



## September Meeting:

By Dick Dragiewicz

### Dave Ruetz's presentation on large and smallmouth bass fishing

Dave's discussion and slide show on bass fishing was terrific. He offered us lots facts and tactics that were easy to understand. This is a summary of his presentation from my notes.

Please post your comments on the presentation and this narrative on the Message Board section of the club website.

#### Smallmouth Bass Fishing

**Locations:** Wisconsin has many rivers that provide great smallmouth bass fishing. They include the Milwaukee, the Menominee, the Wisconsin, the Peshtigo, the Fox, and others. The river that's the closest and easiest to get to is obviously the Milwaukee River. Starting at West Bend and moving downstream to the North Avenue Bridge you'll find good bass fishing locations. Access is readily available to the wading fisherman. The club has had outings at several locations on the Milwaukee River, e.g., West Bend, Newburg, Saukville, Grafton/Lime Kiln Park, and Hubbard Park. I'm sure there are many more places on the river that are waiting to be explored by club members.



**Finding the bass:** The easiest way to find bass fishing locations is to get someone to show you where to go. If you can't get someone to help you, you'll have to find these places by yourself. Here are two steps to finding good bass fishing water. First get a topographical map of the river area you want to fish. Next get a copy of the DNR fish manager's report for this water. Study both of these items and then go exploring.

You need to find deep water if you want to catch big bass. On the topographical map you acquired look for steep land gradients along river banks that might produce deeper water along the shoreline.

The map will also show river bends and curves that might have deep water. Next you need to get out on the water and investigate these places and see where the bass are really located.

When you get to the river look for structure that attracts bass, e.g., big rocks with deep water around them, downed trees, man made structures (dams, bridges, docks, etc.). Look for baitfish and crayfish they always attract bass.

The DNR fish manager's report for the water you want to fish should have facts on the numbers, sizes, and perhaps general locations of the fish available in the area you want to fish. Might even be some helpful information on area stream work the DNR has done.

**Time of year:** You can catch bass throughout the year. However, the best bass fishing is after the river water temperature has reached 70 degrees. This happens around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in most places. Bass like warm water and become much more active when the water is warmer. In the spring time when the water starts to warm up the bass start moving from their winter holding areas to shallower water where they will spawn. Good fishing starts when leaves start appearing on the trees. Remember bass migrate to deeper holding water for the winter season. This migration starts when the water temperatures start getting below 60 degrees. When fishing in cold water use natural colored flies, ones that match the colors of minnows, crayfish, etc. Fish them slowly. With warm water bright, gaudy attractor patterns fished faster seem to work best.

**Flies and techniques:** Dave uses an assortment of flies when fishing for bass. Woolly buggers, muddlers, baitfish patterns, streamers, especially the Mickey Finn Streamer, poppers, woolhead sculpins, and Dave Whitlock's bass patterns. He really likes the Larry Dahlberg Flash Dancer pattern. He said it's his number one fly. Sizes of flies range from 10's to 2's, frequently the flies are 2" to as much as 4" long.



*Selection of bass flies*



*Typical bass poppers & Clousers*

When fishing poppers be sure to match the type of popper to the water surface. For example, when the water is flat and smooth he recommends using a Sneaky Pete pattern with a gentle slow retrieve, when the water surface get rougher use a flat faced popper and a more aggressive retrieve. The four popper types he uses are the Sneaky Pete, Flat Faced foam poppers, Diver patterns, and Sliders.

Bass in Wisconsin rivers don't seem to rise to insect hatches as they do in other parts of the country. The fish that rise to insect hatches are chubs. When you see this happening you can be sure that bass are nearby waiting to feast on the chubs. Search the area with a minnow pattern for some exciting bass fishing.

To make sure you are ready to set the hook when its time he suggested visually tracking the fly during the retrieve. If the water is clear you should be able to see the fish following the fly and be able to set the hook when the bass takes it. Keeping the rod tip near or in the water helps keep a tight line and improves setting the hook when the bass takes the fly.

Early season smallmouth bass fishing on Little Sturgeon Bay and other Door County peninsula bays is generally good. In these locations you'll be fishing for bass that are looking for shallow water where they will spawn. After they spawn the water warms up and the bass migrate back to deeper water until the next spring.

**Equipment:** A fly rod in the 6 to 8 weight range works well on the Milwaukee River and similar water.

When using bigger flies the heavier rod/line combination is better.

## Largemouth Bass Fishing

Most of the time largemouth bass fishing will be on inland lakes. The same flies used for smallmouth bass will work for largemouth bass. However, largemouth bass do feed on hatching insects. Insects they like to feed on include the Hexagenia Limbata (aka Hexes), Damsel Flies (use nymph patterns), and Ephron Leukons (a small white mayfly in hook sizes 12 & 14). Dave said to fish these hatches early or late in the day. Cast your flies to the feeding fish just like you do on trout streams. Hexes hatch from Memorial Day up to August.

Fishing flies next to or near weed lines will be productive. Look for Chana weeds (I think this is the name of the weed he mentioned), it has a rough sandpaper texture and attracts these kinds of insects. This might be a good time to use float tubes and pontoon boats.

