

Program:

Our next meeting is Wednesday, February 5.

Future Programs and Scheduled Events:

February 8, 2012 - Ice Fishing Derby: We'll dig the holes in the ice. There will be lots of fun and prizes for the kids. In case of bad weather the derby will be on February 15.

**February 15 & 16 – Free Fishing Days in Michigan.**

March 5 – regular meeting.

April 2 – regular meeting.

May 7 – regular meeting.

June 4 – regular meeting. This will be the workshop prior to the Kids Fishing Derby on June 7.

June 7 – Kids Fishing Derby at the clubhouse pond. Volunteers are needed to help with setup and running the events.

**June 7 to 10 – Free Fishing Days in Illinois.**

**June 7 to 8 – Free Fishing Days in Wisconsin.**

**June 7 to 8 – Free Fishing Days in Michigan.**

September 3 – regular meeting.

October 1 – regular meeting.

November 5 – regular meeting.

December 3 – This will be our Christmas Party. Bring a dish to share. The Club will supply ham, sodas, and coffee.

BYOB Fishing:

Where's your favorite fishing hole? Call and we'll set up a meet; Joe, Gary Buehre, or Adolph Janke.

Check out our web site: [www.great-lakes.org/vpsc](http://www.great-lakes.org/vpsc).

You are just a click away from pictures of Salmon and Walleye trips, previous news letters and more about our Villa Park Sportsmen's Club. You may also send information to be posted on the web site to [villaparksportsman@att.net](mailto:villaparksportsman@att.net).

From the 'Midwest Outdoors' web site. <http://midwestoutdoors.com/magazine>

From the February 2014 issue

**Backing Down For Big Panfish**

By Ron Anlauf

By mid to late winter, more and more bluegill and crappie show up in deeper water and can make for some easy pickin's. They're easy because they show up on good electronics and can usually be caught, as long as you've got the "right stuff."

Deeper water depends on what type of lake you're fishing, and can be as deep as 20 to 30 feet and as shallow as 10 or less. There are good 'gill lakes here in the Midwest that really don't have much for deep water, and 10 feet may be as deep as it gets. Fish will move to the deepest water rather quickly and be there for most of the winter. These relatively shallow lakes are also the easiest places to nail down the fish because they only have so many options and you don't have to cover that much water or drill that many holes to get on 'em. These fish are also the ones that are most likely to be in peril this year, with arrival of early ice and plenty of snow, which shuts off sunlight and can kill a lake due to a lack of oxygen.

The 20- to 30-footers could also be the deepest water available and might be right out in the middle of the lake. They're not all that tough to figure out either, but with more water and more possible hangouts, you may have to work a little harder to find the mother lode.

In either case, finding fish is a matter of drilling some holes and getting a bait in front of a few them and seeing what will bite. It also means using power augers and being mobile. Last season, I drilled almost all of my holes with the new Ion electric auger and will be doing the same again this year. The Ion cuts holes quickly and does it without the hassle of gas and the smell of exhaust. It's also available with a six-inch auger, which serious panfish purists will really like. With a fish finder like the Humminbird 597ci Ice, you can watch the tiniest bait drop and see if anything comes in to take a look. After cutting a hole, you can drop a tiny jig, like a Northland Mooska tipped with a couple of euro larvae, and watch it on the Humminbird and soon see if there are any fish around.

The Mooska jig is small in size, but drops quickly because it's made out of tungsten, which is heavier than lead and produces more feel. Fish will at least come in for a look if they are there. If you don't see fish in 10 minutes or so, it might be time to move on. You may not have to move that far, though, it will depend on how much water you're planning to cover. If you pick up a fish or two, you'll probably want to drill some more holes in the same area. What you'll probably find is little packs of 'gills and crappie will move in, and you can pick off one or two before they move on again.

You can sit and wait for more to show or you can do some hole hopping, which usually translates to more fish on the ice. Hole hopping can mean spending some time outside. That's when I rely on my Striker Predator insulated suit to keep me warm. Not only is it extremely warm and comfortable, but it also floats, which provides for some peace of mind. They also make a light pair of insulated waterproof gloves called Second Skin that help keep your hands warm (even when you're handling fish), but still provide for some all-important feel.

Super light action rods and light line are a must for working tiny baits in deeper water, and 'gills especially are all about eating tiny. That means one- or two-pound-test line, like Northland Fluorosilk, and the tiniest jigs, like the Mooska.

Reels like the Black Betty 6061 from 13Fishing are made for handling the lightest presentations and do it without twisting line, which spinning reels can't help but do. The 6061 resembles a fly reel, which is the latest rage in panfish gear, but is a whole lot more. For one thing, this high-tech reel can free-spool the lightest baits, has a smooth carbon drag system, and is geared so you can reel 19 inches of line per crank. You can match it up with a Wicked 20-inch, super ultra light rod and you've got the latest and greatest in feel and function.

Icing big 'gills and crappie is pure fun and it's all happening right now, so there's no time waste. See you on the ice.

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We meet the first Wednesday of each month (except July and August) at 7:30 PM at the North Terrace Pond Clubhouse on Westmont and Terrace (approximately 6 blocks south of North Avenue and 3 blocks west of Addison) in Villa Park. Annual dues are \$30. Visitors or prospective new members are welcome - a \$3 fee is requested. If you are interested in attending or becoming a member please contact: Marty Kapolczynski.