

OUTDOORSUPDATE

OF THE OUTDOORS:

To Nab Fish, Learn To Read The Water

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

Spending time on the water fishing is an excellent way to get away from it all and enjoy the outdoors, as long as you can catch a fish from time to time.

The first thing you'll need to do in order to catch fish is to locate them. In previous columns, I've mentioned that all species of fish relate to structure. Structure can be any number of things: From a change in the bottom contour, rapid depth changes or as subtle as a small depression in the old riverbed.

You'll want to locate these changes in order to locate the larger concentrations of fish.

It's fairly easy to locate the structure on the Missouri River, especially with the new electronics that are available.

If you're fishing from shore, you'll want to look for anything in or along the river that cuts the current creating a current break, areas where the fish can get out of the current.

Current breaks allow the fish to take a break and not have to fight the current. These are areas where they'll rest and set in wait for a meal to come by, then they'll slip into the current, using it to run down its prey.

Once they've gotten what they were after, they slide into the next current break to digest their meal and wait for their next feeding opportunity.

Points, rock piles, downed trees, docks and wing dams are a few of the things that force the current out or over creating less current on the down stream side.

During dry years the dams along the river, generally during the spring and fall water releases are decreased due to flooding below or lack of water in the reservoirs above.

This is an excellent time for both boaters and shore anglers to learn the river. With the water low, you're able to look the river over, as the points, snags, sandbars and deep holes will be visible.

You'll need to do to make a mental map of these areas or enter their coordinates into your GPS and as the water comes up, you've got a good starting place.

This has worked well for me, especially when I don't have a whole lot of time to pre-fish an area.

I make numerous trips over the bridges on the Missouri River during low water periods, and each time I do, I see new



Successful guides know where the fish-holding structure is. Tom Sokoll (left) of Omaha, Neb. and Steve Fosbinder, of Fremont, Neb. took these fish while fishing Lake Francis Case with Joel Vasek of Geddes.

areas that will hold fish when the river is brought to full pool.

When it comes time to fish the area, I head right for these newly-discovered spots and look for fish.

On lakes, the easiest way to find fish holding structure is to purchase a LakeMaster chip for your locator or a LakeMaster contour map of the lake.

The chips and maps show you each change in-depth, the main structure on the lake, helping you to get to the areas that should hold fish.

These items make locating fish holding structure quick and simple.

The time of the year will also be a factor when it comes to fish location.

In the spring and fall, look for areas that warm up quickest. Areas with mud bottoms or an area with a rocky bottom will attract fish earlier because the dark bottom and rocks heat up and stay warmer longer.

In the spring fish will be coming out of their slow period and looking for these warmer water areas in preparation for the spawn.

Another good indicator as to where the fish are located is the wind. No matter what time of the year it is, I always try to fish the windy side. I know what you're thinking! What a pain fighting the wind.

The reason I fish the windy side is because that's where the fish are going to be located.

Aquatic life has to follow its food around. They don't have a Wendy's or a Pizza Hut swim through pickup window. They have to follow their food source or go hungry.

The tiny microscopic aquatic organisms are carried around in the water with the current or in the waves by the wind. If all of the smaller aquatic life is blown to one side of the lake or pond by the wind, you can bet that the minnows that feed on

these microscopic creatures will be close by.

The larger prey fish that feed on the minnows will also be tagging along looking for a quick meal.

There's no such thing as a bad fishing trip! The only difference between a good fishing trip and an excellent fishing trip is catching a few fish.

In order to catch them, you'll need to locate either the structure they call home or the food that they prefer and by keeping your eyes open you'll find and catch more fish.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is the producer/host of the award-winning *Outdoorsmen Adventures* television series which can be seen throughout the upper Midwest and on-line at www.MyOutdoorTV.com. For more information on the outdoors, go to www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

Fish Die-Off
At Wall Lake

SIoux FALLS — The South Dakota departments of Environment and Natural Resources and Game, Fish and Parks and South Dakota State University are working together to investigate dead and dying fish at Wall Lake in Minnehaha County.

