



Hook, Line, and Sinker

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Getting The Jump on Spring Panfish Without A Boat

by Jeff Sundin at

<http://www.jeffsundin.com/>

Warm spring days have a way of getting folks thinking about fishing. But with Walleye opener still weeks away, some of us are just too anxious to get out and bend a pole. So for now, fishing for Crappie and Sunfish just feels like the right thing to do.

For me, growing up in the metro area and shoreline fishing went hand in hand. I used to love it whenever my Grandpa would say, lets go fishing at "The Channel", one of our prized, secret spots on Lake Minnetonka.

Fishing early spring panfish in the North Country is a great way to sharpen your skills and set the stage for the season to come. Tackling spring panfish has its ups and downs, but with a good game plan and a little persistence, you can turn a spring afternoon into a real treat for your whole family. Before you start packing all of you gear in the boat, consider that early spring fishing might just be one of the few times each year when folks fishing from shore have an advantage over those of us out in the boat. In fact, I can think of a half dozen great shore fishing opportunities just within the city limits of Grand Rapids and there are probably hundreds of places throughout the Itasca area where Crappies and Sunfish can be captured from the shoreline.

The shore angler has two main advantages; first there is the ability to be relatively silent and second, fish that are hooked and reeled toward the shore have the effect of drawing other fish in with them. This helps to keep fish in the area for longer periods of time and allows the angler to spend his fishing time a lot more efficiently. Often, the fishing will actually get better as the

water warms during mid-day.

During ice out, panfish go on a brief feeding binge and will move into extreme shallow water areas. The best areas will have a soft bottom and semi-dark water. Boat harbors, inlets, tiny bays, creeks between lakes, oxbows and even some boggy shoreline areas are all good choices. These are all locations where the sun warms things up quickly and encourages early insect hatches and bait movement. The spots don't necessarily need to have additional cover, but treetops, branches or Beaver runs are all elements that could make a good spot even better.

The water depth can be anywhere from a few inches, to a couple of feet as long as it is near the main lake and is warmer than the surrounding areas. I've learned to avoid shallow main lake areas with sand, rock and clear water. The fish will find these areas later, but for now they seek out food and the best food is in these warmer pockets. The beauty of this approach is that you can find a lot of these areas by driving around the lakes and stopping to check at bridges, creeks, and landings or at public fishing docks. Many times, you will see the fish or other evidence like lots of bait that will help tip you off to their presence before you even wet a line. As a kid, I learned everything I knew about fishing by using this simple sight fishing approach. I can remember coming in from one hard day on the lake and spotting a youngster heading home with a heavy load of panfish that he'd caught from shore in a small inlet on our lake. He pointed me to that spot and saved our trip. That experience taught me never to under estimate the effectiveness of good old-fashioned fishing. Fishing these areas by boat can be effective as long as you are willing to fish

in full "stealth mode". But you'll need to be really careful not to make any unnecessary movement or noises that will "spook" the fish and move them back out into the lake. In the past we've seen schools of fish move out ahead of the boat and eventually escape around us and return to the safety of the main lake. Once they leave, they don't come back for a while, so this is to be avoided like the plague. Occasionally, it's necessary to use a boat to find the spot, but once located, you can beach it and fish from the shoreline or a least a stationary position.

Tackling the Crappies once you find them is a simpler matter. A handful of small jigs, a few bobbers and a nice long rod rigged with 4 pound test line is enough to get you started. A scoop of Crappie minnows and a few wax worms takes care of the bait selection and you're ready to go. Because you're fishing in such shallow water, small jigs and small floats should be used. I like the small Thill slip bobbers from Lindy, it's a nice balsa wood float with decent weight for casting, they're brightly colored and my line always feeds out smoothly. Jigs that I like best are a 1/32oz. Minnow head with a 1-1/2 inch plastic tube. These small tubes are still among the best panfish lures ever produced, they're inexpensive, effective and available in a multitude of colors. Other effective jigs are small hair or marabou style jigs like the flu flu. I like colors like black, brown and purple. These darker, more subdued colors seem to do a good job of imitating the small insects that these fish are looking for in the shallows. A typical approach is to locate one of these shallow areas that looks "fishy" and begin by fishing the areas nearest the main lake. Make long casts toward the center of the channel and give the jig a series of sharp twitches then let it settle for a few seconds. Retrieve a couple of feet of line and repeat the twitching/settling. This seems to be a good compromise between attracting the fish and giving them an opportunity to strike. We gradually move further in to the bay or inlet until we either contact fish or decide to move to a new location. We will change baits and colors often enough to be sure