Earlier this year Ken recommended going to Lake Waubesa for some great early season bluegill and largemouth bass fishing. It's located a mile or two south of Madison.

## Pike Fishing

Part of Dave's presentation also covered pike fishing since pike and bass frequently live in the same general locations. To find big pike, not small ones, look for cool/cold water. Small pike will be in warmer water where you will find bass. There are several ways to find cold water in rivers (and maybe lakes) and that is to look for cold water springs that feed into the river/lake. Signs of cooler water include places where watercress grows, look for water bubbles on the water surface, this is caused by the seepage of some springs, the color of the river/lake bottom may be lighter than surrounding areas due to spring seepage, and don't forget to use a thermometer to check water temperatures. Sometimes topographical maps show where the springs are located.



Rowley Bay has good pike fishing early in April/May in its shallow waters. Pike spawn right after ice out in shallow water. The spawning time is about 2 or 3 weeks long. Use bigger flies for pike than bass. The same patterns work, just need bigger sized flies. Sometimes pike patterns are 6" to 10" long. Look for bait fish around emergent weeds and bulrushes. To remove hooks from pike get a jaw spreader and long handled forceps.

## Frostbite fishing on Lake Columbia

After covering fly fishing for bass and pike from ice out to freeze up Dave said we can still go fly fishing during the winter by going to Lake Columbia. Be sure to dress properly to match the air temperature and the water temperature. Air temps can be really cold (like zero or not much warmer) while the water temperature is probably in the 80 degree range. For safety reasons wear a bright colored hat or vest so motorized boaters can easily see you. Bring a compass to help navigate your way back to the shoreline in the fog that's always present.

*(Remember to post your comments and suggestions on the Message Board section of the Milwaukee Lake & Stream Fly Fishers website.)*

## September Outing:

By Greg Schick

While our last inland trout outing of the season was a bit sparsely attended, both of us had a good time! I think the fog early that morning may have made some people hesitant to leave Milwaukee and head west on a two and a half hour drive. I left from Lodi, where the weather was absolutely beautiful and got to the “Catch & Release” stretch of Castle Rock Creek about ten minutes before **Ken Zielinski** did.

As we were gearing up in the parking lot, I heard the call of another trout fisher, probably much more skilled at fish catching than Ken and I put together. Across the stream and not too high in a tree was a beautiful adult bald eagle. After a few attempts of me trying to get his picture in the tree, he tired of me sneaking up on him and took to the air. It was the first time I've seen an eagle that far south during the summer season and it was a beautiful sight to behold!



The showers that were predicted for the late afternoon decided to move in sooner than that and shortly after we got in the water the sky began to get more cloudy. I thought that would work in our favor as it would minimize our shadows and make the fish more comfortable. One out of two ain't bad - we didn't cast harsh shadows...

After playing around with an Elk Hair Caddis as my “indicator fly”, and alternately using a Pheasant Tail Nymph and a Caddis pupa as my dropper fly, I switched the bottom fly to a Blood Worm which I've found so successful on Black Earth Creek.

Didn't take much more than five minutes after the switch that I had my first fish in hand — and it was almost as big as my hand, too! If you look closely, you can see that midge pupa pattern still hanging out of its mouth, too!

I always try to take a picture of my first fish... Heck, it might be my ONLY fish!

I got a couple of more, slightly bigger fish (about nine to ten inches) not long after that, but I didn't take their pictures as I was sure that the “big one” was out there waiting for me. He may have been waiting, but he wasn't cooperating, as those were the only fish I caught along that “fish for fun” stretch of the creek.



After lunch Ken and I headed downstream to the next bridge (the one upstream of the “campground”) to try our luck on the water there.

The rain that had started just before we went back to Fennimore for lunch was still making its presence felt, and we hoped it might add to our fishing success. Last time I was on this stretch the fishing got better when the rains came. Much to our dismay, we got skunked on this section of the creek, although I did find some very nice pools that I'm going to try again when the season reopens next March!

## Area Activities:

### Spey Rod Conclave 2006

Three Milwaukee Lake & Stream Fly Fishers club members went to the Spey Rod Conclave in Mokence, Illinois on the weekend of September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Dave Pinczkowski, Erik Helm and Dick Dragiewicz** were there. This was the place to go to be totally immersed in spey rod fishing. You could learn about new and different types of spey rods and their uses, see demonstrations of casting styles, get a free casting lesson, take an all day casting lesson for a fee, learn about the various line types that are used on spey rods, enjoy lots of spey rod discussions or cast any of the spey rods that were being shown at the conclave.

The 2007 Spey Rod Conclave is scheduled for September 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 2007 at the same location.



*L-R: Eric Helm and Dave Pinczkowski at the Spey Rod Conclave.*

## October Meeting:

Our October meeting will feature Jay Thurston. He's going to talk about the good things anglers do while trout fishing. And, he'll be signing and selling his new book.

Jay Ford Thurston was born in 1933 in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and spent part of his boyhood years growing up in Flech where he learned to fish trout and which was the setting for his next book, Out of the Rainbow. Later, Jay and his family moved to Wisconsin.

