



February  
2010

Editor: Tom Raschke ([traschke@globaldialog.com](mailto:traschke@globaldialog.com)) or 608-233-6765

Club Web site: <http://www.yaharafishingclub.org>

## Yellow Perch, an Ice Fisherman's Gold

By Gary Engberg

The yellow perch is one of the most sought after fish species for the ice angler. While doing some research for this article, I found out a few facts that I'm sure many of you don't know about the yellow perch. Madison's Lake Mendota limnology is one of the most studied in the United States mainly due to the top notch Limnology Department at the University of Wisconsin. The yellow perch population has declined tremendously in Lake Mendota over the decades from the millions of perch that once resided in the lake in the 1940's and 50's to the up and down fishing that is experienced in recent times.

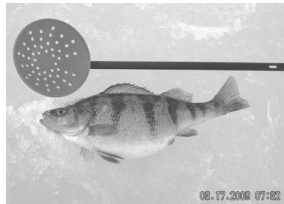
I found articles and scholarly reports by a John Bardach of Cedar Rapids, Iowa that go back to the late 1940's when Bardach was working on his doctoral thesis at the University. Even fifty or sixty years ago, anglers were concerned (much like now) about the decrease in numbers and size of the perch population in Lake Mendota.

Now, the perch population in Lake Mendota seems to vary from year to year. When there is a good hatch and recruitment of younger fish, anglers can expect to find good perch fishing a couple of years down the road. Perch that reach three years in age begin to attract angler's attention because at that age they should be in the 7 to 8 inch range which is at the lower end of being a "keeper" for most anglers. Years and even decades ago, Lake Mendota was known for its jumbo perch which were anywhere from 10 to 14 inches long. These days, it is unusual to catch perch even in the 10 to 12 inch range. But, there still are some of these larger fish if you can find them in the depths of Lake Mendota. There are anglers who still get some of the jumbos, but they are in the minority and

work extremely hard to find the "gold" of Lake Mendota.

There are many reasons for the perch's decline; loss of habitat, poor spawns, competition from other species of fish, over-harvesting, and predation. All of these factors have had their effect on Mendota's perch and these factors continue to this day.

The "serious" perch anglers are well equipped to catch the cousin of the walleye, the perch. Mobility is the key these days because rarely do you find the roving schools of perch in one location where they will stay there for an extended period of time. Perch schools are constantly moving from spot to spot



Randy Derbeck's

seeking food. When found, perch usually like to hang out in the bottom portion of the water column. Their natural diet consists of small fish, fish eggs, crayfish, insects, worms, leeches, and snails. Perch feed during the day most of the year (including the winter) and when they feed it is usually in short time periods. This is why mobility is so important, to stay on active fish. All-terrain vehicles are how the "experts" go from location to location while constantly drilling holes with a Jiffy or Strikemaster power auger and sticking their transducers into the hole to see if there are perch at this spot.

If you happen to find a school of good-sized perch, you want to get back down to them as quickly as possible. I've seen some anglers going back to the old "Swish" rods with the big reel, tripod, and long wooded handle. Fishermen then use a copper tube, inline weight, or some kind which allows them to get back to the fish as quick as possible. As I have said, perch travel in schools and getting back down to them quickly is very important. Other anglers use longer rods with open-face spinning reels and enough weight to get back down to deep water quickly. Under the copper tube or inline weight tie on a 1 to 2 foot lead to a good perch jig like a Rat Finkie, Rocker, Scrimpo, or Teardrop.

**Notice: If you have not paid your 2010 dues by February, you will not receive a March newsletter.**

Continued next page

Then, load your ice jig with anywhere from 1 to 3 wax worms or spikes. Experiment with different color jigs and styles till you find the one the perch want that day.

