

Arlington Anglers

Out of the Box Smallmouth



Bob Diebold

Arlington Anglers Fishing Club

Sometimes your old standby smallmouth tactics are just not working. You've tried every tube jig, crankbait, and drop-shot rig in your arsenal. Did it ever occur to you that perhaps the smallmouth had become conditioned to the same old, same old tossed by ever fisherman on your lake?

Then maybe it's time to think "out of the box" and try some new and creative methods to put more fish in the boat, as suggested by smallmouth guide, Andrew Ragas. Try some of these techniques:

1. Jigging Rapalas – No longer just used on the ice, use mid-summer or fall, deep water or suspended.
2. Carolina Rigged Rubber Flukes – Fished weedless, don't need live bait, can fish deep, over shallow weeds, or suspended.
3. Swim Jigs – Usually used for largemouth. To be successful match the hatch (crawfish) with your skirt and jig. The trailer can be a creature bait, grub tail, crawfish or minnow.
4. Swim Baits – Cheap and simple, good for casting and covering water such as weed lines or rock structure. Try perch, shiner, shad, or sucker imitators.
5. Down-sized Musky Buck Tails – Summer or fall, effective in weeds and timber, triggers

reactionary strikes using single/double smaller blades less than 2 ounces.

6. Twin Tailed Grub – Use a down-sized presentation, ideal for shallows, best in crawfish colors.
7. Top Water Floating Minnow – Rather than a fast retrieve, jiggle across calm water early/late in the day. Use light line with long casts and basic colors like silver/black or gold/black.
8. Sculpins and Gobies – Abundant gobies in Great Lakes and sculpins in most SM lakes. They are confined to the bottom (no swim bladder). Use in deep rock habitat.
9. Reptiles and Amphibians – Use in shallow water, weeds, wood. Use soft plastic and fish as top water or poppers.
10. Trolling for Smallmouth – "Stroll" at 1-2 mph using electric motor. Run crankbaits and jerk baits back 20-40 yards and make fre-

quent snaps and jerks to the rod. Fish open water, deep structure, break lines, or above weed lines.

11. Be creative when "normal" things are not working. Be open-minded and put more fish in the boat!

Andrew Ragas again proved he is one of the most knowledgeable smallmouth bass fisherman around. He is also a writer, guide, and publisher of an on-line fishing magazine (www.fishing-headquarters.com).



Andrew Ragas (guide, magazine publisher, and smallmouth guru) shares his "out of the box" smallmouth techniques with the Arlington Anglers crew.
PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS

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We had a lot of fun at the Schaumburg Show, the Rolling Meadows Flea Market, and the Cabela's Fishing Expo. Thanks go out to the many fishermen who stopped by the Arlington Anglers booth to get Club information or just to talk a little fishing. Stop in at one of our meetings to learn more!

Dates to remember:

Apr 2 – Stocked Trout Opener at various Forest Preserve lakes

Apr 8-10 – Outing
Wisconsin River at Rivers Edge Resort

Apr 14-17 – Outing
Green Bay WI Walleyes

Apr 19 – Meeting
Speaker Mike Salisbury on Boat Maintenance, Rigging and Safety

Apr 28-30 – Outing
Lake Shelbyville camping and fishing

May 5-7 – Outing
Wolf River White Bass

May 12-15 – Outing
Clinton Lake crappies fishing and camping at Camp Quest

May 15-18 – Outing
Lake Erie Walleyes

May 17 – Meeting – Speaker
Chauncey Niziol on Local Fishing Opportunities

May 20-22 – Outing – Lake Shabbona for camping and fishing

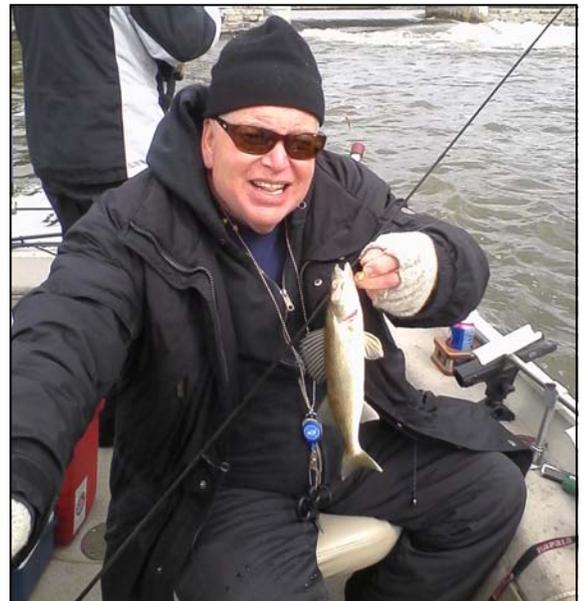
Come to one of our meetings to find out more about our club, activities and outings.

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM.

We meet at Cabela's which is located at 5225 Prairie Stone Pkwy, Hoffman Estates, IL just off I-90 at Illinois Rt 59.

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>



Arlington Angler Seth Mahler holds the year's first (although diminutive) walleye on a chilly March day below the McHenry Dam on the Fox River. PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS

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Arlington Anglers Gary Elliott and Bert Saxon man the booth at the Cabela's Fishing Expo. PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS



Arlington Angler Ed Covers proves that he has perfected his jigging in the weeds technique with this pile of chunky crappies caught on Lake Okeechobee in February. (Assisted by Bob Diebold)
PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS