

Read water to catch fish

Whether you are standing on the bank of some river or stream out in the Rocky Mountains or fishing a stocked lake in the Golden Belt, fishermen far and wide are confronted with the same problem: Where should I start to fish?

If you consider that a fish occupies only a space as large as it is, and in the space where it lives, that space produces only enough food to support that fish, it only makes sense that the vast majority of water in the stream or lake you are fishing is devoid of fish.

Learning to read water is one of the keys to catching fish. Remember, 10 percent of the anglers catch 90 percent of the fish and 90 percent of the anglers only catch 10 percent of the fish.

With this in mind, fishermen need to learn which areas of a stream or lake are more likely to harbor fish than the others.

This skill is easy to learn, but most anglers take a lifetime to figure it out.

Learning to read bottom structure and transitional points, interpreting current flows, and the habitat around you can make a world of difference in your fishing trip.

For instance, let's say you are fishing the Kaw River close to Kansas City. It has a mixture of healthy populations of sport and rough fish. Somewhere along the way, it is most likely that an angler has caught a different species of fish while trying to catch a particular species. For example, a fisherman might be trying to catch a catfish and lands a carp. They may be trying to catch a carp and end up with a wiper. Now you get the idea.

The same holds for other species like largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, white bass, walleye, and northern pike. Now you must understand



The Jayhawker

By Jim Merriott
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not all rivers support these fish, but in most instances, the theory of reading water stands the same for the majority of fish we catch here in Kansas.

All fish must have protective cover and must have a food supply.

Because nature constantly changes the physical processes of rivers and streams due to current flow, regardless of water temperature, warm-water streams still have the same general characteristics as cold-water streams. Both have sheltering lies, feeding lies and prime lies.

The difference between the warm-water species and cold-water trout is they probably do not seek the same food supply. They most likely move from sheltering lies to feeding lies at different times during the day.

For example, walleye and bass feed mostly on minnows and crawdads. They move from their sheltering lies to their feeding lies when their prey are the most active, usually later in the evening until just about dawn. The same goes for brown trout; they are nocturnal and very spooky. That is why they are harder to catch than rainbow.

The only exception to the rule is if the fish lives in a sheltering lie next to a prime lie. In this scenario, fish will feed any time they have an opportunity to catch prey large enough to produce more energy to their body than it takes to catch it.

In lakes or ponds, schools of panfish such as crappie or bluegill will often cruise then rest, then feed in the same place unless they are pushed out of that honey hole by larger fish.

In and around weed beds, over sunken weeds, at inlets, outlets along cliffs, dam rip-rap, and along flooded timber where ridges and valleys run into the lake, around visible and sunken islands and where shallow water drops abruptly into deep water. These are areas where the lunkers cruise.

The secret here is finding the correct depth where they are most comfortable with water temperature and where their food sources and oxygen are abundant.

Reading water is an essential key to your fishing success. A lake or river can be as easy to read as a child's storybook or it can be as difficult as learning a foreign language. In either case, the secret to success is smart, close, steady observation of the area you are fishing and the willingness to adapt to the situation at hand.

Remember to pass it on - take a kid fishing.

Until next time, this is the Jayhawker hoping to see you in the Great Kansas Outdoors.

Jim Merriott has been a professional fishing guide for more than 20 years in the Rocky Mountain Region.

People in Our Community

Mary Lou Olson, society editor mlolson@nwkansan.com

Kyle Mines has returned home from a 10-day trip to Bellingham, Wash., to visit his three daughters, Georganne, Becky and Nancy. He met his newest great-granddaughter, Madison Jean Taylor, while visiting in Bellingham and also saw his grandchildren, Melissa and Mike Fields. Leaving Bellingham with his daughter, Georganne and Larry Ishii, they boarded the cruise ship "Island Princess" in Vancouver, British Columbia. While on board Kyle enjoyed the great food, and playing "Wild Stampede" in the casino. This was the first time he had been on the ocean and not able to see land for three days. They cruised for three days back to California where he visited the Ishii family. He also met his newest great-grandson, Matthew Norris. Other visitors were his grandson, Jeff Ishii and family, and granddaughter, Tami Norris and family.

Dale and Cheryl Votapka returned home last week after traveling for a month. They enjoyed seeing the Grand Circle of National Parks in Utah, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado. They also visited Mr. and Mrs. Larry Guinn at Deer Trail, Colo.

Troy Lindemann of Wichita, and Gene and Yve Lindemann, Littleton, Colo., came last Tuesday to visit Vera Lindemann and attend funeral services for Mrs. Pauline Zander that day. Marilyn Lindemann and Polly Lindemann of Wichita visited Mrs. Lindemann from Wednesday to Friday.

Nancy Jorn of Lawrence visited relatives in the area from Tuesday to Thursday. En route she visited her aunt, Doris Jorn, and cousin, Pat Jorn, in Lincoln, Neb. She hosted a pizza party on Wednesday evening.

Two escape injury in helicopter crash

Marvin May, a pilot from Oberlin, and Ron Willocks, owner of Pawnee Aviation at McCook, escaped with only minor injuries when the helicopter they were testing crashed at the McCook Airport on Thursday.

