

Dave McCoy on Panfishing

Panfish-bluegills, crappies, white bass, perch - they are everywhere. All you have to do is find them and figure out what they want to eat. Dave McCoy gave us some ideas at the March meeting.

First, Dave is a strong advocate of down and side scanning sonar. I don't know that much about them so Dave says I am fishing blind. But, as Dave says, even a blind squirrel finds acorns. You can't use them at high speed when looking for fish: Go about one-to-two miles per hour.

First bluegills- Dave doesn't fish them in the spring when they are on the beds. Remember!! Big male bluegills build the nests, and guard the nests and fry. They are more important to perpetuating a healthy bluegill population than the females (I've been trying to convince one of the local outdoor writers this for two years with little luck.)

When you get into the summer heat, usually around mid-July, bluegills (and other panfish) will suspend over deep water. They are easily marked on sonar. Drift over the schools with an ice-fishing jig and split shot (some local anglers use heavier egg sinkers to get the bait to the correct level depending on drift speed). If the boat is drifting too fast, use a drift sock to slow down or if there is no wind, use a trolling motor for speed. Fish seem more aggressive in rough water. When the fish are suspended they are feeding on zooplankton that aren't strong swimmers. They drift with the wind so look at the wind direction the previous day and fish the windward shore.

Dave likes to dress the jig with a **nail tail**, a gulp one-inch minnow, grubs, or a red worm. His favorite color is blue. With a three-hook limit you can double rig one rod to tests different depths. Pay attention to which rods are catching fish and adjust accordingly.

This technique works for all the Madison lakes but Lake Monona is probably the best.

If fishing reservoirs like Lake Wisconsin, without a lot of weed growth look for brush piles and use a slip bobber to keep from getting tangled in the limbs.

In late summer-early fall look for bluegills on the outer edge of weed beds, especially on the western shore of Lake Mendota but it works in all the local lakes. Use a



controlled drift in 10-to-15 feet of water. A dropshot rig a foot to 18-inches off the bottom works well with red worms or gulp minnows.

In late fall, just before ice-up look for bluegills in your favorite early ice locations. They will be shallow and bite best on calm, sunny days.

Crappies- In early spring, just after ice out, crappies move into shallow water depending on water temperature. On warm, sunny days on warm shorelines they will be shallow. If it gets cold they move to deeper water. If you can't find crappies in the shallows, move out. Crappies move in and out numerous times before they spawn. A two-to-three degree difference in water temperature makes a big difference in the crappie bite. A small ice fishing jig and a Gulp minnow, or chartreuse nail tail. 18 inches under a small float is the "go to" rig. Post spawn look for crappies in 7-to-15 feet of water adjacent to weed beds. Bump you boat in and out of the weed edge and use a long line drift. Lakes you might try besides the Madison Lakes are Geneva and Dele-

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McCoy, continued

van. In reservoirs again look for backwater brush piles. A special bite on Lake Mendota is to look for big schools of crappies a week to 10-days after the spawn off Picnic and Second Points. Another is the fall bite around Blackhawk Island on the Rock River just as you get into Lake Koshkonong.

Whitebass- Locations Dave suggests are below the dams on the Wisconsin River at Necedah, Petenwell and Castle Rock about the second week of May and sandbars in 10-to-14 feet of water. Go to DePere on Memorial Day and fish in 18-to-20 feet of water from the Highway 172 Bridge to the dam on the Fox River. Go to Lake Pepin near Hagar City about any time in the summer. From mid-October to Thanksgiving try the Wolf River in downtown Oshkosh. A couple of techniques are to pull flies on Wolf River rigs or cast or troll silver Sonics. For Sonics drop them to the bottom and rip them up. In many of these locations, especially the Wolf River, walleyes will also be there. If you want a location closer to home ask Jack Hurst about fishing Warner Bay.

Perch- If you are "gutsy" in the fall and want big perch try Young's Reef off of Oconto in Green Bay. Do it only on a calm day and use a drop shot rig or the gobies will drive you nuts. About Thanksgiving there is a shiner run up the Oconto River with perch following them. Other suggestions were Waukegan in Illinois, Navy Pier in Chicago, barges on the Mississippi River, and North and South Dakota.

Generally speaking Dave likes to use long panfish rods like those made by HT or St. Croix and two-to-four pound test line. If you can't find the St Croix or HT rods rig up an old fly rod. It doesn't cast as nice as a spinning model but it will get the job done.



Nail tails circulated by Dave



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If you have and opportunity to visit one these fine sponsors

\$500.00 winner

Professional diver and club member Rich Krueger was this year's \$500.00 winner. John Czajka won the \$1000.00 prize.

Some of you may remember the presentation Rich gave to us about 10 years ago, where he showed us pictures of all sorts of underwater cars and special structures—but will not release the coordinates. Let Tom Wilke know if you would like to hear him again.



Rich Krueger and Vice Pres. Phil James

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2018 YFC Outings

Yahara Fishing Club

SPRING FISHING HAS ARRIVED!!

