

Late January
Edition - 2018

ODU MAGAZINE™

TURNING NEGATIVE FISH

Art of
Fishing
Goes
Viral



CLAM™

Early Scouting
Trolling On Ice
The Eastern Coyote

SECURITY MEETS MOBILITY.

A float suit doesn't have to feel like one.

Designed with an internal segmented float system, The **ALL NEW IceArmor™ Ascent™ by Clam** parka provides the security of floatation assist while offering maximum mobility. Unlike other float suits, the Ascent combines a floatation system with the same warmth and breathability technology that IceArmor by Clam is known for, giving you the most breathable, comfortable, buoyant suit in the outdoors.



ICEARMOR.COM



Motion Float™
technology



EDITOR'S LETTER

January has just about wrapped up and from all I have seen the 2018 hunting and fishing seasons are off to a great start. The Shot Show appears to have been a huge success with record or near record attendance. The four other outdoor shows I visited and several other ODU contributors visited, saw new fishing boats and pricy fishing/hunting equipment being purchased. We

saw at most shows bags and bags of merchandise leaving in the hands of happy outdoorsmen looking forward to ice fishing, saltwater fishing and open water fishing. Honestly hearing all the good news from vendors and visitors alike, was down right great to see.

***Trash.** Every week ODU receives and posts on our Facebook page videos and photos of giant fish and great catches, to unique experiences and much much more. BUT one set of images have made it my way and thanks to our mobile phones we can capture the good and in this case the bad. Trash on the ice, along stream beds and in public campsites is just out of hand. This reminds me of a Boy Scout slogan of sorts called "Leave No Trace". Here is a link to the scouting page that details it meaning and why: <https://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/leave-no-trace/>. The good news about most of what I have seen on Facebook, are posts of anglers and hunters picking up after other folks. This is great news that we have some outdoorsmen who still care. I am guessing most of us do care. I am unsettled to know that this looks to be a trend, especially on the ice with dead fish throwing away and unused, burnt out bomb fires that were filled with garbage and left to sink later and more. Everyone do all of us a favor and tell the young outdoorsmen this does not work and give them some ideas (you know them) on what they really should do with their trash before they leave the lake, stream or woods.*

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

Publishing Team: Bill Schwarz, Jennifer Gonyea, Maggie Ouellette & Richard Barker.

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

Contributing Writers: Dana Benner, Northland Tackle, Tod Todd, Matt Johnson, Bob Jensen, Brian 'Bro Brosdahl, Tom Gruenwald, Jason Mitchell, Chip Leer, Jim Ahonen, Chuck Mason, "Panfish" Phil Laube, David A. Brown, Gary Parsons, Capt. Mike Gerry, Eric Harrison, Jofie Lamprecht, and Lee Juillerat

Interest in more about ODU Magazine and OutDoors Unlimited Media visit this [LINK](#).

Thank You All!



What is in this magazine? This edition of ODU Magazine is split between the Ice Zone, Open Water Zone and Hunting Zone again. January and February are the busiest times of the year to ice fish, so our coverage matches this with tips on chasing all types of panfish, walleye and much more from our loyal contributors. The Open Water Zone covers bass fishing with many articles sharing tips that will make winter fishing more successful and help you get ready for spring. Finally, the Hunting Zone will give you some great information on coyotes, new equipment and more. Enjoy



As you flip through this edition you will find two new features. The first feature is for our Facebook Fans. Each month we will put out a call for great fishing pictures to our Facebook fans (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ODUMagazine/>) and we will choose a bunch to add to the next magazine. Click the image to see the full page of ODU Facebook Fan photos. The second section is our Outdoor Exchange. A section for advertisers of ODU to have an special advertisement or promotion. We will see if the name sticks. Check it out at this LINK!!!

....WS

**Thank you to all who have contributed to make this and past editions a success!
And please, enjoy the outdoors.**

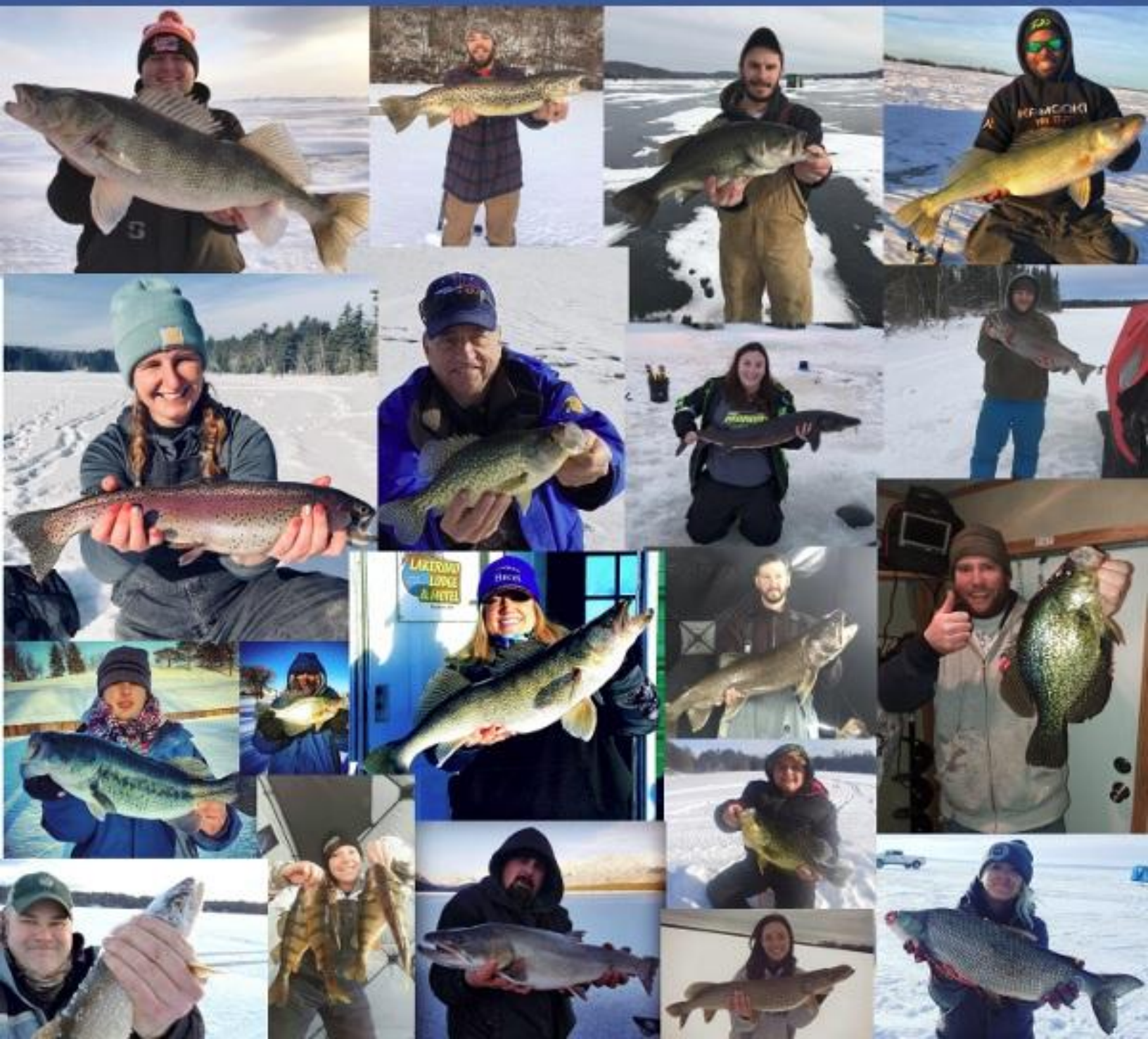
**Larry Thornhill and William Schwarz
Co-Founders of ODU Magazine**

FREE FISHING MAGAZINES

**Bass, Walleye, Crappie,
Bluegill, Catfish,
Redfish, Musky,
Stripers, Trout, Salmon.
Fresh-Ice-Salt**



facebook® fans





**DOWNLOAD
FILE**



INDEX

My Interview with Hank Parker, Pg 7

Ice Zone

Real or Not? Let the Fish Decide, Pg 12

Shoot The Fish, Save The Fish, Pg 15

Double Your Ice Fishing Success, Pg 16

Trolling On Ice, Pg 19

Know When to Set the Hook, Pg 21

Fishing Big Baits, Pg 26

Turn Negative Fish Into Biting Fish, Pg 28

Grave Yard Shift Walleyes, Pg 31

First Ice Attack, Pg 35

Gilling Up For Ice, Pg 38

Spy Games on Ice, Pg 40

Tungsten vs. Lead for Panfish, Pg 43

Be Versatile, Pg 47

Lipless Rattlebait For Walleyes, Pg 50

Open Water Zone

Early Scouting, Pg 55

River Magic, Pg 62

Color For Open Water, Pg 67

Some Cold Water Baits, Pg 69

The Art of Fishing Goes Viral, Pg 70

Looking Ahead, Pg 74

Cold Weather Advantage, Pg 77

Fish Stop Biting, Pg 78

A Year's Worth of Giant Stripers, Pg 84

Hunting Zone

The Eastern Coyote, Pg 87

'n Groot Boom het geval, Pg 93

Changing the Game, Pg 98

Wolf Depredation, Pg 101

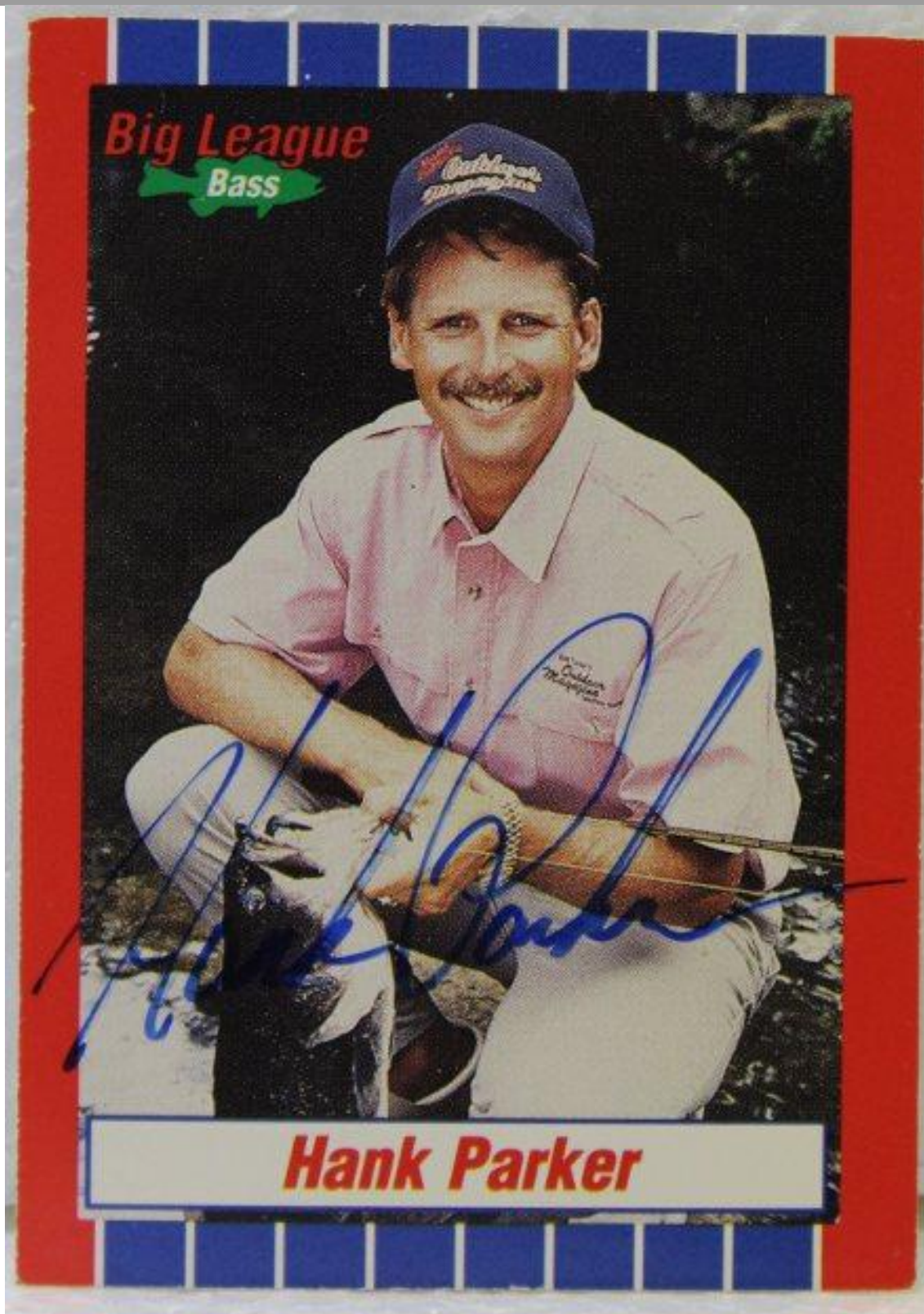
My Interview With Hank Parker

By Dana Benner

Yeah, I know it is still winter and in fact as I write this another winter storm is barreling down on us here in New Hampshire. So why am I doing a piece on my interview with Hank Parker? Well, there are a couple of reasons. First, it is never too early to think about open water fishing and two, this is Hank Parker we are talking about.

Some of my fondest memories date back to the early 1990s. My daughter was born in 1990 (I now have two grandchildren) and I got her started in the outdoors very early. I think her first words were “deer” and “bird”. We haven’t looked back since. One of our favorite things to do was to get up early on Saturday morning, just the two of us, turn on the TV and flip to TNN. We would watch, in this order; wrestling, monster trucks and Hank Parker’s Outdoor Magazine. We also watched “Cops” on Saturday night, but that is another story.

During the 1990s bass fishing was “the thing” and bass fishing shows were a dime a dozen. So why did I gravitate to Hank Parker? It was because he was different than the rest. Most of the other shows didn’t seem to try to teach you something. They were more interested in trying to make the pro larger than life or spent more time hawking their sponsor’s products. I wanted to learn something and



ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK (www.odumagazine.com)

Hank Parker gave me that. Hank put the viewer in real situations and actually showed you how to fish certain locations and how to deal with different situations and he dos it in a way that makes you feel like you are fishing with an old friend.

Recently I had the extreme pleasure and honor of doing a telephone interview with Hank Parker. Let me tell you I was a bit nervous because after all, this was Hank Parker. I had a right to be nervous as not only is Hank an accomplished angler, having won the Bassmaster Classic in both 1979 and 1989 and inducted in the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame, the Legends of the Outdoors Hall of Fame and the International Game Fish Association Hall of Fame, but also “Hank Parker’s Outdoor Magazine” has been on the air since 1985. Here I was, a lowly outdoor writer, speaking with fishing royalty.

Hank Parker is one of least self-centered people I have ever had the pleasure of speaking with and soon it was like speaking to an old fishing buddy. We started talking about fishing with our kids and grandkids. We spoke just about everything under the sun and I soon came to realize that Hank and I had a great deal in common. We both come from simple backgrounds; he in the rural South and I in the rural North. When we were growing up there were no cell phones or internet. We had to make our own fun, like fishing. Most importantly we both want to see more kids getting involved in the outdoors. In an effort for reaching that goal Hank is involved with an organization called Outdoor Dream Foundation (www.outdoordream.org). This group works to get kids will illnesses and other issues involved with hunting and fishing.

Once I was able to regain composure I asked Hank, “With your contemporaries using their shows for self-promotion, why did you choose the route you took?” His answer was one of modesty.

Hank said, "When I first started everyone wanted me to do a 'methods' show. I wanted to do something more. I wanted to show that fishing was more than a competition; that it is a part of life. It is a good way to communicate. I like to share what I know with everyone, especially kids."

Hank went on to say that the thing about fishing is that you can choose the level you want to go to. He told me about his grandfather who liked nothing better than taking a pole, a bobber and a cricket and spend his time fishing for sunfish. He had no interest in bass fishing and that was OK. This was where he wanted to be and this is what he wanted to do. Fishing allows you to do that. You don't have to be a professional bass angler to enjoy fishing.

I then asked him his opinion about the future of bass fishing and fishing in general. "It all rests with our kids", is what he said. "The rise of High School fishing will probably save the sport. With today's technology these kids can get a great deal of information from the internet." Hank went on to say, "What the internet can't teach them are the basics. While understanding the technology is important you need to know the basics before you can move forward. That is where we come in. We need to teach the kids the basics." If you have ever watched Hank's programs, it is these little things, "the basics" that he tries to teach. He has always done this and this is what has set his shows apart from the others on the air.

Hank and I spoke for about 45 minutes, much longer than most interviews. He was one of the most gracious people I have ever spoken with. Knowing that his time is valuable, I cut the interview off, not that I wouldn't have enjoyed speaking to him longer. Maybe one day I will be able to cast a line with Hank, but if not, it was a great pleasure speaking with him. You can catch "Hank Parker's Outdoor Magazine" on the Outdoor Channel.

Join the Over 1200 NPAA
Guides, Captains, Tournament Anglers, Clubs
Angler Educators, Industry Companies, and Non-Profits
All Working Together to Grow and Protect Sportfishing Nationwide



www.npaa.net

NPAA Members Are:	With a Common Goal:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fishing Guides• Charter Captains• Tournament Anglers• Industry Professionals• Promotional Experts• Youth Event Organizers	<p>To grow the sport we love and increase the professionalism of our members!</p>
Member Benefits:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequent E-Blast Updates• Members Only Discounts• Boat Insurance Program• Member's Profile on Web• NPAA Facebook Exposure• Member Media Releases• Member Number Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NPAA Annual Conference• Access to Industry Contacts• Member/Partner Networking• Member Education on Web• Youth Event Support• Give Back to the Sport!
Contact the NPAA:	
Web: www.npaa.net	
E-mail: npas@npaa.net	
Phone: (937)696-4185	



[Click To Join](#)

Pro Members: \$100
Students (HS/Col.): \$50

Business & Industry
Partnership information:
e-mail: director@npaa.net



vexilar®

ICE
ZONE





REAL OR NOT? LET THE FISH DECIDE

By Northland Tackle

Intelligent ice anglers are having success combining traditional live bait tactics with the use of realistic artificial lures

Times are a changin'. Used to be when we went ice fishing, our presentation always included a jig tipped with some type of minnow or hunk of meat, no matter what species of fish we were targeting. As the fishing tackle industry has grown, companies have found ways to make better baits that work in all seasons for all species of fish.