Club Calendar

April 30th.....	NUASF Club Meeting
May 14th.....	NUASF Social Night at Club House
May 28th... ..	NUASF Club Meeting
June 11th.....	NUASF Social Night At Club House
June 25th.....	NUASF Club Meeting

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From the President

By Jason Kuester

First things first, at the last meeting we elected our winner for the Stoney Award. The Stoney Award goes out to the member who gives time and time again. We all know there are many members that do this and I would like to thank all of our members for making this such a great organization. At the next meeting we will be presenting John Rolloff with this great award. Thanks John for all your hard work and dedication to our club.

As everyone knows we have been trying to get a Fishing Boat for the club to raffle off in September. I have great news! We got a great deal on a boat with an electric start 25 Horse Power motor. We will be selling 1000 tickets at \$20.00 per ticket in books of 5. Prizes are as follows, 1st Place-Boat, 2nd Place-\$1,000.00, 3rd Place-\$500.00, 7th-10th place is \$250.00 each. Tickets will hopefully be here by the next meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting and would like some tickets, please contact Ross Nelson 507-766-0765 mnuw@newulmtel.net or Ken Sutherland 507-276-1534 ken.sutherland@ci.new-ulm.mn.us or myself at 507-381-2041 or r@newulmtel.net
Note: The tickets come in books of 5 and are \$20.00 each. If you take the tickets you will be responsible for selling them or turning them back in at or before Riverblast in September.

Mark your calendar for August 19th this will be the day for the kids fishing contest at Riverside Park. We will need many volunteers for this event. We will have more info on this in the upcoming newsletters.

Spring is in the air and what a great time to bring our friends and family to the New Ulm Area Sport Fisherman Club. We are always looking for new members to join. If you know of someone bring them along and show them how much fun we have at our club. As always, bring a friend and each of you will receive a free refreshment of your choice!

Hope to see you at the next meeting!!

Getting the Jump on Spring Panfish Without a Boat

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that we've presented a good mixture. In an age when fishing seems to be getting more sophisticated and complex all the time, sometimes it's nice to get out and relive the days when we rode our bikes down to the fishin' hole and just plain caught what we caught. Sounds like the perfect cure for restless anglers and those affected by cabin fever syndrome. Why don't you try it? Pack a lunch, load the family in the car and go take a look, you just might be really surprised by what you find out there.

Crappie Habitat Spring

Crappies and Sunfish move into channels and boat harbors like this one as soon as there's open water. Notice that there's still ice out in the main lake.

Shoreline Panfish

Don't worry if there's still snow out on the main lake. Sunny weather will attract fish to shallow, weedy areas. Cattails absorb the heat and warm the water even faster.

Bluegill Matt Mattson

Here's Matt Mattson with an April Bluegill caught in about 10 inches of weedy water.

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Hook, Line, and Sinker

The *Hook Line and Sinker* is published monthly by Joyce Reese graphic design for the New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of respective writers and not to be construed as the opinion of the NUASF or its members. Send all correspondence and submissions to New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen, P.O. Box 294, New Ulm, MN 56073.

The NUASF Board

President - Jason Kuester (381-2041); Vice-President - Gary Sprenger (359-9358); Secretary - Ross Nelson (507-766-0765) Treasurer - Tony Miller (354-2457); Board Members: Ron Ludewig (507-276-6093), Mike Buechner (354-2739 s), Ken Sutherland (507-276-1534).