Serious perch anglers will have areas where they target schools of perch. When these locations are reached, anglers drill multiple holes when they first arrive and have a pattern in mind for the holes that they drill. Whether you drill triangles, straight lines, or patterns along breaks and structure, you should now be able to hop from hole to hole checking for fish. The many new and improved ice electronics made by Lowrance, Aqua-Vu, Vexilar, and Marcum allow you to see fish on your LCD screen separated by different bands of colors. These units also allow you to "see" your jig and bait as it is lowered into the water and through the water column. Some anglers are now even using TV cameras (Aqua-Vu Scout) that allow you to actually see the fish that you're targeting. This is a great way to get adults and children interested in ice fishing since they can now SEE what they're fishing for and the mood that the fish are in. Units can now be purchased for anywhere from \$100.00 to \$200.00.

Now, you have anglers equipped for mobility with their ATV's, power augers, and electronics for seeing the fish. An ice fisherman can now jump from hole to hole and drop their transducer from their electronic unit into the water to see if there are fish in that particular hole. The maximum amount of time to

spend at a hole is thirty minutes or less before moving on to check another hole. Another tip which a camera and electronics give is the ability to check the water column from top to bottom. Though perch will often be within a foot or two of the bottom sometimes they will be higher up in the water column. Be sure to check and work from the bottom to top when searching for active perch.



Another big Perch

Lake Mendota has just recently frozen over completely giving ice anglers access to the entire lake. The perch season can be a short one with the season lasting only two months in a cold year. Most ice fishing for perch is done in the deeper water of Lake Mendota. It is not unusual to be catching perch in water 50 to 80 feet deep. A problem with catching fish at this depth is that they have their air bladders coming out of their mouths when reeled in fast from the deep water. These fish will all die, so if you're catching small fish move to another area and try to find larger perch. The smaller fish that you catch that die do count for your daily bag limit.

Some good locations on Lake Mendota to consider are the deep water rock bars and deep water structure like Dunn's Bar and the Brearly Street Bar, Second Point, Picnic Point, County Park, Governors Island, and the Four Doors. These locations are on most maps and electronic chips. The perch population is coming back in some of the state's other waters like Lake Michigan outside Milwaukee, the many backwaters of the Wisconsin River in the Wausau area, Lake Winnebago, the Bay of Green Bay and many Minnesota waters like Lake Mille Lacs or South Dakota's Devils Lake. The perch in Green Bay are growing at a fast rate where fish are 7

**LUND**  
BOATS  
AND  
**PHARO**  
*marine*  
YOUR FISHING BOAT HEADQUARTERS  
608-849-5950

**Full Color Copies** (608) 257-8900

**XER-LITH** PRINTING & COPYING, LLC

131 West Wilson Street, #P300 Madison, WI 53703

One- and Two-Color Printing  
Copying up to 36" x 48"  
Large Format Posters

Posters, Banners, Wide Format for Trade Shows, displays, parties, advertisements, etc.

V.F.W. Post 1318  
133 Lakeside St.  
Madison 53715  
608-255-5955

**Mike's Prop Shop**

This shop offers a 20% discount to members of the Yahara Fishing Club. They have repaired several of my props, a skeg, and welded a sailboat rudder back together. All were done expertly.

*Editor*

Notes from the Prez

to 8 inches long in just two instead of three years. The reason for the quick growth seems to be the invasive species, the spiny water fleas, which perch are gorging themselves on. The stomachs of these Green Bay perch are full of the water fleas which is much like May flies which many fish feed on when they're available.

The perch bite should continue into March on most waters when some of the best fishing can be had. Last night, I had fresh lake perch for dinner and what could be better, walleye or bluegill? Take your pick because any fish caught thru the ice in the winter are tough to beat! Eat these fish when they are fresh and don't keep too many. Keep enough for a few meals and then go back and catch some for a few more meals. I like to eat my fish fresh. Use a good oil like a peanut or olive oil which allows you to get the oil hot without it smoking. Dust the fillets with a little flour, corn meal, cracker crumbs, sea salt, fresh ground paper, onion or garlic powder, and paprika. Combine the hot perch with a green salad and a slice of lemon and you're set for a meal you won't forget soon.

Contact me anytime for any more information on perch fishing around the Madison area and the state of Wisconsin. I can be reached at [www.garyengbergoutdoors.com](http://www.garyengbergoutdoors.com) .