Today, ice anglers can use a blended approach, combining live bait tactics with artificial applications. Maybe work a soft plastic swimming lure in one hole while monitoring a live minnow and bobber in another. And all this while a nearby tip-up deploys yet another minnow, likely something larger. The options are endless.

The following are a few jigging and rigging techniques using artificial lures that have proved effective used in conjunction with a live bait program.

Dropper Rigging Stocked Trout

Brookies, rainbows, splake and the like are all suckers for aggressive presentations during the ice months. These fish are very inquisitive and can be called in from long distances. The thing is, they can be picky about what they eat so give them a 1-2 punch by using a dropper rig. The rig consists of a spoon with the treble hook removed and in its place a short 3-5 inch section of monofilament is attached leading to a small ice fly, like the feathered Spider Ant or new Scud Bug from Bro's Bug Collection. When jigged aggressively, the spoon will dance, while the small jig pulsates and beckons these stocked beauties to bite. This rig is especially effective early in the season when these fish are in their most aggressive state.





GILL-GITTER® JIG

BRO BUG® HEAD

MUD BUG JIG

Bug Up Perch

Our lakes are alive in winter with bottom hugging larvae, bloodworms and crustaceans. All species of fish exploit these tasty offerings but none take advantage of the potential feeding frenzy like perch do. Much of this action takes place in the mud-bottomed basins on the lakes we fish and this is the best place to find massive schools of perch. Ice fishing guru, Brian “Bro” Brosdahl has designed a series of specialty jigs and soft plastic tails for Northland Fishing Tackle that are effective on all panfish, perch included. I used some of these jigs last season for perch and lit them up using a technique that Bro taught me. “Bro’s Mud Bug” is a new jig that has a “fat-head” that anglers can shake and bounce in the mud to imitate hatches coming out of the bottom. Tip this jig with one of the new plastic tails – like the Bloodworm, Slug-Bug, or Scud-Bug – and you have an offering that perch flip over.

Metallic Walleyes

Spoons are available in all shapes and sizes from various manufacturers and they catch walleyes throughout the winter. In fact, I fish spoons almost exclusively for walleyes during the winter months. Spoons are good because they have superb attracting abilities and can call fish in from a long range. They can also be shaken lightly to entice “lookers” that are in close range to bite. I just about always fish a Northland Buckshot Rattle Spoon and use a “jerk, jerk, shake” cadence. I’ll jig the



spoon more furiously if flasher screen is bare and then begin jigging softer sequences when fish appear. One last “triggering” trick to make lookers turn into biters is to slowly jig your bait and lift your rod at the same time, making the bait rise in the water column. Walleyes are more likely to commit to if they get teased up off the bottom a bit.

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

Swimbait Lakers

Everybody knows that lake trout are suckers for plastic, minnow imitating baits like tubes and jerk shads. They catch fish on a consistent basis and have for years. A trend for winter trout fishing is working baits that trigger bass during the open water season. One of the hottest new styles of baits in this category are swimbaits. Gaining popularity for largemouth bass in California, they are now being used by bass anglers all over North America. If you haven't used them for lake trout, you're missing out. The Slurpies Swim Shiner is a great example, Silver Shiner and Emerald Shiner being a couple of the hottest colors. The key is to keep it moving. I will jig these baits in 3-5 foot lifts and cover the entire water column. You will call in big fish while showing them something they probably haven't seen before.

The key with artificial baits is to use them to call fish in to your presentation. If you can do this, there is always a high percentage of fish, no matter what species you are targeting, that will bite. Spend some time this winter using artificial baits in tandem with typical live bait techniques and you will see your catches improve. Every time you do something different than the norm, you learn something and in the end this will make you a much better all-round angler.



SHOOT THE FISH, SAVE THE FISH

BY TOD TODD

We all love to capture a great catch with our cell phones and GoPros. Technology makes it easy but are we doing harm to the trophies we catch?

I have seen firsthand that keeping a fish out of water for even a very short period of time increases the mortality rate. The water below the frozen layer we walk on can range between 35 to 40 degrees, on average. The outside air temperature is often significantly colder.

Just imagine doing a polar plunge in reverse. When the fish comes into the air, its eyes and gills will be the first to almost instantly freeze.

Most fish exchange gases using gills on either side of the pharynx (throat). Gills are tissues that consist of cloth and fabric structures called filaments. These filaments have many

functions including the transfer of ions and water, as well as the exchange of oxygen, carbon dioxide, acids and ammonia.

Fish use their eyes for sight. They can detect colors and see short distances. They use their vision to escape predators and find food. If the eyes are damaged the fish face a certain death.

A few things you can do to help keep the fish alive after the photo is keep the fish in the water while your fishing partner gets ready to capture the moment or have a warm shanty for the picture and the release.

Use a similar technique in the summer: hot weather can be just as bad. For example, during the dog days of summer, most musky guides and musky anglers will not fish due to the stress and lack of oxygen in the water that will likely result in a dead fish.

Tod Todd of Kingston, Ill., is a professional ice angler and promoter. Tod has competed in several top ice fishing tournaments with outstanding results. Watch Tod on several different TV segments across Illinois.

DOUBLE YOUR ICE FISHING SUCCESS

By Matt Johnson

The All new Double Vision by Vexilar will open your eyes to an exciting new way of fishing and understanding what goes on below the ice. For years, Vexilar has been the innovator and leader in three-color flasher sonar technology and truly catapulted modern day ice fishing to what it is today. Vexilar has become a household name with anglers, and to their credit, Vexilar products have stood the test of time as well with over a million units on the ice today and many over ten years old and still working like new. The efforts from the engineers at Vexilar don't stop with just three-color flashers now, the Fish Scout camera systems amazed anglers with the new wide screen LCD color display and the fact that you can use the system for over 12 hours on a single battery charge. With this breakthrough energy efficiency and slim profile it made it possible for Vexilar to create the ultimate fishing machine for the winter angler and it is called the Double Vision. On top of leading the field in efficiency, you also have a lightweight, leak-proof camera capping off a list of elite qualities. This is a system that incorporates a Vexilar Flasher sonar AND a Fish Scout color monitor into one stand-alone system. The Double Vision system gives anglers the flexibility of using either the camera or the sonar to more fully understand what is





See More Catch More

Vexilar, the world-leader and innovator in ice fishing sonar has done it again. The most advance flasher sonar ever developed is the FLX-28, and now Vexilar has expanded the line-up of FLX models with the new FLX-12 and FLX-20.

Night mode, twenty interference rejection settings, and amazing display resolution are just a few of many features that allow you to see more and catch more fish.

With true, real-time sonar and unmatched resolution, nothing else even comes close.

To see the FLX units in action visit www.vexilar.com.



**Want GPS maps
on the ice?**

Put the Navionics app on your phone starting at \$9.99. keyword: Navionics



FLX-28™



FLX-20™



FLX-12™

first digital Depth, Temperature and Direction display on the monitor so you know exactly where your camera is below you and where it is pointing. Vexilar has answered the call of ice anglers by putting together all the bells and whistles in one exceptional and affordable package.

Benefits of having the Double Vision: Both units are together, making your job as an angler easier and more focused on catching fish. Portability, organization, efficiency these are a just a few simple terms that come to mind. Learn how your flasher works better Understand the many variables with sonar by tying the flasher right into the underwater camera, allowing you to actually see whats occurring in relation to the image portrayed on your flasher. This is education at its finest, and something that anglers of all levels can benefit from. Its entertainment for both kids and adults its no secret that watching fish swim around brings excitement to anglers of all ages, and actually watching a fish eat your presentation jump-starts your adrenaline and makes even the coldest days on the ice seem warm!

There are basically two types of Double Vision packs. One comes with an FL-20 flasher along with the camera and monitor. The other Double vision pack comes without the flasher. So, if you have an existing Vexilar, you can combine your current Vexilar Flasher with the Fish Scout and create your own Double Vision pack. The Double Vision system without sonar comes pre-wired to power either the FL-8 or FL-18 or the FL-12, FL-20 or FL-22 systems. Remember though, you can incorporate any Vexilar flasher into the Double Vision system by purchasing either the FSDV01 or FSDV01DT, which come with your choice of camera but allow for the addition of your favorite Vexilar flasher unit. So, no matter the Vexilar flasher you currently own, you know have an option to turn your system in a powerful one-two-punch! Vexilar is very excited to introduce the new line-up of Double Vision systems and were happy to answer the demands of the modern ice angler. Have fun out there and enjoy your Double Vision system!



TROLLING ON ICE

By Bob Jensen



Open water trolling is a technique, or at least a phrase, that most anglers are familiar with. Trolling on the ice is a technique that more and more ice-anglers are becoming familiar with. Trolling on the ice might not make sense at first, but once you understand the concept, it will start to make sense. Once you put the concept into action, trolling on the ice will become a big part of your ice-fishing arsenal. Trolling on the ice is an effective way to present a bait to walleyes, perch, and crappies. Here's how you "troll on the ice".

I was introduced to trolling on ice by several very accomplished ice anglers back through the years. Lake Mille Lacs guide Tony Roach showed me how to troll for walleyes, John and Duane Peterson introduced me to trolling on ice for Upper Red Lake crappies before that, and Craig Brown and I trolled on ice for Lake Winnibigoshish perch. These are all huge bodies of water, and much of that water is void of fish. "Trolling" helped us find fish quickly, and it will do the same for you wherever you fish through the ice. Trolling on the ice increases your odds of showing your bait to more fish, and the more fish that see your bait, the better your chance of getting bit.

Sonar and GPS/mapping will enable an angler to troll on the ice most effectively. The GPS/mapping is very helpful, but the sonar is a must-have piece of equipment. The GPS enables an angler to drill holes at the edges of drop-offs or up on top of a piece of structure, and that is so helpful and much faster. But the sonar will reveal the depth also, and by drilling several holes and then employing the sonar,

REDESIGNED.



AND READY TO MINGLE WITH THE FISHES.

The Meat Stick rods and combos are balanced to load perfectly with heavier search lures yet enables anglers to watch for the lightest pickups. They feature a sanded glass blank that features a feather light tip for bite detection, and an extremely heavy backbone that loads up for the fight!

The Mackinaw "MACK" rods were designed extensively for the sole purpose of taming big fish. The graphite blank on the bait-cast rods feature spiraled guides for better shock absorption and sensitivity. The handle is designed extra long past the reel seat for better balance and leverage to reduce fatigue. This rod is extremely effective for chasing giant Pike, Lake Trout, Walleye and Salmon.



you can also learn about the structure down below. Additionally and most importantly, the sonar will show if fish are down there. Vexilar is the leader in sonar technology. Once you use a Vexilar and learn how to interpret it, you will feel under-gunned and even out-gunned if you don't have one.

Starting off, you find the area where you want to fish and drill holes. Drill at different depths. Now we start trolling. The series of holes is considered the "trolling pass". Once you get your trolling pass set up, it's just a matter of moving from hole to hole until you find a hot hole. Put the transducer for your sonar in the hole, drop a bait to the bottom, and watch for fish life. If you don't see something within five minutes, reel up and "troll" to the next hole.

A jigging spoon such as a Buck-Shot Rattle spoon is outstanding for trolling on the ice. You can fish them quickly to determine if fish are in the area. Try different presentations until the fish tell you what they want.

Most anglers, when trolling on the ice, like a one-person portable shelter for their "boat". When ice-trolling, if there are 2 anglers, it works best if they fish separately. That enables them to cover more water. The Pro Cottage from Otter is a lightweight portable that pulls easily and is comfortable to fish from. And, it has plenty of room for all the equipment that you will need.

If you want to catch more fish this winter, try trolling on ice. Once you do, you'll see why this approach is so effective.

To see new and old episodes of Fishing the Midwest television, new and archived articles, and fishing video tips, go to www.fishingthemidwest.com.



Know When To Set The Hook

By Brian 'Bro Brosdahl

January has the coldest average temperatures of the winter, which can put the brakes on the early ice bites for both gamefish and panfish, especially during the long stretches of below zero temperatures.

November and December are the cloudiest months of the year, with both months averaging around 18

days of cloudy weather. Once January arrives, the clouds are usually gone and clear skies and bitter cold are more the norm in the northernmost parts of the ice belt.

The good news is the ice is usually thick enough for vehicle traffic by January in my part of the country, which allows anglers to spread out on the lakes. Deep snow and ice heaves are the two most likely obstacles for anglers to deal with in January, along with cold and a tough bite for most species of fish.

Fish still have to eat, regardless of the weather and the ice conditions. The mid winter blues often include extra finicky and sluggish fish that will barely move the tip of your rod if you are able to get them to bite.

I like to use a super sensitive Quicktip Frabill 25" Bro Series Rod and a 371 Straightline reel spooled with 2 pound test line for panfish. This gives my lures the most natural presentation possible. By using straightline reels, anglers can reduce lure spin, which often spooks finicky fish.

Seeing is believing when the bite is tough. Some anglers are hooked on sight fishing, but that only works when the fish are shallow and the water is clear enough for anglers to see the bottom.

Anglers that are sight fishing also have to fish out of a house that is completely dark inside and use an extremely short rod, so they can sit over the top of their holes and look down into the water to see their lure and the fish.

NERO

RUSSIAN MADE HAND AUGERS

Award winning ice augers made of Russian steel of unmatched quality that cuts ice with amazing ease!

Un-Folds and Telescopes to the size of a normal hand auger. Easily folds back for efficient storage & transport

[Watch Online](#)



Visit www.htent.com or call
920-533-5080 to find your
nearest NERO retailer.

HT  
WWW.HTICE.COM™

If all this sounds like a recipe for a sore back and tough fishing, there is another way for anglers to see the bites with their own eyes and not be limited to fishing shallow water and a completely dark fish house.

The new generation AquaVu cameras is like sight fishing only better, because you don't have to lean over the hole trying to see the bites and know when to set the hook.

When I first started using an AquaVu camera way back in 1997, the cameras were a very cool innovation



and everybody wanted one. The problem was the units were in black and white and were heavy and awkward to use. The cables were also a problem because they would get tangled and catch on the ice when anglers tried to move from hole to hole without wrapping up the cable.

The old cameras were good for seeing the bottom, but the picture was not very clear and the cameras were not very "user friendly".

Fortunately, technology keeps evolving and the new HD AquaVu Cameras have come a very long way since they were first introduced to the fishing masses. If you haven't seen an AquaVu camera recently, then you really can't appreciate how far the technology has come.

The AquaVu Micro 5 ProRevolution underwater camera is a real game changer. The compact size, super clear color picture and many advanced features for portability and ease of handling make them something anglers need to have to take their fishing to the next level.

The Micro 5's are so sleek they fit in the palm of your hand, with High Definition cameras and a built-in reel to wind up and let out the cord,

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK (www.odumagazine.com)

which makes them super fast and easy to use.

Anglers are able to set the camera lens in three positions, so they are always in the perfect position for Up Viewing, Down Viewing or Side Viewing. This allows anglers to fish the entire water column effectively, no matter what type of fishing they are doing.

Up viewing is used mostly for shallow water and weeds, so anglers are able to look towards the surface of the ice and be able to look through the weeds and see the fish and their bait at the same time.

Down viewing is used when fish are in deeper water and close enough to the bottom that anglers can use the bottom as a backdrop to help see the fish. Having the camera lens positioned above the fish also helps reduce the chances of spooking the fish with the lens.

Side viewing usually works best when the fish are suspended further from the bottom or when I am hunkering down in my Frabill Bro Series Side Step house that gives me enough floor space to drill a separate hole for the AquaVu. This gives me the perfect viewing position so I can watch one or more lines from a safe distance and still be able to see them clearly.

Using an AquaVu to actually see the fish is like sight fishing at any depth. Anglers don't have to rely on "feel" to know when to set the hook. They will actually see when the fish takes the bait and will have instant feedback on how the fish are reacting to their bait.

Seeing is believing. Anglers will know the type and size of the fish they are dealing with because they can see them on their AquaVu.

This does not mean anglers no longer need to use sonar while ice fishing. The engineers at Humminbird have also been busy. The new Ice Helix 7 G2 comes with Chirp technology to separate individual targets like never before and Smart Strike, which helps even rookie anglers fish like a pro.

I had a prototype of one of the new Humminbird units last winter, but I was strongly advised not to let other people see it, so it was like having a secret weapon that nobody else knew about.

Now I can talk about the new Humminbird units all I want, so come and see me at one of my stops on the Bro Road Show, so I can show you what all the fuss is about in person.

(Brian 'Bro Brosdahl is a fishing guide, multimedia outdoor promoter, product specialist and ice fishing innovator. He can be contacted bbro@paulbunyan.net or online on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook).

THE WORLD'S FIRST SELF ILLUMINATING SPOON

Northland
FISHING TACKLE



Replaceable
Glo-Shot™ Sticks

GLOWS 12+ HOURS

GLO-SHOT™ SPOON

More Colors. More Tackle

NorthlandTackle.com

FISHING BIG BAITS

By Tom Gruenwald

Fishing for trophies with larger baits but concerned your tackle can't handle it?

Don't be! When using larger baits, HT's Polar tip-up can be adjusted to create heavier settings and increase the amount of "drag," using several methods:

For a slight increase in "drag" effect, simply place the flag



wire on the notched side of the trip shaft.

To increase the "drag" effect more, set the flag wire on the side of the trip shaft that causes the wire to travel UP the angled flag wire whenever the spool turns—this means the trip actually has to exert force downward on the spring loaded flag before releasing, which requires more overall force to trip the flag. To increase this "drag" effect even further, combine this tip with the above step by placing the flag wire on the notched side of the trip.

If this still isn't enough pressure, loosen the set screw holding central tube mechanism in place, raise the tube and re-tighten the set screw with the tube set in this exaggerated position. This setting increases the angle of the flag wire against the trip, and provided the trip shaft is set on the side of the flag wire where the trip must travel up the angled flag wire to release, this increased angle requires the trip shaft to actually push the flag wire even further downward before tripping, thereby increasing the amount of force needed to trip the flag and creating an even heavier "drag" effect. The higher the angle, the more force, and thus the more "drag" you can create.