Monthly Meeting March 26th, 20 Members Present: 35+

I. Secretary Report

A) Motion made by Jim Liebl and seconded by Orv Rannow to except report as read. Passed unanimously.

II. Treasury Report

A) Balance \$

1) Motion made by Jim Liebl and seconded by Jim Hulke to except report as read. Passed unanimously.

III. Old Business

A) Membership update.

1) 170 – 37 due

B) Area Lakes and Rivers Report.

1) Thin Ice signs were removed on Clear Lake. About 22 club members were there to help.

2) Lake of the Woods – Had some good luck

3) Jerry Carlson saw over 25 bald eagles below his property fishing in a creek.

C) Club House and Grounds Update.

1) Property Purchase – An account has been set up at United Prairie Bank for land purchase. We will propose purchase of 8 acres around the club house. Jason Kuester suggested we put \$1000 in the account to start, open for discussion. Club has to be careful how much money is placed in the account, likely can't be more than 25% of our assets. Motion was made by Ken Kohn and seconded by Scott Sparlin to place money in the Land Purchase account. Passed

2) Jason will be working on the driveway soon.

3) Also talked about deck and tiling around the building. Will talk at later meetings.

IV) Other Old Business

None.

V) New Business

A) Tony Miller Newsletter Update.

1) Tom Simonson is working on placing all the past newsletters on our website.

2) Tony is working on taking out and adding all the correct ads.

3) Confusion with some members when we have our meetings. Always the last Thursday of the month starting at 7:30. Unless noted in the newsletter.

Boat raffle update.

Retzlaff's will work with us this year. Good time to purchase a boat, lots of deals in the Spring.

Printware Graphics will make a sign for us to promote the boat raffle.

There was some confusion if we had decided to do the raffle again this year. Motion was made by Jim Liebl and seconded by George Smith to do the Boat raffle again. Passed U.

Also decided to print 850 tickets like we do for our ice fishing house.

D) Boy Scouts report from district manager Blake Litzau

1) Talked about where the scouts would need dollars. (Paddle board, Scholarship for camps, Shooting range.) We will have a discussion at the board meeting what we can afford. We also have to keep in mind our mission state when we decide where to give our money.

E) Scott Sparlin Update

1) Community cleanup will be done May 18th. Will also do a clubhouse and ground cleanup after the community cleanup.

2) River Congress will be held April 16th. Motion was made by Ken Sutherland and seconded by Wes Ludewig to do a sponsorship for the event.

3) Wild River Academy Sponsorship. The academy take about 25 kids on a trip down the length of the MN River. Club sponsorship for each kid will talk at our board meeting and revisit at our next meeting.

Erv Fischer Fishing Outing for the physically and mentally challenged (17 years & older). This hasn't been done for several years because of county funding. Trying to bring the event back to life. Will be held June 23rd at Studtmann Pond will need 10-15 helpers.

F) Wilmar Studtmann Memorial Ice Fishing Contest Update.

1) Was held March 7th and 34 members and family members attended.

2) Raised money for the Mecklenburg Scholarship Fund. Matched by the Studtmann's.

3) Thinking about doing a summer event.

G) Kids Fishing Contest – have to check the dates available. Possibly Aug 19th

H) Friends of High Island Lake

1) Did a report on the Ice Fishing Contest.

2) In the past we have given them a donation for their fund raiser. Will bring to the board.

I) Stoney Award

1) Nominations – John Rolloff, Del Lambrecht, Tom Simonson, Ron Bolduan, Jim Liebl

2) John Rolloff was awarded the 2014-15 Stoney Award

VI) Other New Business

We will get a gift certificate, from Carl's Corner, to the Berg's for allowing us to use their Landing on Clear Lake again this year. Jim Liebl said he would give a donation for the land purchase.

Food for next meeting will be provided by Tony & Keith

VII) Adjourn @ 9:10


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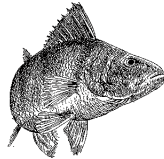

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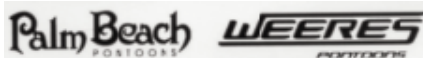
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