

## The Official Bulletin of the Florida Inland Sportfishing Hosts

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 Art Hutt, Editor

FISH MEETINGS, MARCH, 1966: The monthly meeting of the Florida Inland Sportfishing Hosts was held March 9 at the Park Restaurant in Tavares, President Ed Heitling presiding.

Guest speaker was Bob Aldrich, former Director of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, who now serves as a fish hatchery specialist for the Commission. Subject of Aldrich's talk was "Fish Hatcheries. Are They Paying Their Way?"

Aldrich described the physical aspects of the newly completed Richloan Hatchery, near Webster, but emphasized that the only permanent cure for Florida's fishing problems lies in water quality control measures. He added that hatchery fish are useful in small lakes where conditions can be controlled but that it is a waste of time and money to introduce these fish into large lakes because the natural propagation rate is many times any number of fish that could be added.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30.

Art Hutt,  
 Secy., F.I.S.H.

THEY JUST HAD TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES: Lake Tsala Apopka interests attached very little credence to a recent three-year study on their lake by Commission biologist Phil Phillipy, and insisted on an 10-haul seining survey so they could see for themselves. The hauls confirmed Phillipy's findings. Even the local residents were impressed by the lake of game and rough fish taken in the nets. The best shad haul was 2,274 pounds, but chubsuckers were also caught in great numbers.

In general, the potential for producing high poundages of any fish in Tsala Apopka is low. The chain consists of 13 "widenings" in the Withlacoochee River, connected by canals and marshes, sandy-bottomed, and lined everywhere with lily pads, sawgrass, and cattails. There is little agriculture along it to add the nutrients and to create the problem the Apopka Chain is enduring. However, there are enough fish to make the area productive for the sportsman; yet it has been the history of the lake that most people do not know how or where to fish it.

Phillippy had this in mind when he presented his recommendations for the Tsala Apopka Chain. He suggested (1) advertising, (2) a gar-fish rodeo, (3) fishing contests, (4) news releases to all news media, (5) better directional signs to fish camps, (6) more access sites, (7) publication of a detailed fisherman's guide, (8) the use of chumming materials to bunch up the fish, (9) a board of review at a county level with legal power to halt detrimental dredging, filling, and introduction of industrial pollutants, (10) increased commercial fishing to give the gamefish more room, (11) promoting off-season family package resort rates, and (12) the use of weedcutters to establish trails for accessibility to more areas of the lakes.

DORA DIAGNOSING: The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission made their five seine hauls in Lake Dora in April, and will follow up with other samplings by electro-shocking, small mesh nets, trammel nets, and spot poisonings.

In seine-haul figures, they took 43,934 lbs. of shad, 11,631 of gar, and 1,894 of catfish in their five-haul total.

The percentage of gamefish was low, as any reasonable person would expect from open water. Later tests in shallower shoreline areas will supply the information about the gamefish population, and then, and only then, can a true picture of the lake's fish composition be arrived at.

CHICK ARCHER PASSES: Chick Archer died April 25 of emphysema and other complications. Archer was a familiar figure to many F.I.S.H. members, particularly around Lake Apopka, as he pursued his duties with the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

Archer worked for the Commission prior to 1951 as I & E officer, then went into creel census work from 1951 to 1964. Before these duties he had been doing work with quail for the Commission.

Archer's friendly disposition, his spellbinding anecdotes, his familiar figure hunched at the handle of a Commission kicker will be sorely missed.

EUSTIS GAINS LAB: Bids for the Central Fisheries Research Laboratory, to be built at Eustis, will be let in the last part of May. Chemical research will be the most important function of the laboratory, making Florida a leader in water quality research. One phase of the lab's future operation will be to gather valid information on the harmful materials which affect our lakes, this information then useable in courts of law when necessary.

WATCH THESE! Two "Baby Zellwoods" are springing up, each about 400 acres in size. One is between Clermont and Groveland, the other between Lakes Apopka and Harris along Double Run.

DEAD IS DEAD: According to the Sport Fisheries Institute Bulletin, in quoting a Washington, D.C., paper, the eagerly awaited switch from "hard" to "soft" detergents will not solve all problems. In fact, the article suggests that the quickly decomposable new detergents, developed at a cost of \$150 million, may be more toxic to fish than the persistent foaming type.

However, the soft detergents break down quickly and lose their lethal punch, while the hard detergents remain toxic to fish over a much longer period of time.

50-35-25 -- OR FIGHT! When a flower grower wants big chrysanthemums, he nips off most of the buds so those remaining will get all the nourishment for their growth. A vegetable man thins his radishes, his lettuce, and his carrots so those remaining will grow to a marketable size. A cattleman knows only so many steers can thrive in a certain number of acres, and that crowding is the fastest way to lose money on a diseased, skinny herd. A forester thins his trees to allow growing room for young saplings.