You can also bend a curve in the flag wire itself, which accentuates the angle of the flag wire against the trip shaft. This creates a considerable amount of additional drag, especially when this trick is combined with the raised tube mechanism described above. The deeper the bend, the higher the tension.

For a maximum amount of drag tension, combine all of the above steps. Raise the tube mechanism high, bend a deep curve in the flag wire and being sure the trip must slide up the flag wire to release, set the flag wire on the notched side of the trip.

For in-between settings, try mixing just one or two of these steps and set using only slight or moderate flag wire angles, tuned carefully to provide your desired level of tension.



DEPEND ON IT.

Guaranteed against freeze-ups, Polar Thunder Tip-Ups are your trusty sidekick—always ready for that next fish. With a telescopic flag wire, a high-visibility reflective flag and a glow-in-the-dark shaft mechanism, you will always be alerted when a fish takes your bait—even in low-light conditions! The adjustable flag wire provides multi-level tension settings for every size fish and bait. Polar Thunder Tip-Ups feature a large capacity 500Z spool with handle and a lightweight, slim profile for easy transporting and storage.

Visit www.icefish.com to find your nearest Polar Thunder Tip-Up retailer.



Home of the
**ORIGINAL
POLAR TIP-UP**

“Don’t trust your trophy to an imitation.”

920-533-5080

HT  
WWW.HTICE.COM

TURN NEGATIVE FISH INTO BITING FISH



“Another way to entice those negative biters is to keep things natural. By this I mean offer something in a dark brown, purple, black or blood red in color.”

By Matt Johnson

Can you turn a negative fish into an aggressive biter? Maybe — but it can take some real effort. You have to pull out all the stops. Top anglers have several tricks to get the fish to bite when they don't want to.

Fish are simplistic for the most part. They need to eat to survive. The idea of dropping down a tiny bite-size morsel for the fish to eat seems easy enough, but what about when those fish snub the bait and

turn away an easy meal? Do we just sit it out or tell our friends the fish are not biting? Definitely not! It's time to dive into the bag of tricks and pull out methods that work.

Oftentimes we are quick to change the size of the presentation we are using, but we don't have to always follow the rules. I prefer to change the jigging action first. I'm a firm believer that every fish will bite if the bait is presented in the right manner and action. The fish will commit if it feels it has a suitable dance partner. Change your jigging sequence and you'll induce hunger. Also keep in mind the option of changing the direction of movement both up and down, meaning working the entire water column even when a fish is present on your flasher. Dropping the bait below a negative fish and holding it motionless can trigger a strike too.

Breaking away from the live-bait realm can also pay off in dividends. Switching to a plastic, whether scented or not, can trigger even the most skittish of biters. The finesse tails available today quiver ever so slightly and can force negative fish into a feeding frenzy. One trick with these finesse tails is to never stop the bait from moving. I encourage you to keep the plastic constantly quivering even when a fish begins its staring contest. We are too quick to stop the bait once a fish moves in and that can sometimes be the biggest mistake we make. Look for soft and subtle baits and don't neglect the offerings loaded with tentacles. Yes they might break off, but when the going gets tough you need to only plan for one bite at a time.

Another way to entice those negative biters is to keep things natural. By this I mean offer something in a dark brown, purple, black or blood red in color. Leave the glows at home and "match the hatch." The ice



We are more than ice anglers.

We hear a lot about "limit your catch, don't catch your limit" when it comes to open-water fishing. How you shouldn't dump your bait. Why you should let the big ones live to fight another day. But when the snow falls and the lakes freeze over, we don't forget those valuable lessons. We still handle fish with care. We still leave the ice cleaner than we found it. We still make conscious decisions at home to help improve habitat downstream. Because we are more than ice fishing fanatics.

We Are Stewards.

<http://www.recycledfish.org>

Live a lifestyle of stewardship both on and off the water—because our lifestyle runs downstream.
RecycledFish.org

fishing community is so saturated with glow options that we now feel we're doing something wrong if we don't fish them. I'm not saying forget the glows completely, but I challenge you to try more natural colors when seeking that extra bite. Small blood-red noodle plastics can effectively imitate blood worm. All black jigs can easily resemble a variety of aquatic insects. These are just a few options of natural baits, look in your tackle arsenal and find more. Fish simple and slow, and give the fish what they already eat in the natural environment.

Probably the most effective trick when nothing seems to work is to just simply pack up and move. Moving can mean to a new spot on the lake or to a new lake altogether. Don't fall victim to sitting in one

spot if the fish are not biting. I can assure you that there are biting fish somewhere, you just have to take the initiative and go find them. Making small moves across a piece of structure is a great way to start. Followed by more drastic moves where you take the cruise across the lake to a whole new pattern. And if all else fails, hop on the road and attack a new body of water. The old saying "don't beat a dead horse" can sometimes ring true when sitting out on the ice. Move and be the mobile ice angler I know you can be.

While our days might not always be plentiful, we still can expect to catch fish regardless of the conditions. With a little patience and adjusting, we can entice even the most negative fish into biting. Change your action, string up a finesse tail and dust off the black jigs: the fish are waiting.

ULTIMATE
TIP UP
PATENT PENDING

- Walleye
- Pike
- Crappie
- Blue Gill
- Perch

CATCH MORE FISH!

- HEATED
- LONG RANGE RADIO ALERT
- AUTO JIGGING
- NO RESISTANCE
- ELECTRONIC OPERATION

**WILL OUT FISH A CONVENTIONAL TIP UP
GUARANTEED!**



GRAVE YARD SHIFT WALLEYES

By Jason Mitchell

So many fisheries come to mind where after dark patterns offer some of the best opportunities for catching fish. After dark strategies and locations however can vary dramatically from where we might find fish during daylight or twilight hours.

What happens so often to us as anglers is that we simply figure out one window or movement of fish and when that window ends, we assume that the bite is over. Could be setting up on a classic point anticipating the sunset bite. A classic pattern might start in deeper water and as the day progresses to where the sun hits the horizon, we find an intense window of fish activity on top of the point that might last half an hour. What so often happens is that after this intense flurry, we quit marking fish and assume that the bite is over. The bite might indeed be over if we don't make any adjustments but the reality is that we can prolong the bite and keep catching fish if we move with the fish. Of course there are also basin and transition bites as well like what we often see on Red Lake and Mille Lacs after dark. Perhaps the toughest aspect of catching walleye well after dark is forgetting some of the lessons we tend to learn during the day.

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

So often, finding and catching walleyes is all about reading structure and focusing on edges. After dark however, you can throw that edge mentality out the window. We often find walleyes roaming away from structure well after dark. Large expansive flats in shallow water are a favorite location. That four to six foot sand flat that is several acres might be void of walleye activity during the day where even sunrise and sunset patterns seem to revolve around structure that breaks into deeper water. In the middle of the night however, walleyes will often push up and roam much shallower water than what some anglers would envision.

On some fisheries, walleye will also be more apt to eat much higher in the water column well after dark. We have seen many scenarios where we caught more walleye after dark by fishing half way

down in the water column, especially for big fish. This is particularly true for set rods and tip ups with big bait.

Like any other time of year, full moon periods can make some after dark patterns better but there will often be feeding windows that happen in intense flurries through the night. Don't expect activity all night long, wait out the windows because ninety percent of the activity will happen during ten percent of the time.

My favorite after dark locations and patterns are not necessarily classic walleye structure or breaklines that are close to deeper water. Typically, large flats or even basins and large shelves shine after dark. I use the whitetail deer analogy a lot when describing walleye patterns and movements. During the day, deer might follow an edge but come middle of the night, they might be more apt to be standing out in the middle of a soybean field that is several hundred acres. Walleyes can also be just as random after dark.

Because the exact location of fish can be so random on large flats and shelves, fishing these locations takes a certain kind of mentality. You can spread out tip ups to increase the chances of contacting these roaming fish or you can fish out of a shelter but in this situation, you have to realize that the fish are going to find you. This isn't a situation where you can necessarily move around to find these random fish, set up so that at some point during the night... these fish find you. The beauty of fishing well after dark is that these fish will be looking for you. What makes after dark patterns for walleye so much fun is

THE ICE LINE COMETH.

NEARLY INVISIBLE
IN WATER

PERFECT BALANCE OF
STRETCH AND HOOK
SETTING STRENGTH

METERED LINE VISIBLE
TO THE ANGLER,
INVISIBLE TO FISH

HIGHLY ABRASION
RESISTANT

DESIGNED ESPECIALLY
FOR COLD WEATHER

"Clam has revolutionized ice fishing line. Frost Ice Line maintain flexibility at extreme temperatures, giving anglers better sensitivity and control. And that puts more fish on the ice".

— Dave Genz
Godfather of Ice Fishing



PREMIUM LINE

FROST ICE



DEVELOPED FOR
CLAM PRO TACKLE BY

SUNLINE

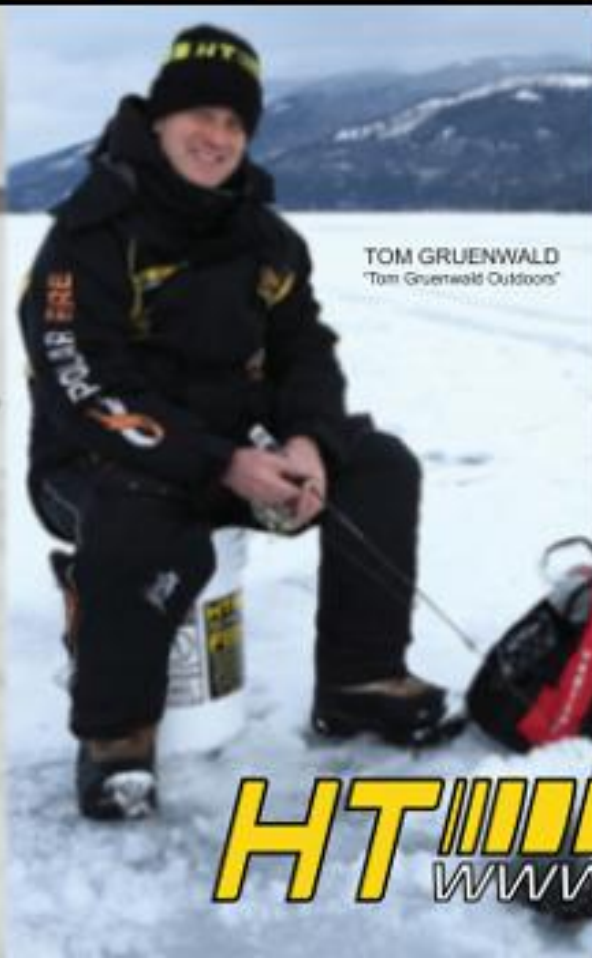
Available in braid, fluorocarbon, and monofilament.
visit clamoutdoors.com for details

that these fish are typically much more aggressive and these fish are looking for a meal. The bites are often much more intense. These fish will peel off much more line off a tip up for example or hit a lure repeatedly.

When fishing after dark, I am a big proponent of using glow finishes on lures. Not always necessary but I have seen so many situations where we almost immediately caught a fish after charging a lure. When using live bait on tip ups, don't hesitate to use larger baits that are up to eight inches long. Clip the tails of rambunctious chubs and suckers so that they can't trip flags or pull the roller around the spool. Strike indicators are nice to have on tip ups. Other nice tools for the grave yard shit include head lamps and LED lights for inside shelters. LED light sources have about replaced a lot of traditional propane lanterns.

What can make the after dark period so fun is the intensity of the mayhem. You can have an hour or two of complete silence interrupted by the most intense feeding windows. The bite is often a full on blitz where it seems like every line has a fish. Where every tip up is out of the water and there are fish flopping all over the ice. Realistically, this after dark window is what can make spending the night in a fish house so appealing. Tangled rattle reels and chaos. On so many fisheries, the period between sunset and sunrise offers some of ice fishing's most exciting walleye fishing.

1974  2017



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 1,000 ice fishing items or find your nearest HT Retailer at www.htent.com.

920-533-5080

HT 
WWW.HTICE.COM™



First Ice Attack!

By Chip Leer

Catch the most fish possible during winter's hottest bite.

First-ice is a magical time. Gamefish of all stripes are on the bite and willing to swim farther and strike harder. Whether you're after panfish, pike, walleyes or trout, this is the time to get out and enjoy the hottest bite of the year.

Here's the drill:

There are times to finesse tiny baits, but this isn't it. To make the most of first-ice opportunities, I recommend living large—fishing faster, with larger lures, than during any other time of the winter.

Arm yourself with a fistful of fast-





dropping lures fit for flashy, gaudy, noisy presentations. Think LIVETARGET Golden Shiner Rattlebait

(<https://www.livetargetlures.com/freshwater/golden-shiner-rattlebait>), Northland Fishing Tackle Buck-Shot Rattle Spoons (<https://shop.northlandtackle.com/spoons-and-swimming-lures/buck-shot-rattle-spoon/>), and Puppet Minnows. To keep yourself light and mobile, keep the selection simple enough to fit inside a pocket sized box.

In a similar vein, limit the rest of your gear as well. A couple of rods, a flasher, bait and auger are all you need for fast-paced, first-ice action. Anything else only slows you down.



And speaking of the auger (<https://www.rapala.com/strikemaster/power-ice-augers/lazerandtrade-lite/LZ-6.html?cgid=strikemaster-power#start=7&cgid=strikemaster-power>), a 6-inch drill is perfect for punching holes in a hurry. As a bonus, your fish look so much bigger sliding onto the ice, your friends will love seeing pictures of them on social media!

After choosing a high-percentage fishing area for the species you're seeking, pop open a handful of holes and slip into search mode.

Use sonar (<https://www.rapala.com/marcum/fish-finders-sonar/digital-ice-systems/lx-7-digital-sonar-system-8-lcd-dual-beam/LX-7-digital-sonar-system-8-lcd-dual-beam/>)



7.html?cgid=marcum-sonar-digitalIceSystems#start=2&cgid=marcum-sonar-digitalIceSystems) to look for fish. When blips appear onscreen, drop a lure just above the level of the fish and get busy with a mix of quick, aggressive lifts, short pauses, twitches and other tempting moves.

If the fish look but don't bite, throw down a slightly smaller bait (rigged on the second rod) and tone things down a little. Follow up these subtle jigstrokes by pounding bottom to kick up a little dust.

Just don't spend too much time trying to tempt a reluctant fish into biting, because there are plenty of active ones around. After a minute or two of coaxing, it's time to move on.

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

If no fish are present when you drop your transducer in a hole, you can still try to attract biters to the strike zone. Drop a big flashy jig or spoon five feet off the bottom and fish it down with a series of flashy attraction strokes interspersed with short pauses.

Give these attraction strokes a minute or two to lure nearby fish. If nothing responds, reel up and continue your quest for first-ice success.

Based in Walker, Minnesota, noted fishing authority and outdoor communicator Chip Leer operates Fishing the WildSide. For more information look to www.fishingthewildside.net or find Chip Leer's Fishing the WildSide on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram.



GILLING UP FOR ICE

By Jim Ahonen & Chuck Mason

As the winter months come upon us, myself and thousands of ice anglers find ourselves looking through some of the tackle and reflecting on the few days we actually had ice fishing last year. I have come to notice that on small inland lakes first ice makes for some aggressive bluegill bites. They are on the move for forage while staying areas that offer good levels of oxygen. Within these groups of bluegills it's common to crappie and both largemouth and smallmouth bass mixed into the action. A lot of the lakes that don't have access for the public, and I have found that the small amount of fishing pressure will allow for some of the best fishing you can find during the early season..

As far as baits go for these fish, a tungsten #4mm jigs simply tipped with a wax worm, or a few spikes, or mousies works great. Plastics that resemble a grub or aquatic life also can be quite effective during an aggressive panfish bite. They tend to stay on the hook better in after repetitive bites. That said I firmly believe that live bait is the go-to choice for all situations, while plastics can be hot early in the morning and then cool off as the day progresses.

When I do use soft plastics, I find it critical to enhance the scent that is given off by the bait. Lure Lipstick works extremely well for not only enhancing any products scent profile which will entice panfish to bite, but it also creates a scent trail in the water. Think of it as chumming for sharks or those giant tuna on the television shows. The pheromone infused product will linger in the area or go with the current, attracting more fish to your bait.



When I hit one of these small lakes, I look for areas that have small flats containing weed beds that are near contour drop-offs. The panfish can be found in the shallow beds and on the drop. Crappie, in particular like the drops for feeding, but can also quickly dash for cover in the weeds when a predator comes by. As the ice fishing season drags on, oxygen levels in the water tend to dissipate and fish metabolism slows down and the bluegill tend to drift down to the deeper basins within a lake and the crappie will suspend off the bottom in the same areas.

When starting out, I will drill a series of holes in the weed beds and then work my way towards the drop-offs. Here is where having a flasher is crucial to have any success. I take my Vexilar and work through each hole, where I can see my jig presentation and even the fish within the tall weeds. Within a few minutes, if my Vex doesn't show any movement, I move off and investigate the next hole. Without my flasher, it's like fishing blind and harkens back to the day when they used a lead weight to find the bottom, then handlined it back up and pegged your line to get back to a foot or so off the bottom. Unfortunately this old school method never showed you if a crappie was suspending higher up in the water column!



With today's modern equipment and advances in clothing, advanced attractants, tackle, shelters and power augers, anglers can chase gills throughout the season in any kind of weather. Remember to look for panfish near their spring feeding and spawning areas as the season comes to an end, ice permitting that is. As the snows melt off, and the ice starts to thin out, light will filter through and stimulate the growth of weeds, bringing the fish back to the beds for food and increased oxygen levels.



Spy Games on Ice: Picking the Right Jig

By “Panfish” Phil Laube

Chances are, your winter jig boxes are overflowing with jigs of all different sizes, profiles and colors—probably lots of tungsten and some lead. Sure, it’s great to have a tool for every job, but so many choices can make picking the right bait a difficult, time-consuming task.