After serving in the U.S. Army for two years, Jay attended college at the University of Wisconsin in Stevens Point, graduating with degrees in history and geography. Jay received his master's degree in outdoor education from Northern Illinois University. After teaching for twelve years and serving as an elementary school principal for the La Crosse, Wisconsin, school district for twenty-two years, Jay retired in 1995.

Jay and his wife, Diana, now live in Viroqua, a town in southwestern Wisconsin that Jay calls "Trout Central." Jay's love of nature is evident in the more than 200 articles he has written and in his two previous books, The Wild Flower and Following in the Footsteps of Ernest Hemingway and 59 Additional Trout Fishing Stories. With Out of the Rainbow, (to be released from Savage Press, 2-07) Jay brings the wonders of nature into the lives of children through the tales of his magical swamp creature, Waller Wampus.

**We'll look forward to seeing you at Yester Years Pub & Grill at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, Oct. 10th**

## October Outing:

**Saturday, Oct. 21st — Salmon Fishing on the Sheboygan River.**

Once again we'll be meeting at the Pettit Center (at 6:30 am) and carpooling to Kohler. Don't forget to bring along a lunch. You'll need an 8-wt rod. If you don't have one, a 6-wt or 7-wt will do, but it will certainly make things a lot more interesting if you hook a big fresh salmon.

Don't forget to bring your waders. Most of the river is wadeable with hipsters, but there are a couple places where you need waders or you will definitely get wet.

If you want to meet us there we have a decent map on our website.

## Cartoon Corner:



## *Milwaukee Lake & Stream Fly Fishers Officers and Committees*

### Officers / Board of Directors

**Ken Zielinski**, President  
414-425-9077  
flyyeguy@wi.rr.com

**Al Dalphonso**, Vice President  
414-541-1711  
ard423wi@ticon.net

**Frank Stetzer**, Secretary  
414-481-8935  
stetzer@csd.uwm.edu

**Jim Johnson**, Treasurer  
262-549-4868  
jjrdjohnson@yahoo.com

**Ron Wojack**, Sgt. at Arms  
414-281-2947  
wojaxx@wi.rr.com

**Peter Alba**, Member at Large  
262-780-6259  
Palba@Amfam.com

**Mike Drout**, Member at Large  
mkd@bizwi.rr.com

### Committees:

#### Education:

**Dick Dragiewicz**, 847-498-3260 obiobiobi@ameritech.net  
**Greg Schick**, 262-635-0522 gaschick@wi.rr.com  
**Ken Zielinski**, 414-425-9077 flyyeguy@wi.rr.com

#### Programs:

**Dick Dragiewicz**, 847-498-3260 obiobiobi@ameritech.net

#### Fly Tying:

**Greg Schick**, 262-635-0522 gaschick@wi.rr.com

#### Food:

**Ken Kurek**, 414-961-2356 ken.kurek@cbexchange.com

#### Hatch Editor:

**Greg Schick**, 262-635-0522 gaschick@wi.rr.com

#### Membership:

**Greg Schick**, 262-635-0522 gaschick@wi.rr.com

#### Outings:

**Ken Zielinski**, 414-425-9077 flyyeguy@wi.rr.com

#### Web Master:

**Frank Stetzer**, 414-481-8935 stetzer@csd.uwm.edu

## MILWAUKEE LAKE & STREAM FLY FISHING 2006 CALENDAR

	<b>October</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>December</b>
Meeting	10th At Yester Years Pub	14th At Yester Years Pub	12th At Yester Years Pub
Outing	21st @ Kohler	TBA	TBA
Fly Tying	11th and 25th	15th and 29th	13th (only)
Event			

	<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>
Meeting	9th At Yester Years Pub	13th At Yester Years Pub	13th At Yester Years Pub
Outing	Jan. 1st — Paradise Springs	24th Location TBA	24th Location TBA
Fly Tying	10th and 25th	14th and 28th	14th and 28th
Event	New Years Day “Wine, Cheese & Trout Fest”!		“Early Season Opener!”

<b>Meeting:</b>	7:00 pm Yesteryears Pub & Grill 9427 W. Greenfield
<b>Outing:</b>	Meet at 6:30 am at Park & Rides lots. See Hatch for details.
<b>Fly Tying:</b>	Sportsmen’s Warehouse (I-43 & Mooreland Rd.) from 6:00 - 8:30 pm.
<b>Event:</b>	*

**The Hatch** is the monthly newsletter of the Milwaukee Lake & Stream Fly Fishers, an incorporated nonprofit organization affiliated with the Federation of Fly Fishers.

**Milwaukee Lake & Stream Fly Fishers** meets the **2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday** of each month at **7:00 p.m.** at **YesterYears Pub & Grill, 9427 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis, WI**

Meetings **May through August** are on the water. Read **The Hatch** for locations or go to our website at: <http://www.speakeasy.org/~mlsff>

Send correspondence to:  
**Milwaukee Lake & Stream Fly Fishers,**  
**P.O. Box 370668**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53237**

Submit contributions for **The Hatch** by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month to:  
 Greg Schick, Editor  
 at: [gaschick@wi.rr.com](mailto:gaschick@wi.rr.com)