Yet, when this basic principle is transferred into the water, people seem unwilling to accept it. When the Commission recently raised the panfish limit to 50 (from 35), many sportsmen objected.

While admittedly 50 panfish makes quite a pile, they are as wasted in the water as they are out of it -- and on land they have a good chance of being utilized. Despite the emotional theory that most of these fish wind up as fertilizer!

Left in the water, these panfish remain stunted and unhealthy. Biologists know that you can have a choice of 10 one-ounce fish or one ten-ounce fish in a given quantity of water. Even though the hook and line is a poor method of thinning these fish out, it is of some aid in panfish reduction, and this reduction allows the remaining panfish to grow just that much bigger.

Further proof of the wisdom of panfish removal where needed is the result of Commission work at Lake Francis, in Madison, Florida. Fall sampling showed that of 4,000 panfish collected in an acre sample, 29.1 were between 2-5 inches long. A shoreline rotenone treatment was made in October. Six months later, over 50% of the panfish sampled were between 6-9 inches long.

It should be something for the non-believers to think about.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS: Bob Aldrich, former Florida Game ...



has repeatedly seen instances where an abundance of gars and excellent bass fishing went hand in hand. Aldrich even ventured an opinion that the gars, infeeding on the slower rough fish, created more living room for Bass.

Which brings to mind a survey by Biologist Mike Diana in Lake Griffin in which he examined 1,297 gars --- 914 of which were swimming around on empty stomachs. In the 383 full stomachs, a total of two (2) small bass were found.

SONNITZ STILL PAYING OFF: Last March, 63 fresh-and salt-water anglers received a total of \$2,000 for tagged fish.

Rewards for tagged fish released annually since 1961 range from \$25 to \$300.

DONKEY'S YEAR: Friend Daniel McCrea of Belfast, writing for a London publication, CREEL; shows that fishery problems are the same the world over. For example, he cites length limits, which vary from fishing club to fishing club, from county to county. He says "the only thing uniform about this regulation is its appearance in so many rule books."

The size limit, he said, has been blindly accepted for "donkey's years" in spite of a lack of biological evidence as to its value."

It takes time, Daniel.

NATURAL CONTROLS: Sea cows are the subject of a South Florida experiment to see if these blubbery creatures can keep up with hyacinth growth in clogged canals. In Texas, when nutrias (an aquatic rodent) threatened the dikes and canal banks of several evaporation ponds by their burrowing habits, the company imported four large alligators to keep things under control.

Sort of a nutria-for-lunch-bunch.

ACTION OR APATHY AT APOPKA?: After two outstanding and definitive articles in the Orlando Sentinel magazine section and a continuing series by the same author, Elvis Lane, on Florida pollution problems in general, many Floridians are understandingly agitated about this out-of-hand peril that is ruining our lakes. It is an old story to most F.I.S.H. members, having battled these inroads for over a decade, and having been instrumental in the publishing of a Lake Apopka report by the State Board of Health a year or so ago. We commend the newspaper for its fearless approach on the subject.

But, is the bride going to be left at the alter? Are there enough people WHO CARE and will voice their opinions to the Sentinel, and their county, state, and local officials? Only by piles of letters on the proper desks will it be known that we really want to do something to halt this senseless ruining of our lakes and streams.

Governor Burns, in answer to a letter from Leesburg Columnist "Chief" Hill, has pledged his support to find a remedy, suggesting - that all "must join with the state government financially and physically to provide funds and cooperation for this study and plan for the future of Lake Apopka."

The Governor took the pledge. Let's not let him forget it. The address is, simply, Tallahassee.

MORE -- APOPKA: A friend who knows his way around Central Florida pretty well came up with the sage observation regarding Apopka and other reputedly poor fishing lakes. He said, "Those people are preaching poor business." And I think he has a good point.

No one says Apopka isn't a lake with a serious problem. But some fish are there as evidenced by film clips on Don McAllister's TV program Going Fishing which showed the Commission electro-shocker turning up some prime bass. Here and there a report of a good catch of bass or panfish leaks out.

My friend wonders how many camp operators have taken the time and effort to find these spots and then lead their customers to them.

The old gal has a three-fourths deserved bad reputation. Maybe the other fourth needs a little attention for a change.

NEW MEETING: May 11 (Wednesday) at the Fiesta Restaurant on #441 in Tavares. Jack Rigsby, F.I.S.H. Secretary, has Mr. Glenn R. Hull lined up as guest speaker. Until recently, Hull was associated with the Walco Chemical Company of Chicago, specialists in the removal of materials dissolved and suspended in water. Since this is the root of Central Florida's problem, nutrients in the water, Hull will be well qualified to give us some suggestions on how these nutrients may be removed. As has been said, we can make the water biologically fit to swim in and to drink, but as yet we cannot remove the nutrients except by an expensive ion exchange method.

Bring your questions along.

Plan to eat at 7:00PM, and start listening about 8:00 PM.

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