The best jig to begin any hardwater panfish trip? “Whatever you already have tied on your rod,” says Custom Jigs & Spins’ marketing director, Walt Matan.

Matan’s mainstay is a black Custom Jigs & Spins Ratso—a lead horizontal jig and Original Finesse Plastic combo that catches panfish across the Ice Belt. “I always have at least one rod with a black Ratso tied on. A lot of times, it’s the first and last bait I need to use for ice panfish on any given day.”

But Matan admits there are situations that call for constant experimentation. Tweaks in jig size, profile, orientation (horizontal vs vertical vs “verti-zontal”) and color may be the only way to grind out a few fish during difficult, post-frontal conditions or when fishing pressured waters. A peek inside Matan’s jig boxes reveals a Crayola assortment of colors, from natural, bug-matching baits to bright chartreuse, orange, pink and UV/glow options.

“Color’s a funny subject,” says Matan. “You get arguments about its importance, but experience proves time and again that it can matter a lot, especially with crappies. Bluegills, on the other hand, seem a bit more focused on profile and size than color.”

So, what’s the best way to cycle through jigs on any given day? Sure, you can randomly tie on different jigs and watch your flasher. Brainerd, Minnesota’s “Panfish” Phil Laube has a better way.

“Once I know I’m on panfish, I drop my Aqua-Vu underwater camera and watch fish respond. I usually have a half-dozen rods with me, each rigged with different baits. Large profile vs small, tungsten vs lead,

THE WORLD’S FIRST SELF ILLUMINATING SPOON

Northland
FISHING TACKLE



Replaceable
Glo-Shot™ Sticks
GLOWS 12+ HOURS

GLO-SHOT™ SPOON

More Colors. More Tackle NorthlandTackle.com

horizontal vs vertical, natural patterns vs bright glow and UV, etc. Then I watch how crappies and bluegills approach the baits on the camera in real-time. Beats watching pixels or blips on a fish-finder,” says the diehard ice fishing enthusiast.



In choosing the right jig, Laube says a lot of factors come into play, like depth, water clarity, and the food fish are keyed into on any given day and location. “I try color and size extremes. For example, I might start with natural black, dark purple, and gold, then move to the other side of the spectrum with chartreuse, orange, and pink. With crappies, bigger baits work better when they’re feeding on minnows and the smaller 3mm to 4mm jigs when they’re vacuuming tiny critters,” says Laube.



“The Custom Jigs & Spins Chekai is my go-to – typically rigged with an Original Finesse Plastic or Wedgee. Close second is a Majmun, rigged with the same. If panfish are really finicky, I work through tiny, slower-falling lead jigs like the Diamond Jig, Gill Pill or tiny #12 Demon threaded with one larvae or waxy on 2-pound line. No matter the situation, the Aqua-Vu camera definitely speeds up the whole process of dialing in the right bait for the situation.”

For 2018, Custom Jigs & Spins has added 10 new glow and non-glow colors to the hugely popular Chekai

Tungsten Ice Jig series in all four sizes (5mm, 4.5mm, 4mm, 3mm). New colors include Wonder Glow, Gold Glow Tip, Orange Puffer, Circus Clown, Pink Clown, Pink Eye, Rainbow Tiger, Lemonade, Fireball, Aqua and Junebug. These new additions bring the total count of Chekai color options to 22 unique, fish-catching patterns! MSRP \$2.50.



Tungsten vs. Lead For Panfish

By Jason Mitchell

In pursuit of big panfish, our travels take us across the Country. We have explored big panfish patterns in reservoirs, natural lakes, farm ponds and beyond. My billfold usually has fishing licenses from at least half a dozen states or more. What always amazes me and in my opinion makes fishing exciting and fun is how we encounter different factors, different influences wherever we fish. Lake type, predators and of course forage all dictate the fish movements and patterns but you can never assume anything with fishing.

You will find a particular scenario that has a cause and effect influence on fish location and drive five miles down the road to the next lake and find a completely different set of rules. Fish enough water and you stumble into some pretty good lessons...



some which have a way of repeating.

On today's ice fishing scene, the merits or attributes of tungsten jigs has been a hot topic amongst anglers. Tungsten jigs originated in European match fishing circles and quickly became popular in the States. The allure of tungsten is that the metal is much heavier than lead so a jig that is the same size as it's lead counterpart sinks much faster. The extra weight of tungsten also enables ice anglers to use smaller profiles. Tungsten is extremely popular right now with ice anglers but isn't the end all. There is still a time and place for lead jigs. Know the different applications where each has a place.

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

Tungsten Craze

One big advantage of tungsten is that the added weight allows anglers to get away with heavier line. Four pound test will feel like two pound test. Tungsten also seems to impart more action on soft plastics when quivered in place because the drop is more abrupt for a more distinct action on any tentacle or tail. Horizontal tungsten jigs tipped with a soft plastic have a larger footprint and move more water. I personally believe fish can feel, see and find this presentation from further away than some other presentations. When in search mode, the tungsten and soft plastic combination is tough to beat. Love this option as well when breaking down basins when looking for suspended fish. Another scenario when tungsten can really shine is breaking down through the canopy of tall and deep weed lines.

At the end of the day however, tungsten just flat out shines for exploiting a good bite. On a typical good

bite, you are going to catch more fish through the day when you can reel up the fish quicker (four pound test) and get back down to the fish quicker. Not that you have to use heavier line but that is one advantage that is afforded if you want it.

Case for Lead

Now of course tungsten isn't the end all. If there is a mistake many ice anglers are making right now that would be forgetting about the advantages of lead. There are several situations where traditional lead gives the ice angler a distinct advantage and most of those situations occur with tough bites. Perhaps the most reliable way to counter a tough bite is to decrease the profile of the presentation and make the presentation more subtle by moving less water or slowing the presentation down. Vertical lead jigs in particular leave a much smaller footprint that more closely mimics a lot of the small invertebrates and large zooplankton. There are other scenarios where the slower fall of lead can be incorporated into the presentation where a slow fall can often trigger strikes. Lead can also aid with some styles of bite detection.

Remember above where we made the comment that tungsten can make four pound test feel like two pound test? That comment was implied because the added weight of tungsten will take out any memory or coil that can develop

TAILORED FOR THE OUTDOOR WOMAN!



ADVENTURESS

HUNT. FISH. EXPLORE. LIVE.

~ FREE DIGITAL MAGAZINE ~
betheadventuress.com

in the heavier line, making the presentation feel more sensitive. This strategy can work well when using a spring bobber or any bite detection where you can either watch for or feel a bite with the end of the rod. When fish suck in the jig and coast forward, this style of bite detection is often optimum.



HOW IT'S DONE.

PROVEN RELIABILITY MEETS HIGH PERFORMANCE.

The razor sharp heat annealed blades on Polar Fire's Power Augers cut quickly and effortlessly—no matter how thick the ice. Available with 33, 43 or 52 cc two cycle or 35 cc four cycle engines, Polar Fire delivers powerful torque and a reliable design that is built to last. Constructed of durable steel alloy with a rugged cast aluminum gear housing, Polar Fire Power Augers get the job done!

Visit PolarFireGear.com to find your nearest Polar Fire retailer.

POLAR FIRE

HT   WWW.HTICE.COM

Home of the **ORIGINAL POLAR TIP-UP**

"Don't trust your trophy to an imitation."

920-533-5080

TOM GRUENWALD
"Fish Gruesome World
Outdoors"

There are other situations however where fish will suck in and spit out the jig or suck in the jig and stay in one place sometimes slowly backing up. This type of bite can be much more challenging and anglers often have to watch the line for indication of a strike instead of having a focus on the rod tip. When the bite dictates that the angler watches the line, some coil in the line offers an advantage. This is a prime situation where lead catches fish over tungsten because the added weight of tungsten can reduce your ability to watch for this type of bite. The toughest bites often dictate lead jigs combined with one pound test.

Basically if the coil in the line gets bigger or less, you set the hook. On the toughest bites, this is the only way you will be able to catch fish. For years, there were pockets of ice anglers that used the old four-pound and two-pound hi-vis Stren that was discontinued years ago. In today's world, line has gotten more specialized for today's ice anglers targeting panfish. The Clam Pro Tackle Frost Line features thread diameter monofilament in one through four pound test that features a high vis orange interval for better visibility when watching the line.

These different extremes basically encompass the power fishing mindset where the angler fishes through water fast in an attempt to find fresh fish (horizontal tungsten profiles with soft plastics). The other end of the spectrum is difficult fish that require some finesse and possibly live bait where strike indication is often accomplished by watching the line (vertical lead jigs with live bait and high-vis line). The toughest question to answer when angling is when to leave fish to find fish. The best anglers have that intuition and are also comfortable with both extremes of the presentation spectrum. The debate between tungsten and lead is not which is better but rather when to use each. Tungsten has brought many advantages but there will always be a place for lead. New school versus old school.

Let the good times roll...and rattle!

BE VERSATILE FOR MORE ICE FISHING SUCCESS

By Bob Jensen

Across the ice-belt there are several species of fish that anglers have the opportunity to catch from under the ice. Walleyes, northern pike, perch, crappies and other types of panfish, smallmouth and largemouth bass and even catfish can be caught by ice-anglers. The thing is, our presentation needs to change for the different types of fish. Different species of fish respond to different presentations. Walleyes like spoons, panfish like tiny jigs, and pike like natural baits. If you're targeting a particular specie of fish, you need to employ a technique that that specie is most likely to respond to.

However, there are some basic principles of fishing that you need to keep in mind regardless of what fish you want to catch. Following are some of those basic principles. The most important consideration is finding the areas where the fish are most likely to bite your bait. Some community holes will hold lots





lithiumshuttle **new**

Add the long-life power of Lithium ION to your MarCum[®] sonar units. Compact, lightweight and long-lasting, the Lithium Shuttle, powered by a 12-volt 12-amp hour Lithium ION polymer battery, can extend your unit's continuous run time up to 40 hours.

Designed for the new MarCum[®] M-Series and the LX-6s & LX-7 sonar systems.

(see page 26 for specs and complete details)

of fish, but fishing pressure makes those fish very selective. And, after awhile, those community holes get fished down. Take some time to search out other areas away from the fishing pressure: Those fish will be more likely to bite your bait, making them easier to catch.

Once you find the fish, you want to keep your bait above them for a couple of reasons. First of all, fish see up better than they see down. If your bait is above them, they're more likely to see it, which makes them more likely to eat it.

The other reason for keeping your bait above the fish is to possibly prevent spooking the other fish around them. If you see fish on the sonar, drop your bait but stop it when it's still three or four feet above the fish. Active fish will come up and take the bait. Catch the active ones first. If they quit rising to the bait, then allow it to get closer to them. If you drop it into the group of fish right away and catch a couple, the rest of the school might spook. Make the active ones move away from the school to prevent spooking. I use a Vexilar FLX-28 in the Zoom Mode much of the time. This unit enables me to "zoom" in on a particular zone, so the definition is really good, and I'm able to position my bait exactly where I want it to be.

Another important thing to keep in mind for more ice-fishing success for any specie: If they're not responding to what you're doing, do something else. If you chase panfish when you're ice-fishing, you probably know how productive some of the different baits in the Bro's Bug Collection can be. These are baits that were designed for ice-fishing. They're all very small, and each has its own distinctive quality. The differences may not be that much, but the fish can tell the difference and at times will favor one over the other.

Last thing: As the ice-fishing season proceeds, don't sit on one hole too long. I know lots of ice-anglers that move constantly. If they're on a big structure, they'll put an auger, sonar, and anything else they need into a portable shelter and just keep popping holes until they find the fish. The Otter Pro Cottage is perfect for this plan of attack. It can seat two anglers, but I like plenty of room, so I use this unit even when fishing alone.

Now is when you need to be ice-fishing. If you employ the tactics above, you'll catch more fish more often when you go ice-fishing.





LIVETARGET's Lipless Rattlebait Primer For Hardwater Walleyes

Recent years have witnessed explosive growth in our understanding of the hardwater walleye. As more anglers tread familiar and exotic walleye waters, our repertoire of productive techniques for everyone's favorite Perciformes has expanded rapidly. Gone are the days when we were limited to set lines dangling sucker minnows along weedlines, hoping for a random bite or two as the sun tucked behind the trees. The most successful walleye anglers have adopted a power fishing approach, running-and-gunning with big baits and aggressive presentations; a mobile mindset that has been rewarded with more and bigger fish.

Ground Zero for this hardwater walleye revolution is the lipless rattlebait. A mainstay of open water anglers throughout North America, the lipless rattlebait is just as deadly when presented through an

eight-inch hole. Wait, better make that a ten-inch hole, because when you fish lipless rattlebaits to their full potential, you'll need that extra space.

There is no better way to shorten the learning curve on a new technique than to pick the brain of an expert. North Dakota-based angler Chad Maloy, past president of Fargo-Moorhead Walleyes Unlimited and a veteran of the Masters Walleye Circuit, is a lipless rattlebait specialist, bringing trophy walleyes topside using ice fishing's hottest presentation on both sides of the international border. We asked Chad to help direct budding rattlebait warriors along the path to success, and he did much more: Chad provided a veritable roadmap that is guaranteed to help you catch your first lipless rattlebait walleye this season.



Maloy is a big believer in LIVETARGET lipless rattlebaits, which he fishes throughout the hardwater season. "I use LIVETARGET lipless rattlebaits all season long. They do an awesome job of locating and attracting the most active fish in an area, and turning those fish into biters.



“First of all, LIVETARGET rattlebaits have an infinite dive curve. They can literally be fished from shallow water, less than a foot deep, to the deepest section of the lake. That allows me to target walleyes with lipless rattlebaits all season long, and at all hours of the day.”

What is the most effective way to present the lipless rattlebait through the ice? Maloy continues, “I start out dropping the lure to the bottom. There have been times when it never gets there because it’s intercepted. If that doesn’t happen, I give it a few very long and aggressive rips to the lure, which sends out a shock wave of sound and vibration.”

That shock wave, easily audible to anglers on the ice, originates from LIVETARGET’s unsurpassed internal rattle system. “What I have witnessed over the years, landing giant walleyes from Devil’s Lake in North Dakota to greenbacks from Lake Winnipeg, is that the rattles in LIVETARGET rattlebaits are unlike any other. They have a special, effective sound that others don’t...and it’s killer!”



Let’s get back to that hole in the ice. Once Maloy rips his LIVETARGET rattlebait to call fish in, he starts paying close attention to his electronics, watching for, “any blip in the water column. It’s not uncommon for larger fish to be anywhere from bottom to 3 feet below the ice. I see a promising mark, I bring my lure right above the fish and try to seal the deal with one of three different moves. First, I get the lure to shake, activating the rattles without making large vertical moves. Alternately, I imitate a fleeing baitfish by giving the bait shorter rips. My ace-in-the-hole is to slowly lift the lure an inch or so, then drop the rod tip quickly to throw slack in the line. This makes the lure freefall, and shimmy dramatically on the fall. All that’s left to do is set the hook and enjoy the ride!”

(Grab a pen and notepad, because what Maloy just said is mission critical. Let that rattlebait fall with zero resistance to maximize the flutter. With even a touch of tension on the line, the shimmy is marginalized, even negated.)

Setting up shop over the biggest, most aggressive walleyes on your favorite frozen lake is no time to break out the whippy noodle rods, either. Thirty to thirty-six-inch rods with a medium to medium-heavy power rating are preferred. Consider the St. Croix Mojo Ice (MIR36MH) while hole-hopping, or the

Frabill Bro Series 30" Large Walleye/Pike Combo for fish house operations where lateral space is limited.

When it comes to line, a stout braided line like 10 lb. test Seaguar Smackdown, tipped with a leader of 15 lb. test Seaguar Blue Label 100% fluorocarbon, will bring lipless rattlebait walleyes topside. Rather than joining the braided main line to the fluorocarbon leader with a typical Double Uni or Alberto knot, use a small swivel instead, which will further reduce line twist with the added benefit of being easier to tie in bone-chilling winter walleye weather.



Back to the baits... "I normally carry two sizes of LIVETARGET rattlebaits, size 70 and size 60," said Maloy. "If we have had a severe cold front I will use the smaller size 60, and if the fish are on the chew, I use the larger size 70. During the later part of the ice season, when the fish are very aggressive in advance of the spawn, I will also start with size 70.