**Gary Engberg Outdoors**

10106 Hwy. Y Mazomanie, WI. 53560

Phone & Fax 608 795-4208

E-mail [gengberg@chorus.net](mailto:gengberg@chorus.net)

**YFC 2010 Calendar**

**February 9<sup>th</sup>** YFC Monthly Meet will be our annual auction.

**February 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>**, Madison Fishing Expo.

**June** - Kids fishing day. This coincides with the Wisconsin free fishing weekend.

**July 10-11<sup>th</sup>** - Fishing has no boundaries

Well I sure have been awfully busy since retiring at the end of October. I'm wondering where I found the time to get this all done while still puttin' in 40+ a week at the post office. But of course, there's grandkids now. Add that fact to the holiday season and that explains a lot. Our granddaughter Evelyn is almost 3 and joined us at the Kid's Ice Fishing Day for about half an hour. She caught two bluegills but told us she liked the hot dog and hot chocolate afterwards better than the actual fishing. Our two grandsons Freddy (10 months old) and Jack (5 months old) round out the pack. What a blessing! I sure hope there are more coming and when they are a little older they are interested in buzzbaits, Power Worms, Slop Frogs and stuff like that! The whole gang lives in St. Paul and Minneapolis. Wish they were a bit closer but, at least, it's not Seattle or San Antonio.

Speaking of the Kid's Ice Fishing Day, a great big thank you and a round of applause to all who helped and did the usual outstanding job that our club does. The weather was pretty good.....the fishing was pretty good.....the food was great.....and the turnout was fantastic. What a great club we have! I know that we will have exactly the same results at the end of February for the Madison Fishing EXPO. Most of the planning is done for booths, vendors, advertising, speakers, kid's events, etc. The YFC DVD that Duffy put together is super (as most of us saw at the potluck last month). Thanks Duffy! I'm sure it will make the club's booth extra special this year. Let's all pitch in for this and help make the raffle a success and sign up lots of new members.

This month's meeting is our annual auction. Please don't wait for someone else to bring donated items. Remember, all the proceeds go to our club! We will try to keep from going too late as this sometimes does. I have not heard officially but I might just be serving as the auctioneer. Does not sound like any fun at all! Someone please buy me a beer.....it's a thirsty job.....but somebody's got to do it.

Think spring folks! Clean up your tackle, oil a few reels, sharpen some hooks (if it's in my box.....it's sharp!). And take it from me....try to squeeze in a trip to someplace warmer for a few days of fishing. Our whole gang is going to Gulf Shores for a week in March and I'm going to Lake Tenkiller in Oklahoma again in April with several guys from the C&R Bass Club for a week. This time of year, it's nice to have a trip to plan and dream about. By the time that's all over our lakes should be warming up. Those fish better look out this year.....Charlie's boat won't be in the garage much of the time this summer.

See you at the meeting February 9 and don't forget to pay your dues.....you probably won't get another newsletter if you don't. Let's not let that happen. Thanks again to all our members who do so much for our club. Setting up events and meetings, doing the club records and keeping our bank account straight, planning for guest speakers, cooking hot dogs, and all that jazz! Much obliged to all!

Charlie

# Kids Ice Fishing Day 2010

Thanks for the great pics! Editor



Our Kids Ice Fishing day was a huge success! We gave out all 200 poles and had probably another 10-20 people who returned them which we then gave back out to more people. The weather was nice but the fishing was slow. Lots of kids caught fish but it definitely was a tough bite. At the start of the event a 36 inch northern was caught on a tip-up in our area which was quite exciting for the kids to see. We had a great turn out of approximately 30-40 club members volunteering which made everything run real smoothly. I heard nothing but very positive praise from all who attended. Thank you all for helping make it such a great day! Special thanks go out to Tom Klein & Roger Swenson who helped



Continued Next Page

 **Dorn Hardware and Sporting Goods**  
*"The fishing & Hunting Specialists"*

Professional Help—ELECTRONICS  
Inland and Lake Michigan  
Tackle and Accessories  
Guns Ammunition Archery

Competitive Prices at  
4 Locations  
Northgate Oregon  
Monona  
Brookwood



**Pharo Marine Inc**  
Hwy 113 and River Road in Waunakee  
849-5950

**MERCURY**  
The Water Calls

**Pontoons Deckboats**  
Mercury Mariner Force  
Motorist OMC

*"We excell in service"*

**MAZANET MARINA**  
"OUR 40th YEAR ON LAKE MENDOTA"  
SALES & SERVICE

   
EVINRUDE STINGRAY POWERBOATS

- \* WINTER STORAGE
- \* 300 WET & DRY SLIPS
- \* GAS DOCK - BEER & ICE
- \* BOAT RENTAL \* LIVE BAIT

WWW.MAZANETMARINA.COM  
**249-9316**  
5320 BLUE BILL PARK DR

me organize the event, Dave Dahl for his cooking expertise, Duffy Kopf, Rick Seeger, and others who drilled all the holes, and to Jim Kusuda & Terry Rogers who brought all their Pro gear and knowledge to show and teach the kids.

Jim Pankratz



 **Mendota Boat Works**  
 5380 Farmco Dr.  
 Madison, WI 53704  
[www.mendotaboatworks.com](http://www.mendotaboatworks.com)

---

ph: 608 - 245 - 9041  
 fax: 608 - 249 - 9396

**Michael Vierthaler**  
 Owner

Quality fiberglass, gel coat repairs,  
 Yacht Chartering and Bottom Painting

**Terry Balding & Associates**  
 Professional Money Management  
 Financial Planning

515 W. Main Street  
 Sun Prairie, WI 53590  
 (608) 837-9099  
 1-800-727-3039  
 FAX (608) 825-6468  
 Email: [talbalding@hirep.net](mailto:talbalding@hirep.net)  
[www.plannr.com](http://www.plannr.com)

  
 "Your Partner in Success"  
**Terry Balding CFP**

Securities offered through Harbour Investments, Inc., One Odana Court, Madison, WI 53719  
 (808) 274-7744 • Member NASD/SIPC

 Live Bait  
 Tackle Service  
 Guide Service  
 Fishing Info

Archery Supplies  
 Bow's & Arrows  
 Ice Shack Rentals


**D & S Bait,  
 Tackle & Archery, LLC**

Gene & Sandy Dellinger  
 1411 Northport Drive  
 Madison, WI 53704

Store: 608-241-4225  
 Fishing Hotline: 608-244-3474  
**BIG-FISH**

[www.dsbait.com](http://www.dsbait.com)

Tune Into  
 "Outdoor Horizons"  
 Saturdays at 8:00 AM  
 Radio WTDY 1670 AM

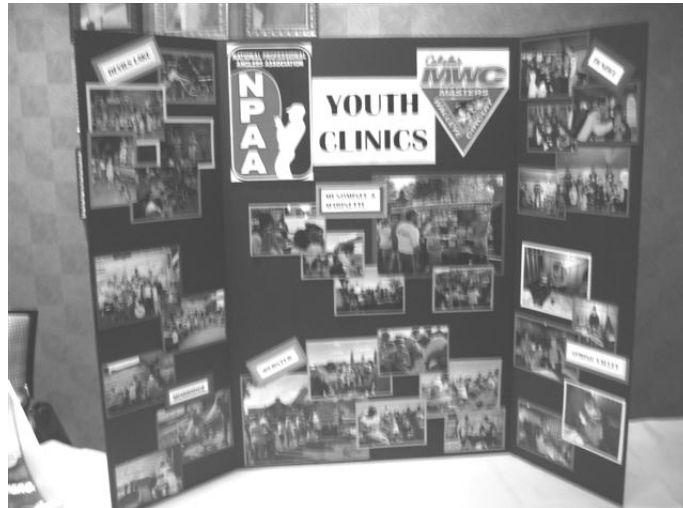


Hosts Gary Engberg,  
 Tony Puccio, Wally Banfi

Bringing you the best in Fishing, hunting and the outdoors.

## National Professional Anglers Association

Here's a few pics from my Annual meeting of the National Professional Anglers Association {1st 4 pics} in Bloomington Min on the 8th-10th of Jan 2010.