We have several special outings coming up that you won't want to miss! Our recent cold snap and lack of rain has slowed down the season which simply means we have more opportunities coming up as the weather warms.

Depere Fox River walleye outing: The ice just came off and several club members have gone already during March but with a recent deep freeze change of weather there will be plenty more opportunities in early to mid April. If you're interested let me know and let's use our knowledge from Dave McCoy's excellent seminar and the hot baits we will have on sale at our next meeting to fish the walleye run!

Clement's Fishing Barge on the Mississippi: This is a fun trip to Genoa with a good chance at hitting jumbo perch, walleyes, sauger and who knows what else on the mighty river! Sign-up and have lots of fun without a boat on the barge! For more information check out this link: <https://www.clements-fishing.com/faq.asp>

Milwaukee Harbor: With lighter wind conditions this trip can bring browns coho, steelhead and more from your small boat. The lake is opening up and fishing has begun! Sign-up if you're interested and we will try to get out in March and April.

Lake MI charter fishing outing in Port Washington: Currently we have 10 members signed up but there is still time for you to go. Here's your chance to participate on a well guided charter with club member and charter Captain John Iverson. Early June is best for Coho salmon and steelhead. July-August is best for King salmon and steelhead. We need to book a trip fast as spots are filling up. Trips are available during the week and weekends. Let me know if you're interested and your preference for early or later summer. Up to 6 people on each trip are possible with many hour options. Check out www.iversonsportfishing.com for more information.

Big Bay de Noc: This is an awesome smallmouth outing in the UP. Small boats can handle this trip easily as you'll be catching smallies in 3-5 feet of water in less and always have opportunities to get out of wind as needed fishing in smaller bays. Trips will be Memorial weekend for sure but times also available the weeks before and after during the week or on the weekend. This is one of our most popular trips, is very cheap with great friendly accommodations in Nahma, MI.

Lake WI panfish outing: As the ice comes off more and water warms we will head to Lake WI to chase down bluegills and crappies.

Eagle Lake Ontario Canada: We have 3 great resorts to choose from at great rates! All kinds of trips are available including a bus trip. After speaking to owner Jeff Moreau of Temple Bay Lodge and the Expo we could do the ultimate club trip with our own boats for as little as \$250 a person for a group of 6 or the ridiculously low rate of \$167 per person for a group of 9. A week in Canada at these prices is pure awesome so what are you waiting for?!

Help create YOUR outings for our club! Let me know what you want to fish for and where and I will try to set an outing up. Better yet you can volunteer to lead an outing. Below is a calendar of likely and suggested outings for 2018. Thanks and looking forward to our best fishing year yet

April: Oconto river walleyes, Depere Fox River walleyes, Lake MI Coho/salmon, Clements Fishing Barge

May: Big Bay de Noc smallmouth, Lake MI salmon, local outing, possible Door County smallmouth, possible Vilas County smallmouth

June: Green Bay walleyes, YFC on water meeting, local outing, possible Lake Winnebago outing

July: local outing, YFC on water meeting, Canada Eagle Lake, possible Green Bay, Lake MI Charter

August: YFC on water meeting, local outing, possible Lake Winnebago outing, Lake MI Charter

September: Clements Fishing Barge, Lake Mendota northern, Lake MI salmon

October: Lake Mendota smallmouth/northern, Lake MI salmon

November: Tenney Park break wall walleyes

December: local outing

Guided trips on local lakes, Green Bay/Sturgeon Bay or others: Would you like to learn a lake better or techniques with a guide and join other club members to get a better rate? Contact me if interested.

All outings above are open to club members, our Rock Valley Angler friends, your family and friends! We need members with boats but you can participate even if you don't have one. Sign-ups will be at club meetings but also on Facebook or through club emails. As always you can contact me at any time to sign-up or if you have questions or just want advice.

Jim Pankratz 608-709-6442 or jimannepan@aol.com

YFC mini fishing workshops

In an effort to help club members increase their fishing knowledge the board wants to set up a time for small groups to get together at 6:00pm on the day of the regular monthly YFC meeting and meet for thirty minutes (give or take) until 6:45 pm. These small groups will have a discussion and or demonstration about an area they have an interest in to improve their fishing knowledge and skills.

At this time the board, wants to get input from our members on what topics they would like to cover in these small group sessions. If you are interested in a certain topic would you be willing to be a facilitator of that session?

We ask all of our members to look at the list to the right to find out to what they would like to have discussed in these small group sessions and if they would be interested in mentoring some of the sessions.

The above items are only suggestions, and we encourage members to add other ideas. Board member Ken Terrill is taking the lead on this new initiative so please send him the subject areas that you would like to learn more about. If you are interested in facilitating one of these sessions please let Ken know that as well.

You can email ken.terrill3011@gmail.com or call him at 608-358-0453 by March 26, 2018.

First mini-workshop

For the first workshop on April 11th we will have a session on how to tie various fishing knots mentored by Ken Terrill and a session on the various features on different depth finders mentored by Rick Kruger. Remember these small group sessions will start at 6:00pm and are one half hour before our regular meeting ending at 6:45pm.