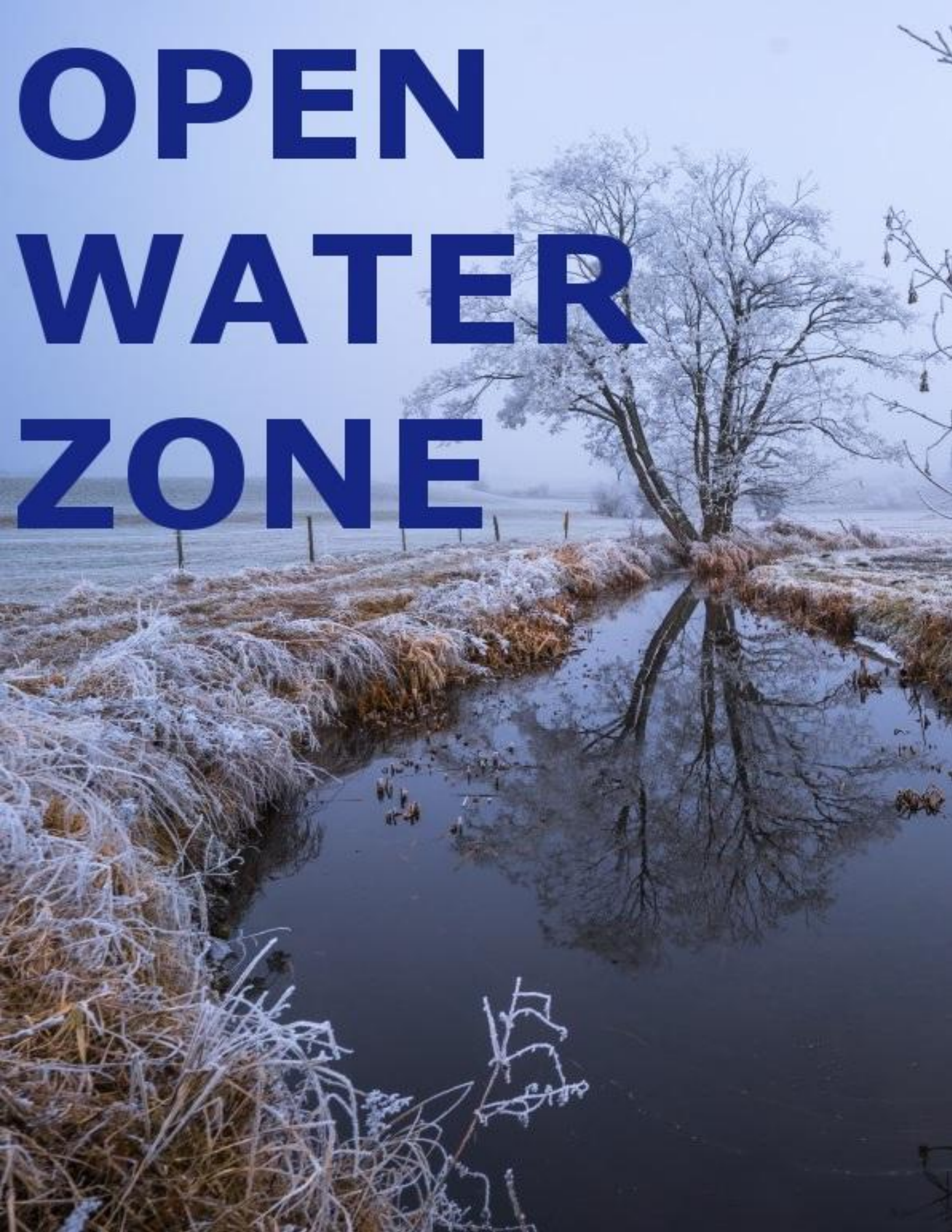
"The first lure I rig is a LIVETARGET silver/blue Golden Shiner Rattlebait. I would guess this lure has put more Manitoba Master Angler walleyes on the ice for me than any other lure. The size and shape of the lure will match the hatch of several baitfish, including shad, but certainly is a dead ringer for a golden shiner minnow. The paint and finish are extremely realistic, and the lure produces lots of flash and contrast. And did I mention the sound? The rattle output is deadly, and unmatched by anything else on the market."

"My second choice is the LIVETARGET Yearling Rattlebait 65. The Yearling Rattlebait mimics the appearance of a baitball of minnows, but with the action and sound of a rattlebait. An equally productive alternative is the LIVETARGET Sunfish Rattlebait. Its three sizes bracket perfectly around the sizes of the Golden Shiner. These three baits: the LIVETARGET Golden Shiner, Yearling, and Sunfish Rattlebait have produced the biggest hardwater walleyes of my life."

While LIVETARGET baits are widely recognized as having the most anatomically accurate, 3-dimensional designs and incredibly detailed, lifelike finishes, there are times when a hint of other-worldly glow will help to close the deal. Maloy remarks, "When water clarity is low due to sediment or tannic stain, I turn to the four glow colors in the Golden Shiner family. Unlike most hyper-bright glow lures, these LIVETARGET patterns offer a subtle hint of glow, and have been excellent the past two seasons."



OPEN WATER ZONE





EARLY SCOUTING PREPARES BASS ANGLERS FOR COLD FRONT FALLOUT

By David A. Brown

"You gotta have a dream, if you don't have a dream, how you gonna have a dream come true?"

That memorable tune from South Pacific finds Tonkinese mother Bloody Mary counseling Lieutenant

Joe Cable on the pursuit of true happiness with her daughter Liat. But you have to wonder how the lyrics might've varied had the scene taken place around some western hemisphere bass factory like Lake Ouachita, Gunter'sville or Toledo Bend, instead of overlooking Bali Ha'i.

Maybe something like:

"You gotta have a stump, if you don't have a stump,
how you gonna catch a bass post-front?"

Broadway aside, there's undeniable logic in knowing the likely spots where bass will seek refuge in the

harsh conditions on the backside of a cold front. Raymarine pro Stephen Browning knows well this game and, in his estimation, fishing after a cold front is generally the toughest scenario a bass angler will face.

Browning confronts this daunting scenario with a well-conceived game plan based on forethought and strategy. But first, let's look at how the scene unfolds.

As a weather system approaches the area, winds increase, skies turn cloudy, rain becomes more likely and the falling barometer spurs intense feeding. As the front moves through, the action continues and fish act like they want to eat the motor off the transom.

Then the front passes and things get weird. Wind goes flat, temperature drops, high pressure pushes every streak of cloud from the sky and the dreaded "bluebird" conditions can have you wondering if someone stole all the fish overnight.

Actually, the fish didn't go anywhere; they've just





tucked in close to the nearest cover. Remember, the only way bass can shield their eyes from intense post-front sunlight is to utilize shadows. Similarly, the solid cover they seek radiates absorbed heat — a biggie for shivering fish.

(For clarity, some bass winter on deep offshore spots, but, as Browning notes, a good number remain in mid-depth ranges and even push surprisingly shallow to feed.)

KNOW WHERE TO GO

Browning's adept at locating bass when starting from scratch, but he also knows that bites can be hard to coax in post-frontal conditions, so less time looking means more time earning those bites. Therefore, he likes to attack these tough times with a hit list.

"What really helps me more than anything for post-front fishing is relying on my Raymarine DownVision, SideVision and RealVision 3D sonar to identifying isolated pieces of cover," Browning said. "That may be a stump, the tip of a laydown, a small brush pile, different size rock and subsurface transition areas. All those things are where I start looking to target where those fish should move to.

"The cold front is going to put those fish directly onto those targets. I think that is the key — identifying the target and making presentations to that specific target. If you have stable weather, you can catch them in a lot of different places this time of year, but once that cold front hits, I think there going to

jump in there beside that stump; they're going hang out in that little cluster of rocks; they're going to bury up in that tree top. That's where your electronics can really save the day."

WHAT TO THROW

When the front is approaching or passing,



CATFISH NOW! DIGITAL MAGAZINE

**FREE MONTHLY
DIGITAL MAGAZINE**



- **Top Industry Writers**
- **Educational**
- **Current & Future Events**
- **Tournament Results**
- **Active Social Media**
- **Entertaining**



READ FREE at www.catfishnow.com

For more information on CatfishNOW advertising opportunities via the digital zine and accompanying social media platforms, contact Dan Dannenmueller a dancatfishnow@gmail.com

Browning gets much of his work done with Live Target mid-range crankbaits, or the Golden Shiner lipless crankbait. Remember, this is the period when bass have the feed bag on, so covering water with reaction baits is the way to go. Spinnerbaits and Z-Man ChatterBaits also fit this plan.

Now, when the front passes and the fish put on their pouty face, Browning says it's time to slow down, refer to the waypoints he's marked on his Raymarine Axiom and turn to the targeted presentation plan.

"On these days, I'm throwing two different baits: I'm throwing a 1/2- to 3/4-ounce Jewel football jig and I'm throwing a ball head shaky head jig with a 4- to 7-inch finesse worm," Browning said. "I would rather catch a fish on a football jig because I feel that fish is going to be a little better quality."

"But if I really think I'm around fish, but they're not taking the (larger) jig, that's when I fall back on the shaky head. It doesn't put out a lot of vibration; it is a super finesse style of fishing, even

during the winter time.”

As for football jig trailer selection, Browning offers this advice: “I use a Z-Man Turbo CrawZ during times when I think the fish are feeding actively. When the front comes through and the fish are less active, I’ll use the more subtle Z-Man Bat WingZ, which is the standard split tail trailer. I’ll trim my jig skirt up really tight and try to make it a really compact profile.”



MIND THE DETAILS

Yeah, we have a general outline of what to expect on every page of the calendar, but nature bristles with variables; many of which can determine how greatly a weather system impacts a bass fishery. Among them:

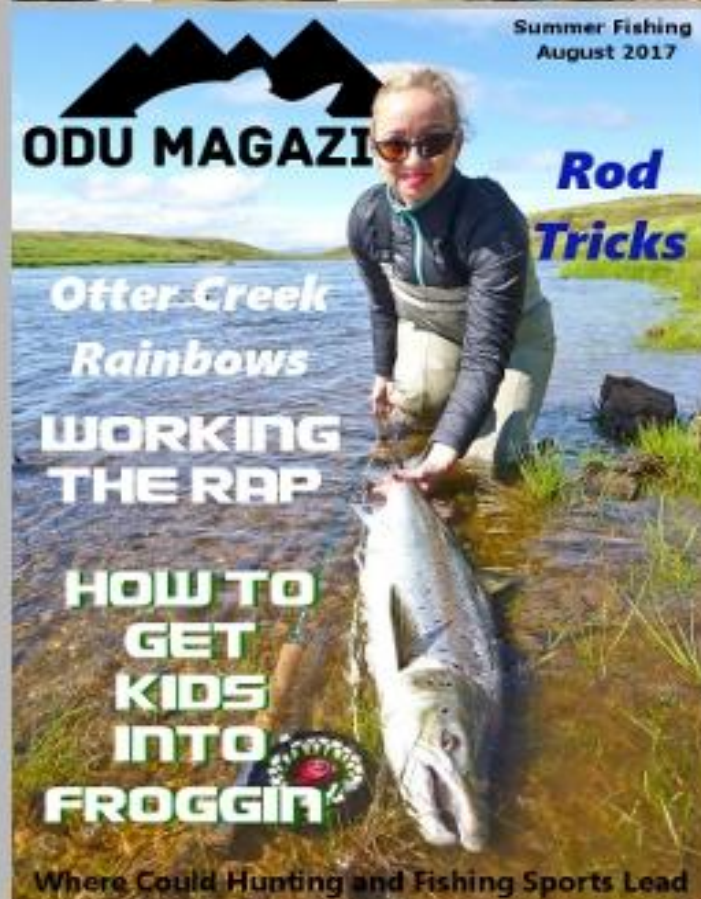


Seasonal Severity: Simple math. If you have a full bag of M&Ms and I take a quarter of them, you still have plenty. But if your candy bag is only half full and I take 25 percent, you’re not going to be happy with me.

Apply this to a cold front and it’s easy to see that a mild fall/winter can absorb even a stout cold front if air and water temperatures have remained moderate. It’s those years when fall sees early and significant temperature declines that see subsequent cold fronts seriously denting the bass fishing scene.

ODU MAGAZINE LIBRARY

CLICK TO CONNECT



Frontal Intensity: Expounding on the previous thought, a front's impact is largely measured by how much the temperature drops. There's no one-size-fits-all cold front formula. Some are mere irritations, others straight-up game changers. Also, the amount of rain a front brings can become a temporary factor, as runoff will stain the areas with concentrated inflows.

After Hours: Daytime temperatures certainly matter, but overnight lows can be the real bite killers. Consider that the pace at which a morning's action unfolds directly correlates to the temperature deficit the sun must overcome. Other words, if the pre-front water was, say, 55 degrees and it dropped to 50 between sundown and sunup; it wouldn't take too long for the the next day to reach a temperature at which the fish might cooperate. However, when the night of a cold front's passage delivers a double-digit decline, you can take your time at the launch ramp — it's gonna be a slow start.

Ultimately, each year and each cold front shapes up a little differently. There's only so much predictability you can count on; and often, you simply have to hit the water and make a firsthand evaluation.

Of course that's always easier when you have a place to start — and maybe find your dream come true.

TRACKER
boats

Don't call it a boat, because it's so much more than that. It's a fishing machine. It's immediate access. It's an adventure. It's more time on the lake, canal, river or estuary. It's a state of the art tool. It's a sword and shield. It's a heavy queen with bite. It's a trusty steed. It's a key character in every fish tale. It's quick like a gnathe and stealthy like a cheetah. It's won championships, bars and rounds of drinks. It's a fighter that never gets knocked down. It's ready for any assignment.

BECAUSE AT THE END OF THE DAY...



IT'S MORE THAN A BOAT.
IT'S A TRACKER.





River Magic

By Gary Parsons

Who doesn't love a good magic show? The music, the lights, and the awe of wondering how the magician made the trick happen. A great magician knows how to plan for a spectacular show. A good



river angler knows where to be and what to use to get a bite. Both are masters of creating illusions.

Before you can create the illusion of an easy meal for a walleye, you need to locate the fish. On a river system early in the spring, walleyes will concentrate up to a mile below natural barriers, such as rapids or dams, between the pre-spawn and spawn period. Exactly where the fish are located will depend on the amount of current present. Very early in the season, before the snow begins to melt, the current is slower and the water is clearer. This causes the walleye to be near the primary break where the bottom

drops into the main channel.

Spots where you find an irregularity close to the channel edge, such as a jetty, a rock pile, wing dam or point will most likely be holding walleyes. These pieces of structure provide visible current breaks and create back-eddies that are perfect holding areas both walleyes and baitfish.

The first nice weekend of the year typically means that there will be a lot of boat traffic on the river, which can cause a traffic jam at the dam and the fish may move. To stay on the fish, you will have to make a change in location, most likely to the middle of the channel. While the current is stronger here, the fish will be gathering near structure on bottom where there are "unseen" current breaks, such as dunes in the sand, boulders, and wood on the bottom.

To navigate the river with our lines in the water, we use a MotorGuide Xi5 bowmount trolling motor. If we get a bite, or see a fish on the sonar we will put the motor in "Anchor Mode". This will hold us



in that spot until we are ready to move downstream again. If we are fishing a visible break, vertical jigging with minnows, ring worms and Gulp! Minnows or Twitchtail Minnows can be very productive. For most early-season vertical jigging scenarios, subtle action jig tails work well. The Berkley Power Jig Worm is a

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK
(www.odumagazine.com)

favorite! This 3-inch worm has a paddle on the back and is very limber. This allows the bait to have a lot of action without a lot of effort on your part. Natural colors that resemble a real night crawler work well.

When using Berkley PowerBait Minnows, the 2 or 3-inch size mimic real minnows quite well, especially when doubled up by threading a 3-inch minnow on the jig up to the jig head. Follow it with a 2-inch version hooked through the nose. This rig increases the profile of the bait and gives it extra action. Don't rule out putting on a 4 or 5-inch bait to entice a bite either!

Begin working these baits with a sharp "pop" off the bottom, followed by holding it for a couple seconds. Then slowly lower the bait back down and pop it again. Since the walleyes are relating to bottom, you don't want to pop the bait more than six inches. Be careful to not let the bait sit on bottom for too long or it will drag in the current and become snagged.

For aggressive fish, a 3-inch Berkley PowerBait Twitchtail is dynamite! This durable and flexible bait

comes in a few different colors. In clear water we use Black Shad, while in tanic water Golden Shiner is a good choice. If we need a bait with more scent, especially in murky water, we go a 3-inch Berkley Gulp! Minnow. When fished slowly, this bait will slowly disperse scent like a blood trial, expanding the strike zone.

Using blade baits, like the Johnson Thin Fisher, with a bit of a twist on the technique is another great option. For years these baits have been vertically jigged, but if you cast it out and work it back to the boat in the same manner you would a jig, you can trigger some pigs to bite!

Getting bites off of the unseen current breaks calls for a few different techniques. For those areas with wood on the bottom, a drift over the top with weedless jigs baited with crawlers or ringworms will often do the trick!

The best way to fish the dunes is to use lead core line while trolling over them with a Berkley Flicker Shad or Flicker Minnow. When it comes to rod selection for pulling lead core, the new 9 1/2 foot Bass Pro Shops Walleye Angler Rod is a must have! Not only is this rod made of high-tech materials, but it also collapses down to easily fit in a rod locker.

While trolling, we keep the boat on course with a FOB that is worn around the neck that controls the PowrTran Python Kicker Steering System from anywhere in the boat! Instead of using two throttles to keep the boat to control the trolling speed, this system works in conjunction with the iTroll, which can fine-tune speeds to a 1/10th of a mile!

Don't rule out fishing back water areas either, such as the back channels on the Mississippi River. If you head to the back channels, rigging creek chubs and red tails or casting jigs and Twitchtails is the way to go! We like to use Berkley FireLine Ultra 8 Carrier Braided line with a Berkley 100% Flurocarbon leader when doing this, as it is made for casting into structure!

As you can, there are plenty of tricks that you can use to get you Next Bite when you are fishing a river system, and it will be much easier than pulling a rabbit out of a hat!



COLOR FOR OPEN WATER AND ICE

By Bob Jensen

To some anglers, lure color isn't that important. To other anglers, color is very important. To the most successful anglers, lure color is part of the equation. In a good number of situations, whether it be open-water or ice-fishing, the color of your lure can affect how many fish you catch.

It's especially obvious while ice-fishing that color is important. When we're on the ice, our eyes are usually glued to the depth-finder. You can 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 they come in and look 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 other 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. 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. If you're not catching anything, try a different color, and keep trying different colors until the fish show you what they want.

Color can be especially important in ice-fishing. Fish can really study 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.

We all have our favorite colors. This past summer I discovered Strike King Walleye Elite Lucky Shad baits. These baits look like artwork, and, I guess in a way, they are. They just don't cost as much as artwork, or as much as a lot of other crankbaits. The Chrome/Blue, Yellow Perch, DB Craw, and Chartreuse Perch have quickly become my go-to baits when walleyes are the quarry.

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 catching a few and catching a bunch.

To see new and old episodes of Fishing the Midwest television and fishing articles as well as fishing video tips, go to www.fishingthemidwest.com.



Fish Like a Pro.
Pledge to PITCH IT.

Protect our lakes and rivers by recycling your worn-out soft-plastic baits at every FLW tournament. Just look for the FLW Foundation, Keep America Fishing Pitch It recycling container. It's a simple action with a big impact.

Visit pledgetopitchit.org & FLWFishing.com/foundation

PITCH IT
KEEP AMERICA FISHING

FLW FOUNDATION
Connecting youth to their natural resources and promoting education, conservation and an active lifestyle.

Some Cold Water Baits

Capt. Mike Gerry

Its always tough to decide in the winter what baits to choose and which of them have the best chance at being successful. To me it narrows itself down to a few that can be used for a multiple of depths and speeds. Meaning you can choose a bait that is generally known to cover water but by slowing it down you make it a bait that can be used for slow winter lethargic fish.