Mr. May needed four stitches to close a cut on his head and Mr. Willocks received scrapes on his hands and leg and a cut by his nose.

Pawnee Aviation came to McCook in January 2005 to build a plant and offer kits of the company's prototype helicopter to home-

Invited guests were Marianna Bendon, Karla Jones, Cecil Hess, Mark and Barbara Olson, Kurt and Mary, and Keith and Mary Lou Olson.

— **Brunch Buffet, Sunday, Oct. 8, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. LandMark Inn, Call (785) 475-2340 for reservations.**

Connie Grafel entertained with a slumber party Saturday night for her grandchildren, Kade, Isabel, Kel and Reece Grafel.

Kelsie Griffith and Tanner Griffith of Clayton, and Alyssa Montgomery of Jennings entered market steers in the 74th Kansas Junior Livestock Show held recently in Wichita. Kelsie's crossbred market steer placed eighth in class 14; Tanner's Shorthorn came in ninth in class 4, and Alyssa's crossbred market steer placed sixth in class 15.

Kendra Anderson was among 2006 spring graduates at Barton County Community College in Great Bend. She is the daughter of Gayle Anderson and is a student this fall at Kansas State University.

— **Get acquainted and discuss county issues with write-in candidate Marcia Lohofener Tuesdays, 5 p.m.-?? through October, yellow house east of library. pol. adv. M. Lohofener, treas.**

Gabe Moore of Oberlin will be a cast member in the fall play, "Dearly Departed," which will be presented by the theater department at Colby Community College on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 2, 3 and 4. Director is Terrilyn Fleming. It will be presented at 7:30 p.m. each evening in the Northwest Kansas

Cultural Arts Center located on the Colby Community College campus. He is the son of Monte and Kelly Moore.

Herschel and Jody Betts, and Buzz and Cynthia Matson attended the homecoming game in Hays Saturday afternoon between Central Missouri State of Warrensburg, Mo., and Fort Hays State. At the pre-game alumni luncheon, they visited with Martha Nemeth of Topeka, but formerly of Oberlin, who was attending a class reunion.

Winning highs in pinocle at Golden Age Center the past week were Veanna Carman, Elden Haas, Dewaine Stapp, Kelva Dryden and Max Carman. Lows went to Doris Gilbert, Floyd Edgett, Wilma May, Elden Haas and Dorothy Moore. Pitch highs were won by Floyd Edgett and Henry Edgett with lows going to Aleen Van Vleet and Dorothy Moore. Bridge winners were Phyllis Lohofener and Dorothy Cochran.

Ian and Pam Patrick, Nederland, Colo.; Kerry Ann Hastings, Arkansas City; Mike and Rhonda Starbuck and Audrey, Hebron, Neb.; and Andy and Trish Starbuck, Drew and Anna, Colby, visited relatives in Oberlin over the weekend. Joining them for dinner Saturday evening at the LandMark Inn were Cecil Hess, Mark and Barbara Olson and Sarah, Keith and Mary Lou Olson, Marianna Bendon and Karla Jones. Ian Patrick, Mike Starbuck, Keith Olson, Kerry Ann Hastings and Anna Starbuck were honored with birthday cake for their October birthdays. The Patricks, Miss Hastings and Mrs. Hess toured the Kanona area Saturday afternoon and also visited Ivis Hanson at Wheat Ridge Terrace.

Eighth-grade girls win eight in row

The Decatur Community Junior High eighth-grade volleyball team extended its winning streak to eight in a row against Rawlins County Thursday in Atwood.

The Lady Devils used teamwork, aggressive net play and a dominant defense to defeat the Lady Buffaloes, 25-16, 25-8.

Rachelle Scott was the top server. "I was very pleased with the way the girls worked together," said Coach Melissa Dreher. "They kept aggressive, alert, and focused."

The seventh-grade team did not fare as well, dropping both sets of the two-game match, 25-21, 25-18.

Oberlin's top server was Kiah Blau.

Even though the younger girls lost, Coach Dreher said that the team used the ball much better against Atwood and worked well as a team.

The Lady Devils will play host to Goodland starting at 4:30 p.m. Thursday.

Colby downs Oberlin youth football team

Oberlin's fifth- and sixth-grade youth football team lost 6-0 to Colby on Saturday in Oberlin.

Colby scored in the second quarter after a Red Devil fumble at the goal line. Oberlin played tough defense, holding the Eagles on four downs on a goal-line stand prior to

the Devils taking the ball over on their own one-yard line.

On the first snap from scrimmage quarterback Zach May ran a sweep to the outside but, fumbled the ball after being tackled by three Colby players.

The Red Devil defense held the

Eagles twice from the Oberlin one-yard line before the Colby score.

The Little Devils play Phillipsburg Saturday at Smick Field. The third and fourth graders will start at 10 a.m. followed by the fifth and sixth-grade game at 11:30 a.m.

Come to Oberlin this weekend for

MINI SAPPA DAYS

October 7 & 8, 2006

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Quilt Show Both Days

Breakfast and Lunch Menus served on grounds

Poker Run 11 a.m. Saturday Only (Open to tractors & cars)

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