The popular 207-acre lake is located a few miles west of Sioux Falls.

The first calls reporting dead and distressed fish came Thursday. An initial investigation by GFP fisheries staff from Sioux Falls found a few dead fish, but thousands of others in distress near the surface of the lake.

Oxygen levels were found to be 0.5 to 0.8 parts-per-million (PPM), which is far below the normal of 5-10 PPM found during the summer.

"Prolonged exposure to oxygen levels this low could result in significantly more dead fish than we're seeing now," said Todd St. Sauver, Regional Fisheries Manager. "Based on the oxygen testing results and our observations, we believe Wall Lake is suffering a phenomenon commonly known as summerkill."

Summerkill occurs when oxygen demands of all living organisms in a lake are greater than the oxygen produced through plant photosynthesis and the air/water interface. Runoff produced by heavy rains Wednesday night, combined with an overcast sky, all contributed to the condition.

"Biologists from DENR collected water samples Thursday afternoon, and there will be additional water and sediment samples collected for testing at SDSU," St. Sauver said. "It may take several days to complete the tests, and we may not know the exact cause until then. The best we can hope for now is some sunshine and some wind to start raising the oxygen level."

The City of Sioux Falls has designated a special disposal area for fish cleanup.

Fish waste brought to the landfill must be separated from other domestic solid waste materials and Wall Lake residents are the only residents eligible. Residents must stop at the landfill scale house and inform scale house employees of the contents of their load.

The GFP will also have a special lined container at the Wall Lake boat ramp for lake residents who need to dispose of fish waste.

General information regarding the Landfill, including hours of operation, rates, and materials accepted are located on the City's Web site at www.siouxfalls.org, or you may call the Landfill at (605) 367-8162.

Until testing is complete, the South Dakota Department of Health cautions people about using Wall Lake and consuming or handling fish from the lake.

TROPHY SPOTLIGHT



PHOTO: CAPTAIN NORM'S
Quentin Moser (bottom) of Yankton caught this 6-pound catfish on June 20 at Westside Park.



PHOTO: CAPTAIN NORM'S
Jordan Coolidge of Norfolk, Neb. caught this 4-pound, 1-ounce smallmouth bass on May 26 on the Missouri River.



PHOTO: CAPTAIN NORM'S
Jason Foss and his son Cristian, age 7, caught a 49-inch long muskie recently in West Rush Lake in Minnesota. Jason is the son of Jerry and Carol Foss, Mankato, Minn., Grandson of John and Marian Bevar of Yankton and Palmer and Eirleen Foss of Lesterville.



PHOTO: CAPTAIN NORM'S
Iden Ramey of Yankton caught this catfish on June 28 at Lewis & Clark Marina.

OUTDOOR
REPORTReminder: Personal
Watercraft Prohibited
On Missouri National
Recreational River

The public is reminded that jet skis and other personal watercraft are prohibited on the Missouri National Recreational River. However, jet skiers and personal watercraft owners are welcome to use them on Lewis and Clark Lake, the reservoir section of the Missouri River located above the Gavins Point Dam that is managed by South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks.

"Lately, we have been receiving multiple reports of jet skis being operated in the national park, the Missouri National Recreational River, particularly down river between Gavins Point Dam and Vermillion," says Acting Superintendent Gia Wagner. "This is of great concern to the National Park Service because we are responsible for protecting the River's outstandingly remarkable values as designated by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968."

The 39-mile District of the Missouri National Recreational River extends from just below Fort Randall Dam down to Lewis and Clark Lake and the 59-mile District stretches from below Gavins Point Dam down to just south of Ponca State Park.

The National Park Service and other river users greatly appreciate everyone's compliance with this and other regulations. For any questions, contact Wagner at 605-665-0209, ext. 30.