Let's take a few examples; I certainly love fishing a swim bait, it covers water and can be fished at many different depths and by using it as a count down bait you can run through suspending winter bass. You can also use this bait to search by fan casting it from your boat covering lots of water. In the winter however, you can go a little heavier slow it down and roll it over, through and around cover making it a great winter bait. I have seen this bait catch winter fish just by sitting on the bottom and just shaking it. Making the bait a multi-purpose versatile fast or slow-moving bait. This can be said about many of your favorite power baits; baits you have used to trigger reaction bites in 75-degree water.

Another favorite is a jerk bait; these present themselves with fast and furious pulls and jerks to get reaction bites. In the winter this becomes the ideal bait that you can let it suspend and the water current will rock it in place and look very life like around rock or over cover. There is no bait like it, as a jerk bait will pull bass up from 20 ft. depths and cause competition among bass in the cold winter water. Slow pulls, long pauses and cadence all make this the ideal winter reaction bait by just letting it sit and rock for seconds at a time.

Lastly a rattle bait is also a great winter bait when used accordingly. In warm water we speed reel it and cover water; in the winter you yo-yo this bait let it grab the bottom and drop erratically some and let the bait cause a winter reaction. Take a rattle bait and slowly roll it over grass it will deflect and cause bites as good as any bait on the market.





The Science and Art of Fishing Goes Viral

Z-Man Fishing Enlists Communications Pros Traditions Media

There's something elusive and simultaneously irresistible about a truly original thing. It draws you toward the unknown, and toward the possibility that mind-blowing things are about to happen.

Within the mega-competitive realm of fishing tackle, Z-Man Fishing has always approached things from a different point of view: A softbait with nearly extra-terrestrial properties; a vibrating, flashing, wobbling lure that isn't exactly a jig or a spinnerbait; an ultra-subtle presentation that's rewritten the rules of finesse bass fishing altogether.

Etching a parallel path within the sphere of angling communications, Traditions Media has gained a reputation for articulating cutting-edge fishing concepts through stirring words and imagery. Recently, the unconventional organizations joined forces, bringing two unique voices into harmony. The aim: To convey with wisdom and passion the wealth of fish-catching stories inherent in Z-Man's inimitable league of lures.

"What really sets Z-Man apart from the sea of other fishing companies are the unique properties of our lures and materials themselves," says Daniel Nussbaum, President of Z-Man Fishing. "From the proprietary 10X Tough ElaZtech® material used to make our softbaits to the patented design of our ChatterBait® bladed jigs, all our lures offer something distinctly different from the competition — and that translates to superior performance on the water."

Given the meteoric ascension of the Ned Rig, for one, it's easy to understand the buzz surrounding the Z-Man brand. "We are one-hundred percent convinced that our ElaZtech softbait formula is the material of the future," Nussbaum asserts. "The shift toward ElaZtech is analogous to the rise of superbraid fishing lines. As anglers learned to adjust to different knots and to match line with select rods, spectacular new fishing tactics emerged."

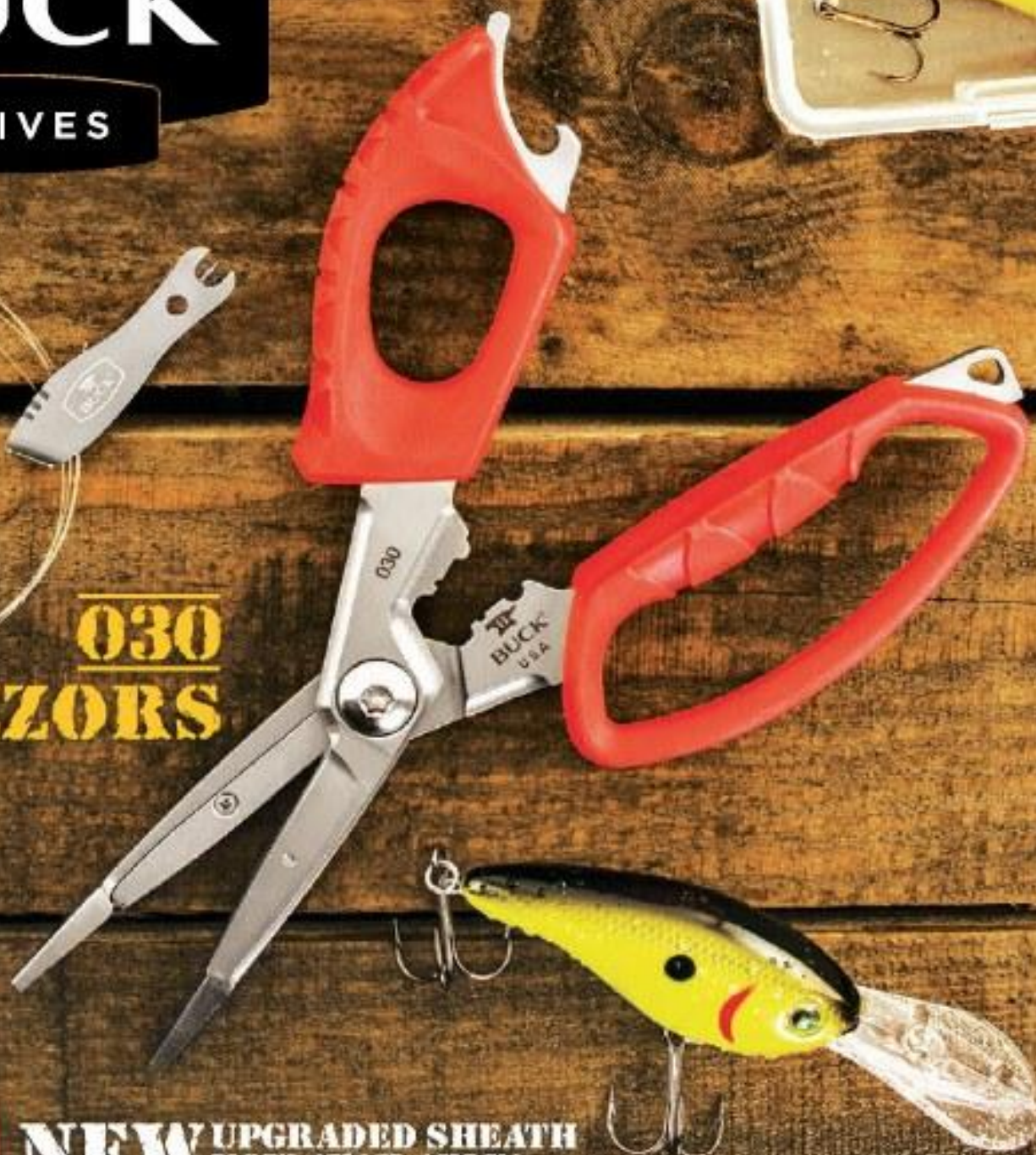
Traditions Media president Noel Vick fortifies Nussbaum's notions. "Z-Man has exhibited impressive growth in recent years. The time has come to share their story — the trailblazing Z-Man way — with the greater angling public. How many anglers know, for instance, the superior fish-catching advantages of a

EST.  1902

BUCK®

KNIVES

**030
SPLIZZORS**



**NEW UPGRADED SHEATH
NOW AVAILABLE!**
INJECTION MOLDED MULTI-CONFIGURABLE
SHEATH WITH OPEN AIR DESIGN!
FITS BOTH THE 030 AND 031 MODELS.





REPLACEMENT BLADE KITS ALSO AVAILABLE!

The kit contains two new sets of 420HC blades and two sets of screws for changing out blades. Housed in a convenient carry tube, the blades fit both the 030 and 031 models.

ONLY AVAILABLE AT WWW.BUCKKNIVES.COM, SEARCH SPLIZZORS.



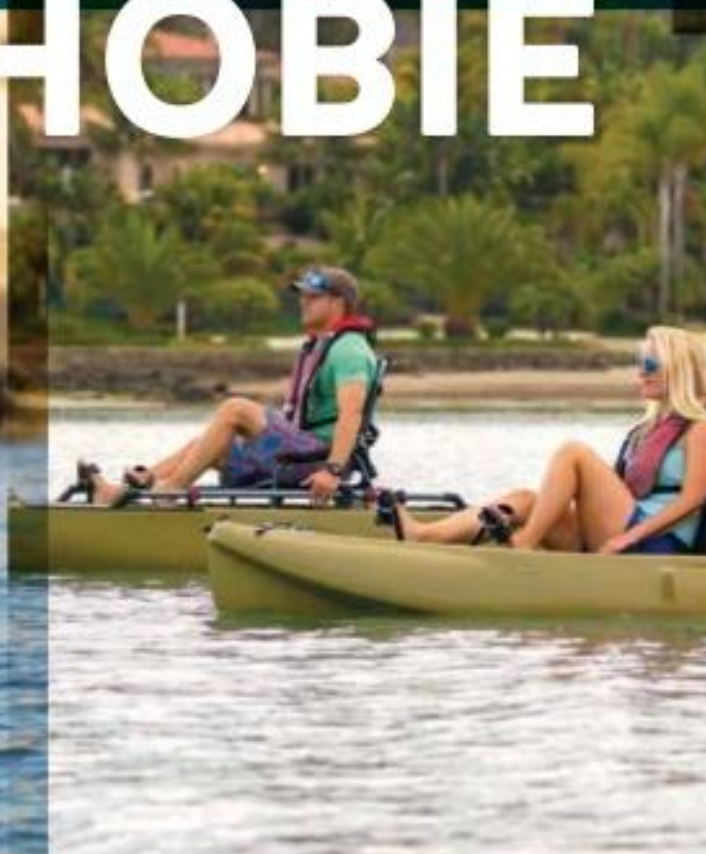
660 S. LOCHSA ST. | POST FALLS, ID 83854 | 800-326-2825

f www.Facebook.com/BuckKnives  www.Twitter.com/EdgeOfALegend  www.Instagram.com/BuckKnives

The Hobie logo is displayed in a stylized, cursive font within a blue diamond-shaped frame. The background of the top half of the advertisement is a man in a white shirt and tan cap fishing from a blue Hobie kayak on the ocean. A fishing rod is bent, indicating a catch. The Hobie brand name is also visible on the side of the kayak.

Hobie

YOU BELONG
ON A **HOBIE**



naturally buoyant softbait? Or that ElaZtech is 100-percent non-toxic?”

“I’ve closely watched for the last five years how Traditions Media conveys the stories behind fishing products and brands to the angling community, most importantly the media and the trade,” adds Nussbaum.

"Taking a step back and looking objectively at our product line, there are simply so many stories behind our recent lure and terminal tackle introductions that haven't been told. Our talent pool runs deep, too, from touring bass pros and inshore saltwater guides who use our products daily to marine biologists and materials scientists bringing a different expert perspective to the table. Telling these stories will immediately allow anglers to realize the benefits of our products; there is no one better equipped to do this than Traditions Media."

“We can’t wait to start divulging all the new Z-Man intel, really blow anglers’ minds with possibilities,” says Vick. “That’s the strength of our team. Partnering with imaginative companies like Z-Man makes what we do fun; it’s why we’re all here — to plant the seeds of possibility in the minds of outdoors folks for the betterment of the whole industry.”





LOOKING AHEAD

By Bob Jensen

I haven't been able to do as much ice-fishing as I would like so far this year. Between Holidays, hazardous travel and such, I've just been home-bound more than usual. When that happens, I start



thinking, and when I think about fishing, I think of places I've been and places that I want to return to. Following are some of those places.

Big Stone Lake on the Minnesota-South Dakota border has changed as a fishery in the past number of years. Back in the mid-80's when I first visited Big Stone, walleyes were the deal, and the walleye population on Big Stone is still very good.



Then I went ice-fishing on Big Stone. We caught perch: Lots of'em and nice ones. Perch fishing through the ice on Big Stone continues to be outstanding. I should be out there right now.

Most recently, largemouth bass and bluegills have taken some of the limelight on Big Stone. With all these different species available in good numbers, you can almost always find action on Big Stone Lake. Big Stone truly is an outstanding destination for the angler. Learn more about Big Stone Lake at www.bigstonelake.com or call 320-839-3284.

I should also be ice-fishing on Clear Lake in north central Iowa. Clear Lake is another lake that's changed greatly, and for the better, in the past decade or so. Clear Lake didn't used to be so clear, and it also didn't have the variety and quality of fish that it now does. Water improvement projects have enabled walleye, musky, and

panfish populations to increase dramatically. Walleyes are everyone's favorite, but in Clear Lake, yellow bass are exceptionally popular in open water and through the ice. Yellow bass are outstanding on the table, and you can keep as many as you want. Clear Lake has truly become one of the Midwest's premier fishing lakes. Check Clear Lake out at www.clearlakeiowa.com or 800-285-5338.

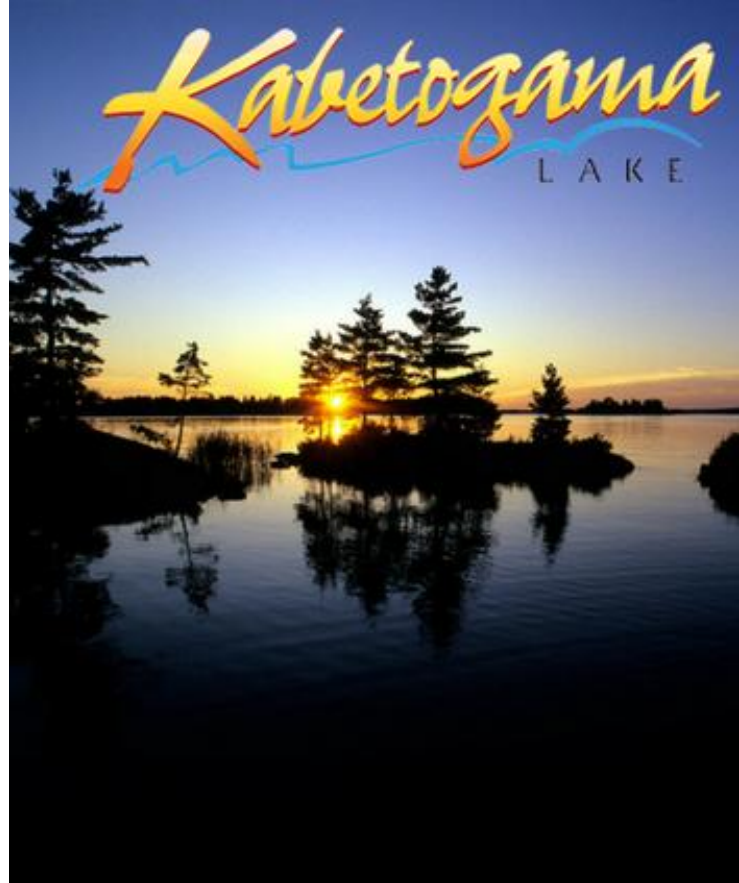
One more fishing location that I have developed a real fondness for: Kabetogama Lake in northern Minnesota. I would enjoy Kab even if it had no fish. Kab is wilderness although it's not very far away from all the creature comforts. You'll probably see deer, eagles, beavers, waterfowl, maybe a bear or a family of otters, you just never know what's around the next island, and most people like that.

And, best of all, Kab has fish: Many, many fish. Big ones and eaters. Depending on when you go and what you want to catch, Kab can provide world-class fishing for walleyes and smallmouth bass, and the crappie fishing is pretty darn good also. Add in absolutely jumbo perch and northern pike and you've got an outstanding experience. Kab has a great selection of resorts on part of the lake, so you can find whatever you're looking for in lodging. And then on much of the lake, there is absolutely no development, so there's lots of lodging for the wildlife that abounds in the area. Go to www.visitkab.com or call 844-525-3522 to start your trip.

We're fortunate to have so many wonderful fishing destinations in the Midwest. Lots of fish to catch and lots of other things to do. I am certain you'll be happy at any of the destinations just mentioned.

Fall is smallmouth time on Kabetogama Lake, and when the action turns on, the fishing is hard to believe. Tim Snyder taught us that this is a typical Kab smallmouth.

To see new and old episodes of Fishing the Midwest television, new and archived articles, and fishing video tips, go to www.fishingthemidwest.com.





THERE IS AN ADVANTAGE TO THIS COLD WEATHER

By Capt. Mike Gerry

With the many hours of below freezing temperatures we are having; out side of the tough physical conditions it imposes

on us there is an advantage. Believe or not it's not all bad, yes, it's cold, yes, its physically demanding and it will probably slow what bite we had prior to the sever cold for some period-of-time. However, it is not all bad!

There are a few advantages that we will see from these colder than usual temperatures, the first thing will be is the bass will group up in large schools of fish and when you find them they will compete for your lure. Bass are very much homers when the water temperature turns cold; some of the best days I have ever had on this lake is the coldest of the winter days. In February of 2013 I had a guy catch three fish within 100 ft. of each other that weighed in at more than 34 lbs. All within a few minutes of the original bite, the fish were together they competed for the lure and my customer benefitted from one of the coldest days on the water we had that year. In 2003 I found some fish on the edge of a creek with a guy that before it was all over we ended up with 30 fish over 5 lbs. that were all within less than a 100 ft. of each other, and occurred in about an hour time frame. That doesn't count the numerous numbers we caught that were smaller fish. Both days occurred during a wintery cold spell in those time frames mentioned.

You can also count on some sizable shad kill caused by the extreme cold water, if this continues over the next few days there will be thousands of shad that will not survive the cold water. This will deplete the lake from a large amount of predator food for the bass and will cause them to be more aggressively feeding on artificial baits. Every year in the past that we have had big shad kills from extreme cold water we have seen some of the best March or pre-spawn fishing we have ever had. The bass are more aggressive, their fighting for a lack of shad as a food source and the fisherman will benefit with more bites and numbers and size.

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



FISH STOP BITING TRY NEW DEPTHS SPEEDS AND LURES

Team Rapala

Fish rarely “stop biting,” despite claims to the contrary when we return to the dock with an empty livewell! If you get skunked today where you thumped ‘em yesterday, some factor out of your control — weather, water clarity, current — has re-positioned the fish or prompted them to favor a different forage profile. So the next time a hot bite shuts down, fish a different depth, speed up your retrieve and throw some different baits.

