

Arlington Anglers

Get Ready, Get Focused, Get Fishing



Bob Diebold
Arlington Anglers Fishing Club

What's the difference between a casual fisherman, a serious fisherman, and a tournament fisherman? The answer in short, is the level of preparation, focus, and concentration.

The casual fisherman throws his rod in his car or boat and when convenient puts in a little time out on the water. His success rate is hit or miss and really does not learn much from one trip to the next. The tournament fisherman researches that next lake or reservoir. He checks the weather reports, maps, results from his last visit, and local reports. He pre-fishes the lake with his \$75,000 rig equipped with \$20,000 or electronics noting temperatures and water clarity in every bay or piece of structure. He has a scripted plan for the first ten lures to come out of his tackle box. He eats and breathes that lake for a week straight.

Don Dziedzina, the Outdoor Writer for the Chicago Tribune, notes that most of us want to be that "serious fisherman." You don't have to be a full time fisherman or own a big metal flaked rig that can hit 60 mph. All it takes is a little focus and preparation. Make sure your gear is safe, in good repair. Study the maps and learn how to use your electronics. Be cognizant of the water clarity and temperature (especially in the spring when a couple of degrees can make a world of difference.) Believe in your angling abilities and learn from experience- your own and from others.

Don also shared some his best bets for early spring fishing in the Chicago area: Braidwood Lake is open now and is full of 2-4 lb. catfish with some nice gills and LM. LaSalle Lake opened on 3/17 and crowds are expected. If it is still cold, try for LM bass on the warm north end. Blue

cats can be good drifting with cut shad. Heidecke opens April 1st. The power plant discharge is no longer working. Fish a little bit off the rocks for stripers or well-fed species.

The Illinois River is good for early saugers using minnows on jigs or Wolf River Rigs. There are a lot of good areas: downstream from Starved Rock, I39 Bridge, Peru Flats, under the Spring Valley Bridge, Hennepin by the grain elevators, etc. Light hits? Use a stinger hook. Lake Calumet and the Calumet River can be hot for perch and crappies fished along vertical structures (like I beams or bridge supports) or LM bass in the early weeds.

Early season Lake Michigan can be good for perch around 95th Street and the Calumet River bridges. Use mini-mites, twister tails, grubs, or minnows fished just off the bottom. Cohos start soon, too.

As the water opens up at Shabbona Lake, try for the muskies as they move up into the shallows first (boat or shore.) Try Forest Preserve Tampier Lake for some big walleyes 2-3 lbs and some up to 8 lbs. Use golden roaches on a bobber. Want LM bass, try jerk baits, Rattle Traps, or live bait.

Feel adventuresome? Take a trip to southern Illinois for red hot crappie fishing at Lake of Egypt, Little grassy, Cedar, Rend, Devils Kitchen and oth-



Tribune Outdoors Writer, Don Dziedzina, provides early spring fishing tips for the Arlington Anglers at their March

ers.
One last tip from Don Dziedzina: Slow down your early spring presentation (aren't we all a little anxious?). Try the northern sun-filled bay. Or, that bay that is shallow or dark (2 degrees makes a big difference). Look for structure that grabs radiant heat like trees, girders or boulders.

Don Dziedzina has hosted *The All Outdoors Television Show* www.myoutdoortv.com since 1999 and now has become the outdoors writer for the Chicago Tribune. See his articles on Tuesdays in the Tribune.

April is a great time to seek out and try out a new club as you get ready

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to hit the open water. You have a no-risk opportunity to see first hand what a club can do for you. Attend our Arlington Angler's meeting on April 20th. Our speaker will be Nick Camarada.

Dates to remember: April 10 - Inter Club Outing at Spring Valley on the Illinois River; April 17 - Outing Chain of Lakes at the State Park; April 20 - Meeting and Speaker- Nick Camarada - Muskie Guide Services; April 29- May 2 - Outing at Clinton Lake and Camp Quest; May 8 - Outing on Lake Michigan out of Waukegan for Perch; May 18 - Program by Coast Guard Auxiliary and US Power Squadron; June 12 - Outing on Lake Delavan (County Park Launch); June 15 - Meeting and Speaker - Bruce Marabella on Walleye Techniques.

Come to one of our meetings to find out more about our club, activities and outings.

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. We meet at Dick's Sports Store (Flr.1-NW) near Woodfield Shopping Center in Schaumburg, IL, .5 miles north of Higgins, on Martingale Road. Door prizes, speaker, raffles, fishing reports: Give it a try!

For further information call our President Tom Curtin at 847-639-7858 or visit our website at <http://arlingtonanglers.com>