifle's ability to print tiny clusters at an incredible pace.

And Remington's new hunting single-stage trigger design is as cleanbreaking as they come. Whether you choose the 223 Remington or 204 Ruger version, the semi-automatic gas action all but eliminates muzzle jump and recoil so your target remains in the crosshairs. And when it's time to add optics, the receiver-length Picatinny rail makes it a rock-solid cinch.

Control comes naturally with the ergonomic pistol grip and lightweight overall design of the R-15. Its uppers and lowers are machined from aluminum forgings for featherweight durability, and the

fore-end tube is drilled and tapped for accessory rails. This new family of firearms consists of three models. Each was designed with input from leading predator authorities and decked in the ultra-effective Advantage® MAX-1 HD™ camouflage to blend with sage, open country and a multitude of hunting





terrains. All come with five-round magazines and are compatible with all aftermarket AR-15 magazines and other accessories.

Key Features:

- New semi-automatic AR-15-style rifle developed with the predator hunter in mind
- Free-floating button-rifled 0.680" Muzzle OD ChroMoly barrels with recessed hunting crown for superior accuracy
- Fluted barrel design reduces weight and promotes rapid barrel cooling
- Clean-breaking single-stage hunting trigger
- Receiver-length Picatinny rail for adding optics
- Ergonomic pistol grip
- Fore-end tube drilled and tapped for accessory rails
- Compatible with aftermarket AR-15 magazines
- Lockable hard case included

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