So says James Lindner, director, producer and co-host of Lindner’s Angling Edge television show and a Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame Legendary Communicator.

“To be really successful as an angler, you can’t just say ‘I caught ‘em here yesterday, but today the fish weren’t biting,’” Lindner says. “There’s a lot of environmental factors that could have changed overnight. So you’ve got to change your baits and tactics — shapes and sizes, speeds and depths.

“But a lot of people don’t do that,” Lindner continues. “That’s why really successful anglers are so successful — they have a wide variety of baits and they’re not afraid to experiment.”

That being said, the best time to experiment is not when the fish aren’t biting. But rather, when they

ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK (www.odumagazine.com)

are biting so well they're practically jumping in the boat.

"The best way to build confidence in a bait is to catch something on it," Lindner says. "So the best time to experiment — not just with new products, but also with lures you've had a while but never caught fish on — is when you're really catching 'em."

The next time you're having a great "numbers day" — one of those days you're catching multiple "cookie cutters" on one or two go-to baits — that's the time to tie on a new or under-used bait or two. "Not only will you garner confidence that they do indeed catch fish," Lindner explains, "you'll also learn the subtleties of how to retrieve them best. Not to mention, you might just catch some bigger fish."

If you wait to try new lures until you can't get bit on your favorite baits,



ODU MAGAZINE VIDEO BLOCK (www.odumagazine.com)

chances are you'll never gain confidence in them. "When the fish 'won't bite,' you're often just in the wrong location or fishing too fast or slow," Lindner explains. "But what happens is you tie on a bunch of different baits, throw 'em six or seven times and then cut 'em off and try something else — 'Well, they won't bite that one!' And back in the box it goes."

Often, the best way to determine the "right" bait is cutting off the wrong bait. "What's the wrong bait?" Lindner asks. "It's the bait they're not biting! And the fish are telling you that. If you'll listen, you'll start catching 'em again."

Because Rapala "has a lure for just about every different imaginable species and every imaginable condition — and is coming out with new baits all the time," Lindner says, you'll catch more and bigger fish more often



***CRAPPIE* NOW!** DIGITAL MAGAZINE

Free Digital Magazine



Award Winning Writers



Active Social Media

Read Free NOW!

www.crappienow.com

if you gain confidence with more baits.

“You should use all the different baits in your tackle box to their maximum potential,” he says. “The key is the willingness to experiment and then to listen when the fish tell you what they want.”

Need For Speed

When the fish stop biting where you thumped ‘em yesterday, do you tie on smaller baits and fish more slowly?

“That’s absolute reverse thinking!” Lindner exclaims. “For walleyes, smallmouth bass, muskies, what have you, speed is a huge trigger — especially in the warm-water months. Some of the best anglers in the world understand this dynamic and they’re not afraid to radically change their presentation.”

Lindner can recall countless scenarios in which he and a fishing partner have cleaned up with crankbaits and spinnerbaits behind anglers barely getting bites by fishing painfully slow with live bait on small jigs.

“You can go through those exact same fish with those high-speed baits and clobber ‘em, you really can,” he says. “What it does is force the fish to make a split-second decision to strike your bait. Their brains are just wired that way.”

When Lindner tells the following story in seminars, he says, many people nod along and laugh:

“A lot of people say, ‘Well, the fish aren’t biting, let’s move to another spot.’ And then they reel in their baits really fast so they can leave. And then they’ll catch a fish!

“But what happens next? They say ‘Hey, let’s make a few more casts here.’ But then they go back to reeling in their baits slowly — just like they were doing before they caught that fish. That fish just told you what they want! You gotta



SNAGPROOF
WEEDLESS LURES

The **FROG DAYS**
of SUMMER!
www.snagproof.com

TSUROVIEC ©

SNAG PROOF

The advertisement features a large, detailed illustration of a bass fish with its mouth open, showing a lure. Above the fish, a frog is perched on a log. The background shows a body of water with reeds. The text 'SNAGPROOF WEEDLESS LURES' is prominently displayed at the top in large, bold, green and yellow letters. At the bottom, there is a logo for 'The FROG DAYS of SUMMER!' and the website 'www.snagproof.com'. A circular logo with the words 'SNAG PROOF' and a fish icon is also present.

listen. It can be the difference between catching two or three fish or catching 30.”

Location, Location, Location

When fish seemingly disappear, do one of two things, Lindner says — “Either go shallower on the same structure, or go deeper.”

“Sometimes in tournaments, you’ll smoke ‘em in a certain spot for days and then come back the next day and you cannot catch those fish,” Lindner recalls. “But then you try a spot at a totally different depth — some place you only caught maybe one or two the day before — and you start lighting ‘em up again.”

He’s seen this time and again, he says, while targeting numerous different species. “Fish of all kinds move up and down on structure in relation to environmental conditions,” he explains. “They’re following their food. It’s very easy for them to slide up or down 10 feet.”

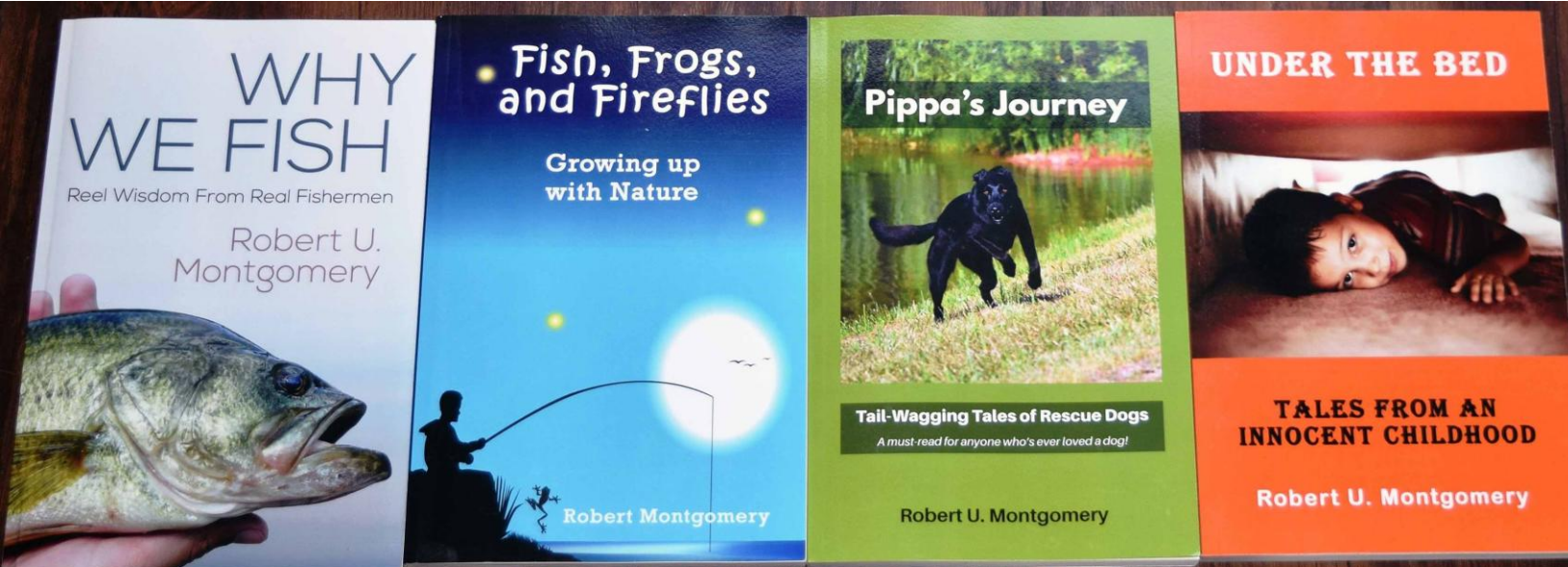
Wind, water temps and clarity, and current can all re-position baitfish. When they do, gamefish follow. And you’ve got to follow with them. So when you’re catching fish well, take note of bottom- structure changes on your maps and sonar displays. When a hot bite cools, move deeper and shallower on that same structure until you find the fish again. More time than not, they’ll be nearby.

When you look at an underwater structure, any big point or sunken island, look for where they fish are likely to go if and when conditions change,” Lindner instructs. “If they go shallow, where are they going to go? If they go deep, where are they going to go? Many times, it won’t be too tough to see some obvious spots on your graph.”

After a dramatic weather change, for example, fish will likely “slide out to the first really distinct ledge drop-off,” Lindner explains. An influx of muddy rainwater, on the other hand, will often push fish up into the shallowest water near vegetation, which filters sediment and offers a cleaner-water environment.

Another example? Changing wind direction can re-position fish from a weedline to the nearest offshore humps or reefs. Wind moves the micro-organisms baitfish feed on, causing gamefish to follow.

“The fish stopped biting, you say?” Linder jests. “I bet they didn’t stop biting at all — they just turned around and headed to the next restaurant that’s open!”



A YEAR'S WORTH OF GIANT STRIPERS

BY ERIC HARRISON



2017 was an unbelievable year for striped bass in Massachusetts. Localized bites popped up all over, the Cape Cod Canal experienced epic fishing and schools of large stripers moved in and out of Boston Harbor and along the North Shore. As good as the fishing was, some locations had very poor fishing and the best spots were running hot and cold—one day the fish were everywhere, the next they were gone.

I spent the season targeting big bass from my Hobie Revolution 16, the fastest of the Hobie kayaks. I fish from the Revolution 16 because I often fish in current and in windy and choppy conditions. The Revolution 16 has the speed to take me to spots miles apart and slides through current and chop extremely well.

This video is a compilation of some big bass from the 2017 season with several fish over the 40 pound mark and one over 50 pounds. All the fish in the video were taken on artificials; I use big plastics when



I'm targeting big fish and every one of these fish ate either the 14" Original Hogy on a Barbarian swimbait hook or a 13" Hogy Jiggin' Eel on a Barbarian jig head. The techniques that I used to catch these bass are described in this article. [LINK >>](#)

You will notice that I land most of the fish in the video using the leg lift technique. I use my leg to support the fish as I lift it into the kayak, this method is easier on the fish and less likely to cause a serious injury to the bass. It also helps me balance the kayak, pulling a 30 to 50 pound bass into the kayak isn't as easy as it looks!

Conservation of these large bass is very important, every fish in the video was released. These large fish are an important part of the breeding population, they carry the best genes and produce tens of thousands more eggs than smaller bass. Stripers are good to eat, but fish just over legal size are much better quality than the older larger fish.



HUNTING ZONE



The Eastern Coyote

By Dana Benner

A great deal has been written about the Eastern coyote (*Canis latrans* var) on the blog and Facebook pages of ODU. We've seen gruesome photos of deer and horses that have been attacked by something, with many readers blaming it on coyotes. Though some of the kills were made by coyotes, most of the responses from readers are emotional; the need to blame the "big, bad wolf". How much of this fear, yes, I said it, is based on fact? How much of it is based on the human belief of good vs evil, with humans being "good" and everything else being "evil". To understand man's "hate" relationship with all predators, especially wild canines, here in America we need to go back in time.

For thousands of years Native American people lived alongside wolves, mountain lions and other predators. Yes, sometimes lives were lost, both human and animal, but for the most part all lived with a healthy respect for each other. Then the Europeans arrived with their fears, guns and livestock. Worse yet they brought with them the belief that their purpose was to control everything. What they couldn't control they eliminated; human and animal alike.

My interest, in the coyote began about three decades ago. I was hiking in Maine; camera in hand, when I came face to face with what I, at first, thought was a wolf. I was able to get the camera up and

take a quick photo before it was gone. The animal I saw was an Eastern coyote. Since then I have spent a great deal of time watching and investigating both the Eastern and the Western coyotes. Despite their differences, they both carry the same trait that has allowed them to survive in the human created world; their intelligence.

Called “Coywolf” and “Coydog” by some, the Eastern coyote, which is a hybrid of Western coyote, wolf and to some extent, dog, is found from the Mid-Atlantic States to Labrador. The exact percentage of any of the genetics is dependent upon the test being run and the area in which the sample is being taken. Patrick Tate, Biologist for the New Hampshire Fish & Game Department told me that you could sample a coyote in Ohio and one in Maine and come up with different genetic makeups. Those Eastern coyotes found in the Northeast have the highest concentration of Eastern wolf (*Canis lycaon*), also known as Timber wolves, genes where the coyotes test in the Mid-Atlantic seem have less.

It is unclear just when the animal we now call the Eastern coyote first arrived in the Northeast. Evidence suggests that the coyote was being reported in New York in the 1930s and in northern New England in the early 1940s. The first reported coyote in New Hampshire was in 1944. The Vermont Fish and Game Department started receiving reports in 1948. By the early 1950s reports were coming in of coyotes in Maine and Massachusetts and the animal had reached Connecticut, Rhode Island and parts of the Mid-Atlantic by the late 1950s. These numbers, as compelling as they are, only reflect the animals spotted or killed. It is impossible to know exactly when the Eastern coyote arrived, though there is a good bet it wasn't until the late 1800s at the earliest, around the time when the wolves were eliminated.

The most widely accepted theory suggests that the eastward expansion of the coyote was Nature's way of filling the void left with the extermination of the wolf and cougar. Over the 150 years or so, from the time the last of the wolves were taken and when coyotes began to be sighted, coyotes moved from the upper Plains into Ontario and Quebec, Canada and from the lower Plains into the Southeast. In the North it is believed that the Western coyote began breeding with Eastern wolves, thus producing the Eastern coyote that we see today in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. This cross-breeding helps to explain the almost two-fold size increase between the Western and Eastern coyotes. From Canada the



Eastern coyote spread into upstate New York and northern New England. In the South the coyotes more than likely crossed with the native Red wolf (*Canis lupus rufus*) setting up an entirely different version.



It needs to be made clear that though it is physically possible for different canines to mate and produce young, it doesn't usually happen naturally. Wolves will

kill both coyotes and dogs and coyotes will kill dogs. For this cross to happen everything needs to line up perfectly. Low densities of both species combined by the natural need to procreate forced these two together and it had to happen over a period of time. The likelihood of the young, whether wolf/coyote or coyote/dog, to survive is very slim.

There are many factors as to why this is so. One is that dogs usually breed in the fall and give birth in the winter thus making it hard for both the mother and the pups to survive the harsh northern winters which are typically a time of little food. Wild canines breed in the winter and give birth in the spring when food is plentiful. In the Northeast, where cold and deep snows are the norm, coyote/dog crosses are doomed to fail. Another factor involves parenting. Coyote and wolf parents, both parents, share in the care and protection of the young. The same cannot be said for dog parents. With dogs, the female is often left on her own to care for the young. In a wild situation the female will be hard pressed to care for herself and her young. With that said, enough did survive to give us some of the genetic makeup of the Eastern coyote.

Characteristically, the Eastern coyote has traits from all of its ancestry, including dogs. By far size is the most noticeable. Eastern coyotes have a larger head and are physically larger, traits inherited from the wolf. These animals can reach up to 60 pounds and they measure 48 to 60 inches in length making them at least twice the size of Western coyotes. Where true coyotes have a long, narrow foxlike muzzle, the Eastern coyote's muzzle, though longer than a wolf's, tends to be a bit broader and heavier than the Western coyote. Eastern coyotes have retained the typical pointed ears and the habit of carrying their tail down, unlike either wolves or dogs. Coloration ranges from gray to red to cinnamon-blond.

According to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, coyote survival and their ability to reproduce are

directly related to habitat and available food and coyotes will continue to thrive as long as favorable conditions exist. Sometime in late April about six pups will be born into a den made from an excavated fox or woodchuck hole, cave or in a hole made by an over-turned tree. The young are cared for by both parents who mate for life. Several studies indicate that young coyotes suffer a high mortality rate with 50 to 60 percent dying within the first year.

The Eastern coyote is an opportunist and thus will feed on whatever it may find. Its larger size and strength makes it fully capable of bringing down deer, though according to the New York Department of Environmental Conservation, “coyotes infrequently kill healthy adult deer.” In a study conducted during the winter of 2008, it was found that of the deer kills studied, only 8% had been conclusively proven to have been killed by coyotes. It was also proven that those deer had been suffering from preexisting injuries, illness or old age and would have died anyway. The other 92% of the deer carcasses studied had been scavenged by coyotes after they had already died from vehicle contact or other causes. According to the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game far more wanton deer and other wildlife kills, which are often blamed on coyotes, are caused by packs of domestic dogs. With that said, Eastern coyotes will and do feed on young deer and fawns. More often than not Eastern coyotes will settle for easier pickings like mice, squirrels, woodchucks, hare, house cats, carrion, insects and fruit.

Eastern coyotes have larger territories than Western coyotes, though not as large as wolves, ranging from 5 to 25 miles. Though often seen as single animals or perhaps in pairs, Eastern coyotes may form family centered packs within their territory. Whether they hunt as a pack, like wolves, is unclear. There have been numerous reports made by hunters and trappers regarding this, but many are unverifiable. While there is photo evidence of coyotes traveling in packs and it is easy to put two and two together, without hard evidence it is difficult to come to a definite conclusion. There are some within the



scientific community that do believe that coyotes, on occasion, may hunt in packs, though this has a great deal to do with location and environmental conditions. Tate told me that the

re is evidence of coyotes hunting deer in packs during the winter, especially in areas of extreme cold and high snow levels. Basically in areas where other food options are not available. Kim Royar, Furbearer Biologist for the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, Eastern coyotes do “sometimes hunt in family groups”. She went on to say that the “pack size can vary by season, population density and/or food availability.”

In the Northeast man has eliminated the wolf and the cougar, but eliminating the Eastern coyote will prove much harder, if not impossible. Where the wolf opted to stand its ground when facing human encroachment, the coyote has learned to adapt. When you combine the size, strength and hunting ability of the wolf with the adaptability and intelligence of the coyote you have yourself one tough animal. Whether we like it or not, I believe that the Eastern coyote is here to stay.