Then after reviewing the response from the YFC members the club will have another session before the May 9, 2018 meeting.

The board is doing this as a pilot project for April and May. If the response is good we will schedule more workshops prior to meetings starting next September.

Suggestions for Small Group Workshops:

How to set up and operate various fishing technology: HumminBird, Lowrance, Marcum, Vexilar depth finders

- Initial set up
- Understanding the menu
- Down imaging
- Side imaging
- Sonar
- Making your own maps

Underwater cameras Aqua Vu

- Initial set up
- Understanding the menu

Trolling motors set up and features and using them with depth finder

- Lake mapping computer programs
- Lake master series
- Navionics
- Lake master plus
- Smart strike

Fishing tackle skills:

- How to tie fishing knots such as double surgeon knot, blood knot, trilene knot, etc.
- How to make custom lures and jigs and kits
- How to read topographic maps for use on lakes and rivers.
- Making your own leaders
- Tips on using jigs, top water baits, crankbaits, swim baits and artificial worms
- How to use Ned Rigs

How and where to locate fish in the Madison chain:

- Learn when and where to find different fish, species-based fish behavior, daily weather changes, different times of the year.
- Learn fish aquatics and what make fish locate in different areas.
- How to interpret solar and lunar cycles and lunar fishing calendars and how they relate to fishing.
- What do you need to take on an outing when you want to catch certain kinds of fish?
- What to take for bass, walleye, Bluegills, Crappie, Perch Northern, Muskie, Catfish

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April raffle items

Featured are 2 rod combos from Lews (a premium manufacturer), one is a 7' casting rod, medium heavy action fast taper, the other is a 7' spinning medium action with a fast taper. There are also some lures our speaker, Nate Bergman, will be talking about – an X-rap with a prop, a Rapala sr-9 deep runner, and some medium size gold blade baits.

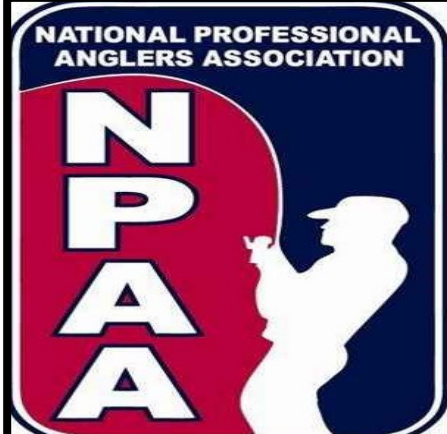
Also a \$50 gift certificate to Dane Co. parks, one day passes for Clements barge, other gift certificates, and a varied selection of crank baits, tungsten jigs, a variety of plastics and more. Check it out and buy some raffle tickets, the money raised goes for our kids outings. Tom Klein



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D&S Spring Speaker Schedule

April
4/12 | Roy Vivian | Fishing River Walleyes From Shore
4/19 | Noah Humfeld | A Season Chasing Madison Walleye
4/26 | Brian Zubke and Austin Ragotzkie | Pre-Spawn Panfish

May
5/3 | Ron Barefield | Opening Weekend

Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance

Annual fundraiser auction
Tuesday, April 17 5:30 pm
Maple Tree Supper Club, McFarland
Bid on guided trips, rods, reels, gift certificates, etc.

May Issue—Man Overboard, Walleye Roe

Greg Belanger and Karl Schoen go fishing and swimming in DePere. There is a good ending. Also in the May Issue. Tom Klein has a great pictorial on cooking up Walleye roe from a Walleye recently caught at Genoa. There is a surprise ending.

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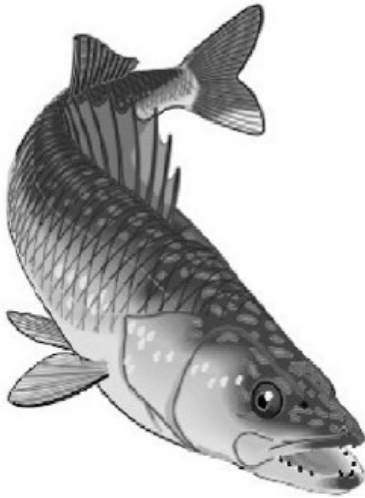
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The next YFC meeting is Wednesday, April 11th
7:00 pm at the VFW Hall, 301 Cottage Grove Road
Speaker: Nate Bergman - Spring Smallies in the Northwoods

Calendar of Upcoming Events

April Events

- April 11, 2018, Regular club meeting at the VFW hall at 301 Cottage Grove Road
- April 14, 2018, Take a Vet Fishing Fund Raiser at the Waun-A-Bowl in Waunake, See Page 3.
- April 17, 2018, Wisconsin Smallmouth Association Auction, See page 6, or Rich Connor for more information.

May Events

- May 5, 2018, Wisconsin Fishing Opener
- May 9, 2018, Regular club meeting at the VFW hall at 301 Cottage Grove Road
Pat Westburg will talk on trolling for panfish.

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