Mid-Maryland Sportsman

Would you believe 19 bass in four hours?

By Bob Spore
Observer Correspondent

Fishing gets slow this time of year-Wanna Bet? Would you believe 19 bass in less than four hours and 65 rockfish in about the same amount of time? Yep, she happened.

Two friends of friends headed for the upper reaches of the Nanticoke last week with a bucket of minnows and a hand full of shad darts. They had given up largemouth bass fishing for the year and were looking for a basket of crappie.

Even though the crappie are around all year, there's something about December and January that turns them on.

The gentlemen began fishing in the conventional manner with the bobber set at about three feet, but the only action came from trying to keep warm. Then one took off the bobber to see if anything inhabited the bottom and WHAM- a largemouth about two and a half pounds.

The action persisted for more than two hours, the final count was nineteen. The largest was three and a half pounds.

The technique was to lip-hook a bull minnow on a shad dart and slowly, very slowly jig it along the bottom.

The 65 rock were taken in 65 feet of water just East of the Old Gas Bouy (Bouy 71). The water drops off to more than a hundred feet in the area and the fish were at the 65 foot level.

The technique for the rock, similar to the largemouth, was to bounce the bottom with a small white bucktail dressed with minnow.

Bouncing the bottom requires wire line, 20 or more ounces of drop sinker and constant attention to assure that your lure is on the bottom.

So you see Virginia, there is action to be had if we are willing to brave the elements.

For those preferring indcor activities, Bill Mare of Mare Inc. in Frederick Maryland, is sponsoring a bass fishing seminar this coming Sunday 2 p.m. at Prince Georges Community College.

Will Whitehead and other bass masters will attempt to stir up interest in bass fishing for anglers in the Beltway area. The affair will cost a buck a head with proceeds going to the Maryland Bass Federation.

If this seminar runs true to form late comers must be satisfied with standing room only. Seminars of this type help to sharpen your technique, allow you to meet neighbors with similar interest (maybe even enough to form a club), and are a temporary cure for Cabin Fever.

The University of Maryland's Department of Microbiology, The Chesapeake Bay Institute of John Hopkins University and the Oceanic Division of the Westinghouse Electric Corporation have conducted a study for our DNR (Department of Natural Resources) to determine the level of PCBs persistent industrial chemicals, in the upper Chesapeake Bay.

PCBs (Polychlorinated biphenys) are essential in the electronics industry. Highly resistant to heat, PCBs are used in hydraulic fluid for high energy transformers and have been used in household paints, caulking materials, and copy paper.

Scientists have discovered that high amounts of PCBs cause liver damage in animals and affect reproduction. An outbreak of PCB poisoning from contaminated rice oil in Japan killed more than a dozen people and gave 1000 more a skin disease.

PCB levels in the Bay were significantly below the critical level, but not reassuringly low when it comes to speci slightly lower on the reproductive tree, e.g. fish.

The Susquehanna, one of our prime rockfish spawning rivers, also transported the preponderance of the PCBs found in the area.

The PCBs will have a certain effect on the 1976 rockfish spawn, whether it will be significant or not won't be known until July when we start looking for fry.

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