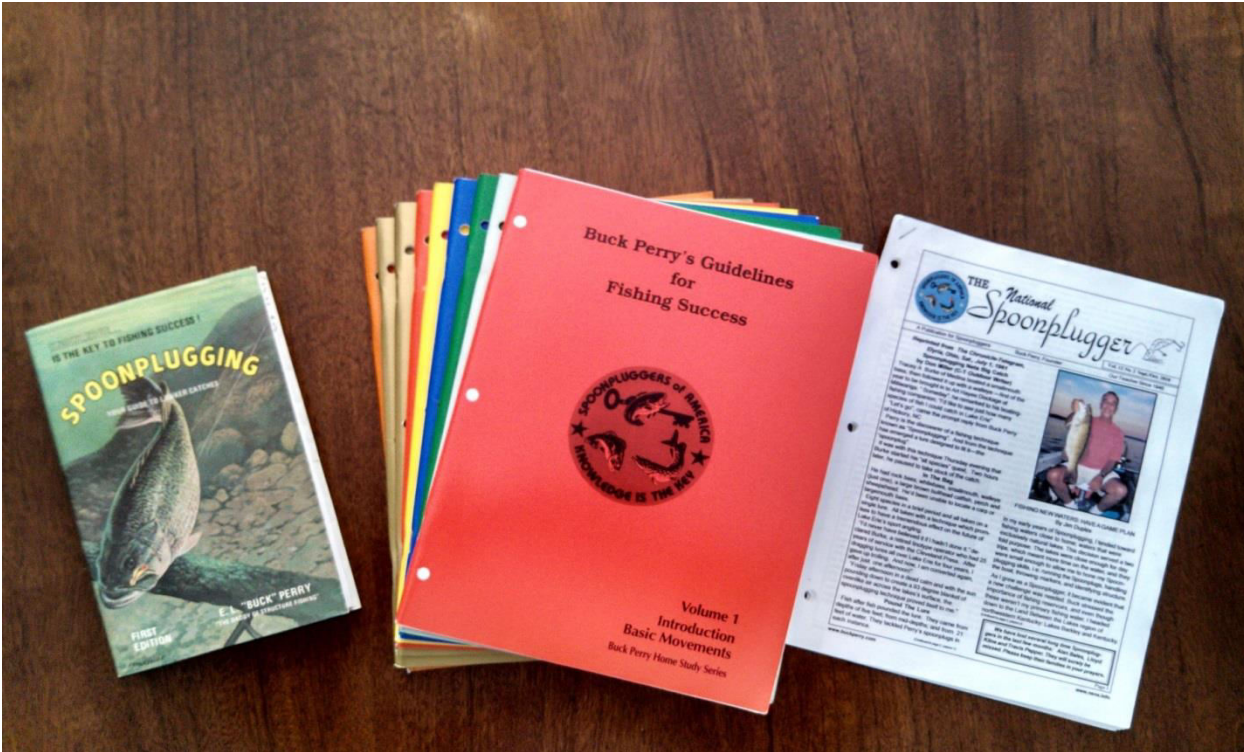


RELAX AND FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

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“Green Book”

Study Guide

National Newsletter

Writing this article is likely a symptom of a **severe case of my getting “cabin fever”**. It is **February, 2014 in Michigan**. It is **cold outside**, and there is close to **2 feet of snow on the ground!** Could it be time to start **thinking about making mental changes to improve our fishing results** for the coming open-water season? It seems that **many launch their boat with numerous questions on their mind**. What lake should I fish today? Is the weather good? What species will be available? Is there too much boat traffic? Should I cast or troll? What lures should I use? What speeds should I use? At what depth should I expect to find the fish today? There can be **many more questions** than that. **Sometimes we concentrate on one or two questions and other times we have so many questions it confuses us**. Inability to get quick answers **can** at times **cause frustration, anxiety, and even loss of interest in fishing**.

Maybe we need to **step back** at times and **ask ourselves** some **other kinds of questions**. **Was Buck Perry a great fisherman?** (Yes, thought by some to have been the most successful fisherman of all time). **How did Buck catch all his fish?** (By using the knowledge he discovered about fish). **Can I obtain all the knowledge he had so I can catch fish like he did?** (Probably not, he was a genius and spent a lifetime studying fish behavior). Then **what can I do to become a better fisherman?** The answer to that last question is the key to improving our fishing results.

Buck Perry left us a great part of the knowledge he discovered about fish and fishing. It is included in all his writings, the Green Book, Study Guide, articles, booklets, newsletters, videos, etc. Most Spoonpluggers have read and studied them. Yet many feel that, **even though** they have been **exposed to a lot of Spoonplugging**

knowledge, they find it a real challenge to apply it on the water. It is **difficult to connect** the general knowledge in the material **with what we see when we get on the water.** **What we may lack is the experience** on the water that gives us the answers. **How do we get the experience needed** for a specific situation? I believe that it lies in **following his directions.** Buck included many “directions” in his written material. **The directions aren’t just for sometimes.** They are **universal and essential** to give us the answers we need when on the water. **Two of the most important** involve **lure presentation and mapping,** both keys to becoming a successful fisherman.

Lure presentation is a mechanical skill. Mr Perry outlines specific steps in his material for both trolling and casting to cover “fishing water” or structure thoroughly. Fishing from shallow to deep, using progressively larger lures to control depth, and checking all speeds at the same time are basic directions we should all adhere to, but **we often fail to execute well.** **By fishing thoroughly, we can obtain the answers we need for that situation without having 100 questions cluttering up our mind.** Presentation also includes selection of **tools and lures** to use for best control. **The farther we stray from his recommendations on tools, the tougher we make it on ourselves to succeed.**

The **mapping and interpretation of structure** is the area where Buck Perry placed **the greatest importance.** This is the **ability to read and “figure out” bottom conditions.** We are told **to troll a structure thoroughly** or to follow its’ breaklines **to get a picture of it in our minds and then to draw it on paper.** How many of us **actually do that?** Until we can visualize and draw these bottom conditions, we will find it difficult to interpret how, why, and where fish move on that structure. **Terry O’Malley has said: “If you can’t draw it, you don’t know it”.** If you don’t normally draw the structures that you fish, **do it once in a while, just to make sure you can do a good job!**

It is fine to **“straggler fish”** (trolling breaklines and weedlines to locate structure or fish), but **when we do hit a fish** or find good structure, **do we throw a marker and map and fish that area more thoroughly?** Often we end up making a few more trolling passes or casts and move on, and do not follow Mr Perrys’ directions. We found a good area, but **failed to check it all.** That **could cause us to miss getting into a school of adult fish!** We need to remember that all fish become active on a lake at the same time. If a good fish is caught, it is not recommended to continue on because trolling takes time and fish movements are often of short duration.

When **Buck Perry emphasized “Back to Basics”** at the Chattanooga Jamborees, I believe he was telling us to **just follow directions.** The **“Spoonpluggers’ Basic Guideline”** describes **Spoonplugging in a nutshell** and contains directions for lure presentation and the basis for mapping structure. **Advanced Spoonpluggers** who have learned the fastest **all speak about how they read the “Green Book”, accepted it literally, and simply followed the directions in it on how to fish.** **Nowadays,** with our fast-paced life, **people have less tendency to read directions** on any project attempted, and read them only as a last resort. Maybe the **answer to improving our fishing lies in relaxing and just following the directions of one of the greatest fisherman who ever lived, Buck Perry!!**