GF&P Commission
Hears About Lion
Management In SD

ABERDEEN (AP) — Managing and hunting mountain lions in the Black Hills will be on the agenda for the Game, Fish and Parks Commission at its meeting in Aberdeen starting Thursday.

The state's wildlife division will go over a new five-year management plan for lions that would reduce the population by about a third, to a target of 175 lions.

The commission also will get its first look at proposed 2011 hunting seasons for lions in Custer State Park and in the rest of the Black Hills. Both seasons will be finalized at a later meeting.

Minnesota Duo Wins
Cattfish Tournament

GRAND FORKS, N.D. (AP) — A team from East Grand Forks, Minn., caught 10 cattfish weighing just under 53 1/2 pounds over the weekend to win the annual Red River cattfish tournament in the Grand Forks area.

John Anderson and Tony Weber collected \$5,000 for their Cats Incredible win. Their winning weight was about 8 pounds shy of the record winning weight set last year.

Runners-up Eric Thompson, of East Grand Forks, and Ray Lee, of Grand Forks, had a total weight of just under 72 1/2 pounds.

The biggest cattfish this year — weighing 21.3 pounds — was caught by the team of Mark Lierz, of Pawnee City, Neb., and Ronald Rowland, of Seneca, Kan.

Firth Man Wins Neb.
Super Tag Lottery

LINCOLN, Neb. — Leo Benes of Firth won the first Nebraska Super Tag Lottery. His name was randomly drawn from a barrel by Gov. Dave Heineman at Thursday's meeting of the Nebraska Game and Parks Board of Commissioners.

The permit, offered for the first time this year, is valid for hunting in 2010 and 2011 and has a bag limit of one elk, one deer, one antelope, and two turkeys.

Benes, 50, is a battalion chief for the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department. He learned he had won the lottery in the morning and came down to the Game and Parks headquarters to pick up his permit in the afternoon.

"It's pretty exciting because for 50 years I've wanted a high-powered rifle to do my own hunting with," he said. "I actually purchased one this year in anticipation of being able to get out and do a little hunting."

Benes has never hunted elk, antelope or turkey. He had planned an elk hunt in Colorado but will be changing those plans to Nebraska now. "I'm very much looking forward to the opportunity to travel out west and give it [elk hunting] a try."

There were 1,714 applicants who each paid \$25 to enter the lottery, which is only available to Nebraska residents. Hunters who had drawn a once-in-a-lifetime bull elk tag also were eligible.

Need Quick Cash? Call the Classifieds 665-7811.

Convenience Store/Bar & Grill

- TURN-KEY BUSINESS
- ON U.S. HWY 18
- NEW PUMPS w/CANOPY
- FULL KITCHEN
- LIQUOR LICENSE
- CASINO (10 MACHINES)
- FURNISHED: COOLERS, TABLES/CHAIRS, BAR COUNTER, STAGE w/ LIGHTING

AUCTION w/ MINIMUM RESERVE
AUG. 18, 2010 • CANTON, SD
Inspection Times: Thursday Aug. 5 (1-4 pm) & Sunday Aug. 8 (1-4 pm) or by appointment

For full details with terms and VIRTUAL TOUR visit www.southernauctions.com
Souvignier Real Estate & Auctions
(605) 987-2404

SCHUNEMAN EQUIPMENT CO.
JOHN DEERE

Send resume to:
Schuneman Equipment Co.
Attn: Store Manager
PO Box 229, Milbank, SD 57252
Email to: tschuneman@schunemanec.com

Store Manager - Brookings, SD

Job Function: Manages sales operations within the Brookings location to maximize return on investment through; optimizing Sales Department processes to ensure internal and external customer satisfaction, growing profitable new and used complete good sales, exercising disciplined expense control, attracting and retaining outstanding talent and effectively engaging department personnel.

Schuneman Equipment Co. is an equal opportunity employer