

A NEAR WHAMMY



Pastor Steve Manskar with 24-pound flathead catfish from the Grand River

A Grand River whammy is described by yours truly as catching 5 different species of fish on the Grand River in one day of fishing. It is a verification of the universal effectiveness of Spoonplugging knowledge. Using general guidelines for fish behavior and fishing for whatever species is active by “checking all depths and all speeds on structure” makes sense. On Friday, October 18, 2019, I took out Pastor Steve Manskar from our church to fish the Grand River. Pastor Steve has a pleasant low-key and non-judgmental personality, traits very helpful in dealing with a diverse congregation. The weather was excellent for that time of year: sunny, calm wind, and high temperature of 57 degrees. Water level was a bit up but fishable, with dark water color (2 feet), 50 degrees water temperature, and current around 2 ½ mph. A plan of action was followed that tried to include several different depths, speeds, and structures in our lure presentation. Trolling began on one structure with slow crankbaits (Tadpollys) while searching for steelhead. A nice 15-inch smallmouth bass was landed, indicating a slower speed might be needed today. On the next structure, Spoonplugs were trolled at a slow speed, resulting in another smallmouth bass. The next 3 structures were cast with jump lures or trolled with Spoonplugs, and one 15-inch largemouth bass was caught from shallow water on a slow chatterbait. It

was next decided to try trolling 3-way river rigs against the current, but found that the current was too fast for proper control with the tools we were using. After casting another structure, it was decided to return to a previously cast structure to see if any fish movement had started. 3 nice crappies to 12 inches and 2 big flathead catfish were hooked and landed, the largest one going 24 pounds and 36 inches. A calm air was displayed by Pastor Steve, even as he was reeling in the largest catfish. His true passion is his Christian faith, but one will need to attend his Sunday sermons to experience that!

8 fish of 4 different species were caught. Having a plan ahead of time for lure presentation and structures worked greatly helped to cover more water and check more structures. This requires some familiarity with the river structures and knowledge about fish behavior (Spoonlugging). It was a beautiful day, but early fall weather can often be quite unstable with poor fishing, so a “near whammy” can be considered a good day of fishing!

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