

"WHERE DID YOU CATCH THOSE FISH?"



Bass limit from Reeds Lake, to 21", released

The **2 most frequently asked questions by fishermen** after **seeing a nice catch of fish** are: #1. **"What did you catch them on?"** and #2. **"Where did you catch those fish"**. The frequent use of those questions can relegate the fisherman to a life of "fishing mediocrity" and **can lead** the beginning and intermediate **Spoonplugger astray**.

"WHAT DID YOU CATCH THEM ON?"

If the answer to this question is **"Spoonplugs"**, it gives the inquirer **a sense that the Spoonplug is some kind of magic lure, which it isn't**. Buck Perry says that he **doesn't care what lure is used**, just so **depth and speed can be properly controlled at the same time**. The Spoonplug is **a tool** that allows the most versatile and **accurate control of depth and speed** of any lure, but other lures can be used. The **better question** to ask would be: **"How did you catch them?"** Spoonplugging teaches us **HOW** to fish along with the knowledge about fish and their environment. Specifically, **we might ask: "at what depth and speed?"**. A very important statement by Mr Perry that is frequently overlooked is: **"All fishing successes and all fishing failures MUST be answered in terms of depth and speed control"**. In other words, if you caught or didn't catch fish, it **was because of how you controlled your depth and speed, no matter what lures you used**. Due to ingrained beliefs, this is **difficult for many fishermen to accept**, but it is **important in becoming a successful fisherman**.

"WHERE DID YOU CATCH THOSE FISH?"

This is the **second most asked question** when one displays a nice catch of fish. **Where** fish are caught **reflects much knowledge, time, and effort** that was expended **to find and pinpoint a specific structure that fish use** in their movements and migrations. Because most waters have only **limited**

numbers of spots where schools of adult fish can be found, **most Spoonpluggers are reluctant to reveal exact spots** to fishermen that don't have knowledge about Spoonplugging, and rightfully so. There are **2 "humps" a beginning or intermediate Spoonplugger may need to get over** to become a serious Spoonplugger. The **First hump** is to **watch someone catch several adult fish from a school on the cast** or be motivated enough to want to do it yourself. I was an intermediate Spoonplugger for many years, catching some decent fish, but never getting into an adult school of fish and catching them on consecutive casts. **John Bales opened my eyes to the possibilities** in Spoonplugging by **taking me out on the water**, locating good structure, and **getting into a school of adult fish**. It was a **very exciting** experience I will **never forget**, and I was **motivated to learn more**. That was the first hump. Yet the **hardest part lay ahead** for me. Motivation and realizing the possibilities was **a far cry from accomplishing that on my own**. I could not just keep asking John and other accomplished Spoonpluggers "Where did you catch those fish?" every time I went fishing. **I needed to use the knowledge they had to find my own structures and schools of fish**. Fortunately, **that knowledge is available** in Buck Perrys' book "Spoonplugging---Your Guide To Lunker Catches", as well as from attending our Spoonplugger outings. I **renewed my efforts to follow the Guidelines more accurately** with spending **more time on the water** and **attending as many outings as possible**. Becoming **better at mapping and interpretation** was the key. **Over a year later** I got past Hump #2 by **locating a structure situation with a good school of fish all on my own!** It was on **Lake Macatawa** where I got into **a school of smallmouth bass and landed 13** in a short period of time. What an **exhilarating** experience! I now realized that **I could do that on my own**, which gave me the **confidence** needed to advance faster in my learning. Getting past those 2 humps was **a milestone in my fishing growth**. **If I had simply asked** the question **of everyone "where did you catch those fish"** and gone to those areas to fish, **I would have sponged off of others hard work and likely never have advanced in my fishing**. I now had the **confidence to tackle any lake, locate the best structures, and be as successful catching fish as anyone on that lake at that time**.

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