1st is of the MWC and their kids days of 2009. I'd like to develop something similar for the Yahara Club's Kids Fishing Days !

2nd is the Honary Lifetime membership awarded to {middle two men} Wayne and John Peterson of the "Northland Fishing Tackle" By {left} Pres.Npaa Pat Nue and {far Right} Cody Roswick {exec. dir} of Npaa



3d is of Jim "Titeline" Kloth and "Fin-tech" National Marketing Director , John Butts {my NEW sponsor}

*Jim Kloth*



## YFC Expo Raffle

The Madison Fishing Expo will be here very soon and we will again be having our Club Raffle at our booth. If you have anything you would like to donate to the raffle or have any contacts at a business that may be willing to donate something please let me know. The club raffle is a major fundraiser for our kids fishing days so any help is highly appreciated.

Thanks, Jim Pankratz

## FOR SALE

Jiffy STX Pro Lectric Jiffy Ice Drill with 8" drill assembly. Retail price is \$380 and will sell for \$240.

The selling price is Duffy's Pro Staff price and he will not be making money on these. The drills will be used for promotional purposes and will be available at the end of the season (near the end of Feb.) A non-refundable \$75.00 down payment is required with the balance due upon delivery. If you have any questions ask Duffy: 849-7245 or [ljkopf@tds.net](mailto:ljkopf@tds.net).

# Yahara Fishing Club Membership Application

P.O. Box 3271  
Madison, WI 53704

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

## Annual Dues:

Individual.....\$25  
Family.....\$35  
Youth Member.....Free  
(with paid membership)

Except for special Summer "On the water" dates, meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Lakeside VFW Hall, John Nolan Dr, & Lakeside St. in Madison.

*An Organization to Educate, Protect and Propagate the Interests of All Fishermen in the Yahara Basin Area  
Including all of Madison's Lakes*

**OFFICES AND BOAT SLIPS**



**INTERLAKE BOATYARD**

Located Between Lakes Monona and Waubesa

Call George Kinsler  
**223-1961**

**Ryan and  
Joyce-Ryan  
Funeral Homes**

Serving Families of all Faiths Since 1938  
"Colonel" Ryan - Roman Ryan - P.M. O'Rourke

2818 N. Sherman Madison 783-8257    118 N. Franklin Verona 845-0623    5701 Odana Rd. Madison 274-1000



**Lake-Link.com**

**BEYOND THE WATER**

Interactive fishing reports, lake database, topographic maps  
tons of angling and outdoor information and much, much more

Visit [www.lake-link.com](http://www.lake-link.com) today!

The next meeting is on **Tuesday, February 9th**, at the Lakeside VFW Hall (John Nolen Rr. & Lakeside St.)  
The Board Of Directors meet at 5:45 pm, The **General Membership meeting starts at 7:00 pm.**

**Annual Club Auction**

**Calendar of Upcoming Events**

**February Events**

February 9<sup>th</sup> - YFC February Monthly Meeting at the VFW hall. This meeting is the annual auction.

February 26-28<sup>th</sup> - Madison Fishing Expo

**March Events**

March 9<sup>th</sup> - YFC December Monthly Meeting at the VFW hall. This meeting is the annual auction.

The Yahara Fishing Club's doors are open to **EVERYONE**, so invite a friend to the meeting!

President - Charlie Grimm .....249-9694  
Vice President - Paul Marunich...219-4449  
Secretary - Paul Nichols.....  
Treasurer - Brad Czebotar .....838-9458

Director - Tom Wilke .....834-9554  
Director - Jeff Wydeven.....848-4542  
Director - Jim Pankratz.....288-9789  
Director - Tom Klein

Director - Roger Swenson..608-752-6825  
Director - Jim Kloth .....608-635-0116  
Director - Karlette Schoen..608-242-8803

Check out our web page at:  
[www.yaharafishingclub.org](http://www.yaharafishingclub.org)



Yahara Fishing Club  
P.O. Box 3271  
Madison, WI 53704