Sources:

- “Eastern Coyote”. New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. www.wildlife.state.nh.us Accessed 12/22/17
- “Eastern Coyote”. New York Department of Environmental Conservation. www.dec.ny.gov Accessed 12/22/17
- “Eastern Coyote”. Pennsylvania Game Commission. www.pgc.state.pa.us Accessed 12/22/17
- “Eastern Coyote”. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. www.vtfishandwildlife.com Accessed 12/22/17
- Kays, Roland. “Eastern Coyote’s a Hybrid, But ‘Coywolf’ is Not a Thing”. Earth Sky Voices, November 20, 2015. www.earthsky.org Accessed 12/22/17
- Royar, Kim, Furbearer Biologist Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. Email dated 1/5/2018
- Tate, Patrick, Biologist NH Fish & Game Department. Interview 12/2017
- Way, Jonathan. “Eastern Coyote: Coyote, Wolf, or Hybrid”. Project Coyote, Fall 2008. www.projectcoyote.org Accessed 12/23/17

Support Our Environmental Officers



NAWEOA





Watch and listen...

**...download O'Neill's TV shows and
watch at your convenience **FREE!****

**Download
radio show
archives
too!**



O'Neill Outside Now

Visit: www.oneilloutside.com

'N GROOT BOOM HET GEVAL

By Jofie Lamprecht



In the magical glow of pre-dawn the mystery of what would today unfold takes me contemplate to deep places in my mind.

The only light came from the L.E.D. lights on the front of the Land Cruiser we churned through the thick white sand of the Kavango. The two-track ahead of us winding eerily at the early hour of 5:15 in the morning. Our team assembled early every morning, the coffee served to the tents the only warmth in our bellies at this hour. There was a lot more heat later in the day, coffee the only welcome heat. We were headed to our first pan of the day to look for the round and oval. The plan to stretch our legs there and have a picnic breakfast prepared by our master Argentinian Chef. The tracking team unraveled the nights events stamped into the sand at the eu-de-vie - the “water-of-life” so important in September as temperatures climbed. We had on light jackets; the temperature fluctuating from a cool 10 C (50 F) in the mornings to 54 C (129 F) in the sun at midday in September.



We had just poured ourselves another cup of hot coffee served with cold milk when one of the trackers pointed and said “’n groot boom het geval”.

It had been a very emotional and tough few weeks for me in my private life. I had gone up to hunting camp a week early to do camp maintenance, cut open roads, drive in provisions and prepare for our next clients for the start of our Elephant hunting season for 2015. A call via satellite phone from my dear beautiful wife had me in the Land Cruiser and headed to Rundu with urgency. The message was simple. “Your father is not well”. It was another hot Sunday in the Kavango and I rushed towards Rundu to take one of the last seats on the region flight leaving in the next hour. My feet black from working around camp in preparation of safari. All that I checked was my Heym .500 NE double rifle, my small backpack as carry on.

He fell Thursday. The ambulance fetched him on his beautiful Rooikraal Ranch of Friday. He watched the Blue Bulls game of Rugby he loved so much on Saturday afternoon in hospital. Sunday he was admitted to intensive care. This was the day I was rushing back to see him. Landing mid-afternoon my wife fetched me at the airport and we went straight to the hospital. Early Monday morning it was all over. “’n groot boom het geval”.

On Tuesday family arrived from as far as Dubai, Cape Town and Pretoria. At sunset on Tuesday 1 September 2015 after a short service people were asked to say a few words about my father. Only family and the Rooikraal staff were in attendance. There was a six-gun salute and we buried him at his favorite place in the hills overlooking his beloved Rooikraal Ranch. His life's work. His dream from a young child - realized in spectacular fashion. His view for eternity the place he had built and loved. The best view on the Ranch is his forever.

The hunting industry and Namibia have lost an icon. A man's man. An entrepreneur. A visionary. A conservationist. A philanthropist. A good man that looked after his people and never turned away from their problems. At his funeral on Tuesday 1st September many spoke about him. They loved him for the man he was. Helping them become who they wanted to be. A hard man with a soft heart.



This man was my father. And I miss him.

He thought me to be tough. Hard life lessons only a father can teach his son. Lessons that prepared me for this big bad and beautiful world we know as Africa.

Wednesday morning early I met with my next hunters and headed to the airport to catch our charter flight to hunting camp. My father would have been mighty pissed off if he had caused any delay of safari. The lifestyle he led for many decades.

After the events of these last few weeks I am only one thought or memory from emotion. Telling stories. Reliving all the adventures that I shared with my father.



In the golden glow of pre-dawn we quickly gathered our gear. Twin barrels cold in my hand as we followed the round and oval towards the noise we heard. That was a big tree that fell – it must be a big-bodied bull. From the spoor we could tell that there was a big old Bull as well as a younger Askari.

The trackers Petrus and Lang-man (Long-man) easily moved through the bush unraveling the spoor. Everyone in silent anticipation for what lay ahead. Would this be our day? Or would we return to the truck and continue on with our quest on the ivory trail?

As the red fire-ball of the sun broke the horizon directly in front of us another branch snapped. Everyone froze. The Elephant were close.

Ash-bag came out and confirmed that there was a steady early morning breeze in our favor. Abandoning the tracks we now followed the sounds of a noisy breakfast.

Without a word the trackers fell in line behind Mark and myself and we slowly and quietly advanced towards the noise. What a beautiful scene emerged before us. Under a rosewood tree a giant bodied Elephant bull was standing with his left side visible to us. The sun was making its ascent to the left of the tree. A serene and incredible scene. One that will be long remembered.

Using binoculars it was evident that this was a mighty old bull Elephant. His body huge and heavy. Huge head. Trunk thick between his tusks. His ivory on the left side very thick. Very very thick. Broken just outside the lip.

Mark and I had a discussion earlier on in the week. “Symmetrical ivory would be my first choice, but I will leave it up to you to advise me” were his words. I indicated my preliminary findings to Mark but we had yet to see the other side.

On our left side branches of small trees broke noisily as the smaller Askari bull had the breakfast that we had skipped in our haste. We shadowed the big Bull waiting from him to turn. He fed and walked.



Moving calmly in the brisk breeze of early morning. As he turned and showed us his right side a long and thick piece of ivory pitch black with age was shown. This was a big Bull. I took my binoculars and silently handed them to Mark. He looked as the Elephant walked silently away. A dangerous angle, for like the Warthog, they both look so much bigger from behind. We moved again to get closer and let Mark have another view of this mighty bull. In my mind I was thinking of ways to convince him that this was a Bull we should not pass on.

Thoughts of asking if I could shoot the Bull for myself or getting on my knees and asking nicely crossed my mind in good humor.

“I think we should collect this Bull” Mark quietly said.

Days and weeks of hard work and the moment had finally arrived. We gave Mark a drink of water and then we looped downwind of the two Bulls to get ahead of them to make our approach. As we looped, so the young Askari edged his way between us – like a land-mine set to go off if he detected us.

We made our final approach with the Bull standing broadside to us. A side brain was chosen. At the last second the Askari again pushed his way between us and our target. I told Mark that now was the time.

He lay on his side. Thick ivory sticking into the air. My father would be proud of this Bull. Measuring 20.5 inches at the lip it was the thickest ivory that I had ever hunted.

Now the hard work started. Having hunted this Bull in a communal conservancy all the meat needed to be slaughtered and delivered to the community. Time was of the essence. In this heat the meat would spoil quickly. It would take two vehicles 24 hours to deliver all of it. An estimated 3000 people would benefit directly from the protein of this Elephant. Revenue from this Elephant would go directly to the community. Our staff employed year round even though we are in hunting camp less than three months a year.

Namibia. The only country I know of in Africa that moves communities out of areas to make place for wildlife. Sustainable utilization is the purest form of wildlife utilization.



‘n Groot Boom het geval means in Afrikaans “a great tree has fallen”.

CHANGING THE GAME... AGAIN

*The NEW ThermoSight Pro PTS536 and PTS736 add
extended range to FLIR's next-generation thermal riflescopes*

For many predator hunters, invasive wildlife control specialists and tactical professionals, thermal targeting got real last August with FLIR's release of the breakthrough ThermoSight Pro PTS 233 thermal-



imaging weapon sight. Powered by FLIR's newest, compact, uncooled, high-performance 12-micron Boson™ thermal camera core, the 19mm ThermoSight Pro PTS 233 set a new standard in thermal image quality, while offering a wealth of innovative and intuitive performance features in a compact and lightweight package. Best of all, this next-level performance and functionality came with a hunter- and shooter-friendly MSRP below \$2,200.

For 2018, two new FLIR ThermoSight Pro thermal riflescopes are now available: the 50mm ThermoSight Pro PTS 536 and 75mm ThermoSight Pro PTS 736.

Both new FLIR ThermoSight Pro models are powered by FLIR's high-performance 12-micron pixel pitch



FLIR Boson™ thermal camera core, which delivers smaller, lighter optics with increased image performance and range. Featuring industry-leading on-chip video processing and an uncompressed video signal fed directly to a bright, high-definition 1280 x 960 FLCOS display, the FLIR ThermoSight Pro Series offers improved object detection and classification in the field and clean thermal imagery in any light – from low contrast daylight to total darkness – or through smoke, haze and light fog.



Both new ThermoSight Pro models offer 60Hz video refresh rates, 320x256 thermal resolution, USB-C connectivity, user-controlled imaging palettes, image enhancement filters, and built-in digital compass and inclinometer. Shot-activated onboard recording allows for the internal storage of up to two-and-a-half hours of video or 1,000 JPEG images. ThermoSight Pro models also feature multiple reticle and thermal palette options and crisp iconology and graphic overlays over virtually all backgrounds.

The new FLIR ThermoSight Pro PTS536 features a 50mm lens, 4x optical magnification, 4x digital zoom and a 4.5°W × 3.5°H FOV. The new FLIR ThermoSight Pro PTS736 features a 75mm lens, 6x optical magnification, 4x digital zoom and a 3°W × 2.5°H FOV.



Superior primary optics for hog hunters, predator hunters and tactical professionals and enthusiasts, the new FLIR ThermoSight Pro PTS536 and PTS736 will be available through established FLIR dealers in the U.S. at MAPs of \$3,795 and \$4,795, respectively, in early March, 2018. See them at flir.com/ots/thermosight-pro/.

LINK TO VIDEO:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WdEh_0fEEI



RANCHER TAKES DIFFERENT TACK ON WOLF DEPREDATION

By Lee Juillerat

The recent killings of three calves by wolves in Jackson County, Ore., probably by members of the Rogue Pack, hit close to home for Mark Coats, who advocates a predator awareness program he believes can reduce such incidents by wolves, coyotes and other carnivores.

Coats, who has cattle operations in Siskiyou County in far Northern California and Klamath and Jackson counties in Oregon, said the attacks happened on a neighbor's land.

"My cows turned out fine," he said. "I'm confident in my cows' ability to stand off predators," explaining he routinely takes steps to retrain his herds.

Coats doesn't necessarily like it, but he accepts the fact that wolves have become a fixture in Oregon and parts of Northern California.

"The wolf is a carnivore. Killing is what he does. By the laws of the ESA we can't do a lot," said Coats, referring to protections to wolves mandated under the federal Endangered Species Act. "We need to learn how to stay in business in his presence."

Over the past six years Coats has been studying and implementing new ways of preventing cattle deaths by predators, including wolves, coyotes and mountain lions. He has been working with the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service on creating a predator awareness program he believes can successfully reduce or eliminate predation deaths.

“What they need is the individualized chase,” where a wolf or wolves isolate a cow or calf from the herd, then chase, immobilize and eat the animal, which is often still alive. “We’re trying to interrupt that. That is the key.”

The key, he believes, is training cattle to gather in herds when threatened by wolves or other potential killers.

Coats began researching wolf and cattle behavior six years ago when OR-7, then a lone male gray wolf that for several years was electronically tracked after it left the Imnaha Pack in northeast Oregon in 2007, passed through his lands near the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge along the Oregon-California state line. During his wanderings in Southern Oregon and Northern California, OR-7 eventually found a breeding female. The pack has grown and includes OR-7’s grandchildren.

“My phone was ringing off the hook because I was the cattlemen’s president,” remembers Coats, who served as the Siskiyou County Cattlemen’s Association president for three years, of what spurred his interest. “I started doing a lot of research on what cattlemen can do.”

What cattlemen and others can do is limited. Wolves east of Highway 395, which slices through Washington, Oregon and California, are not protected by the ESA but wolves west of the highway are protected, which restricts ways cattle ranchers and others can deal with potential depredation threats. Coats said various studies, including research done in Yellowstone National Park, show threats can be reduced or eliminated if cattle are taught to group together and not to flee or run.

“The fear of the wolf is still there. There are no sound practices to defer him,” Coats said of concerns by livestock owners who are legally prevented from killing wolves. “We cannot manage them with any effective measure.”

Instead of hunting or trapping wolves, he believes the predator awareness program is a viable alternative. “When wolves confront livestock, they (livestock) get fearful for their lives. Once they reach the group, the pressure is relieved. A defensive standing posture will defer wolves. What we’re encouraging is a defensive posture of moving to the herd.”

He said studies indicate wolves do not attack groups of livestock, choosing instead to chase individual animals. According to Coats, previous studies showed that wolves will leave if livestock remain still and in groups. While



he is focused on cattle, he said the group-and-stand theory applies to other livestock. “We always saw losses to coyotes, but since we’ve worked with this program we haven’t had any losses to mammals.”

“Training can last several months or, if done intensely, seven to 10 days,” he said. “And it continually needs to be tuned up. The cow must understand it is its decision to return to the herd. ... A key is training them to stand and not run or flee.”

Studies indicate cattle can check attacks by gathering in groups as few as three, although he prefers groups of 10 to 12. In more open areas, such as the Wood River Valley south of Crater Lake National Park, he promotes having groups of 40 or 50.

He hopes to make his findings more available through a series of workshops.

“We’re encouraging something that’s been un-encouraged for years,” Coats said of training cattle to respond to threats by forming groups. “Keep it tight, keep them in a herd, in a defensive posture. They’re in that group for a reason.”

Online

For detailed information on Mark Coats predator awareness program, including videos on how to train cattle, visit his website at www.rancherpredatorawareness.com.



The Outdoor Exchange

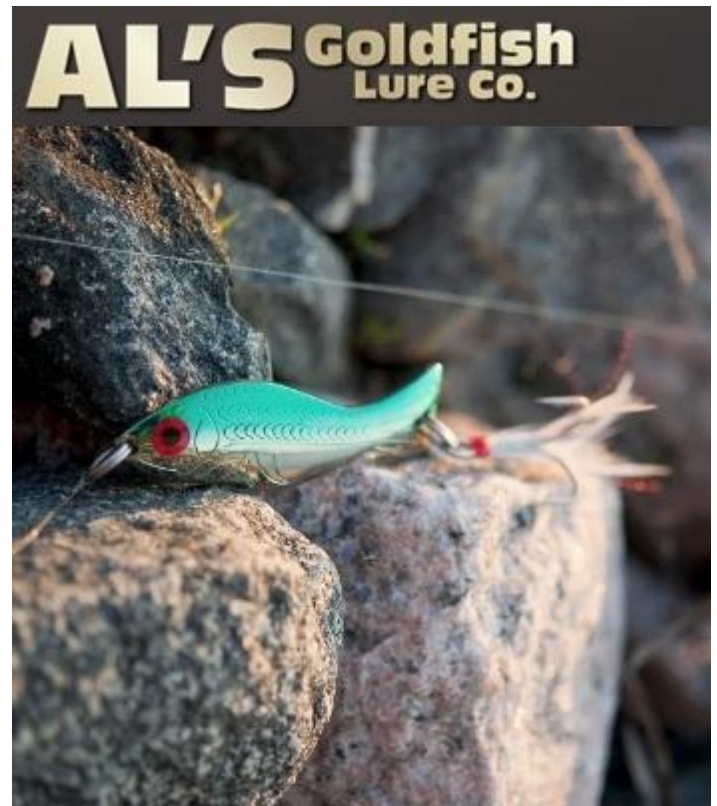


**Simply.
IRRESISTABLE!**

WWW.SNAGPROOF.COM

Made in the USA!

A close-up photograph of a fish's mouth with a fishing lure inside, demonstrating the snag-proof technology.



BAIT

WIRE WRAPPING

OFFSHORE

GEAR UP WITH CUDAS GLOVES

CUDABRAND.COM

A pair of blue and black fishing gloves with the Cuda logo on the back of the hand.

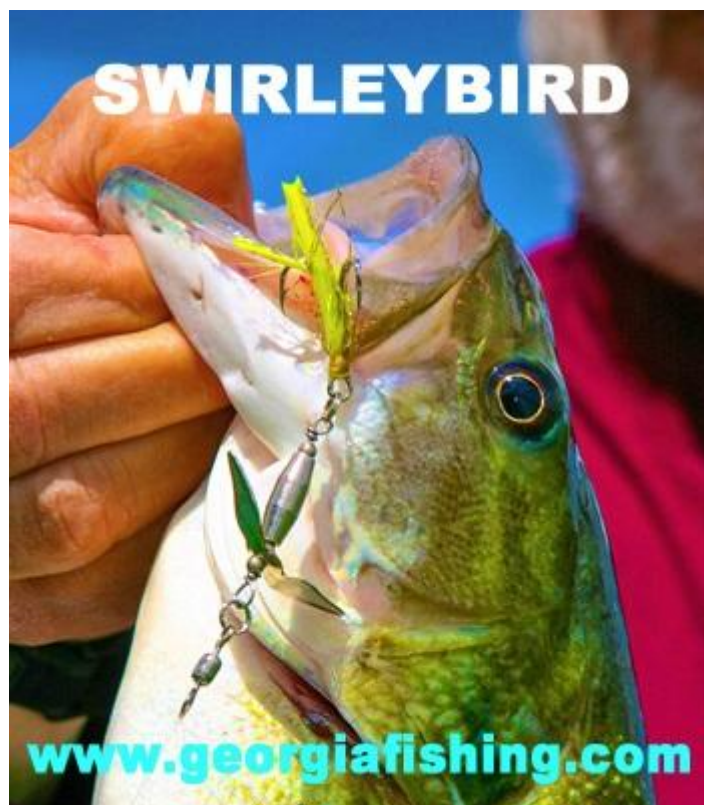


The Outdoor Exchange



**YOUR
AD
HERE**

Email ODU By Clicking This Ad To Enquire





ODU MAGAZINE™

