



WELCOME TO
**NORTH EASTERN
 ANGLERS
 ASSOCIATION**
 FISHING & KAYAKING CLUB



N O R T H E A S T E R N A N G L E R S A S S O C I A T I O N

Up Coming Events:

Swartswood Lake
 Tournament
 April 3, 2010 8am-2pm

Bass of Week Winner:

Jerry Cammarota
 March 15-21, 2010
 LMB—2-15

Be sure to get your New Jersey Fishing license before the tournament on the third. If you do not have your license already, you can visit <https://www4.wildlifelicenses.com/nj/ALS/licCtrl.php?start=1> to obtain one.

Be sure to read all tournament rules and regulations, as they have change slightly from 2009.

All pictures for weight pool should be sent to pointscale@neafishing.com ONLY! Please include clear picture of scale, body of water and date in the email.

ATTACKING THE PRE-SPAWN BASS!

"The secret to catching bass in the springtime is being crazy enough to figure them out. From February through April, bass will be in the pre-spawn and spawning modes. During this time, each day can bring on a whole new set of rules as to where the fish are holding and what you have to do to catch them. You might find fish suspended in 35 feet of water one morning and then in the afternoon they're all up in 5 feet. Springtime's a crazy time of year but it is my favorite time to fish.

When cold fronts have passed through an area in the early spring, the bass go into what I call a "waiting mode." They seem to be waiting for a signal to get

active. They'll back off the spawning flats, suspend off ledges or the bases of trees. That's when I'll throw everything from crank baits to drop shot worms to target and catch fish. Most of the New Jersey Lakes that I fish regularly act the same way in the spring. If a lake is deep and clear, fish could suspend very deep; on a more shallow lake, the waiting mode might be in 5-10 feet of water or even less.

Don't be fooled, when you find suspended fish, by thinking they will be there long. The "waiting" period may last for minutes, hours, or days. I can't believe how fast bass can move. People accuse me of being a little wild with

the different methods I use to find fish, but in the spring sometimes that's the only way to stay on top of the game. You have to be versatile and creative.

Sometimes, while trying to figure the fish out I'll try a small RoboWorm drop shot worm and a 3-inch drop shot rig. Or I'll drag an area with a heavy split shot rig and a worm or grub behind. The weight stirs up the bottom and attracts active fish. Reaction baits are important too while finding fish. Bass do strange yet predictable things during the pre-spawn.

See **Pre-Spawn** Page 2



LARGEMOUTH FISHING AFTER HEAVY RAINFALL

Smart anglers know how to take advantage of extraordinary opportunities for catching bass. For instance, special conditions sometimes occur that draw fish into predictable areas and cause them to feed. Anglers who know how to find and work these places can score some unbelievable catches.

One good example is fishing run-ins after a heavy spring rain. Bass fishing superstar Kevin VanDam describes a run-in as a place where fresh water is gushing into a lake's tributary after a downpour. This could be a large feeder creek or a small gully. VanDam says when this fresh water is running in,

baitfish move in immediately, and bass are quick to follow them. He explains, "Anytime there's a hard rain while I'm fishing or the night before, I'm going to immediately look for run-ins, especially in highland See **Rainfall** Page 2

PRE-SPAWN

All it takes sometimes is the warming of an afternoon to get the fish moving, and out of their waiting period. Then another cold front moving through will find them playing their waiting game again.

Have you ever noticed sunny days that just feel cold? The sun might be out but it's not warming up? Then, the next day the sun actually begins to penetrate, and it feels really warm. The fish react the same way. You must be aware of the changes in water temperature, air temperature and fish behavior.

I like fishing the secondary points, walls that get a lot of sun, and the warmer water first. At Clear Lake for example, I'll start on the north end of the lake, because it's warmer, and because it has a hard bottom. Don't under estimate the value of a hard bottom. This attracts the pre-spawn fish. Before the small males have made the beds, I'll throw reaction baits like jigs, crank baits and rattle-type baits to locate fish. Ripbaits like the Mega bass X-110 work well because the fish will at least chase the bait up. My cranking line is Suf-

fix Seige. It's a tough line, great for cranking as well as many other applications.

Once the males make the beds, the females won't be far behind. I love the pre-spawn before the fish are locked on the bed because they are generally more aggressive and active. Still working outside the bedding area, I'll sometimes get just close enough to see the lighter bottom which shows the beds, but I'll fish water maybe 5 or so feet deeper. My techniques work well for skittish bass as well as bass already "locked" in an area.

Once the bass decide it's time to spawn, first the males, and then the females lock on the bed. Then I concentrate on their movements. Many times the females will not be right on top of the bed. They are off to one side, or in the general area. I might again throw a ripbait through the bed to attract their attention. But, by far my favorite bait for beds is either a tube, or Zipper grub, or full-sized Zipper worm. I'll back off and make a 20- to 30-foot cast and let my bait either settle onto the bed or throw past the bed and bring my bait through it.

My rigging might surprise some of you. I don't generally use the long flipping and pitching sticks. My rod is 6-foot 6-inches long with a medium/light action. Then, I use 50-pound Spider Wire. The extra feel I get is incredible, and I can pull fish through whatever cover is there. I like the shorter rod because I can control it so much better, and again, the action helps with feeling the hits.

A Texas-rigged 4/0 Gamakatsu hook with a 1/4-ounce weight finishes off my tackle. My choice of baits - Grubs, Tubes, Stick baits and worms fall on the beds in a very natural way. They are soft-bodied and the hook penetrates the fish easily. My favorite colors are black & blue, green pumpkin and pumpkin seed.. Best of luck out there & Tight Lines!

Jerry "The Rodfather" Cammarota

RAIN FALL

reservoirs. A heavy spring rain will do a couple of things. Usually it will be a warm rain, and it'll cause a rise in water temperature where it's running into the lake. This warmer water draws baitfish.

"Also, a lot of times there's 'sawdust' (a surface mat of small leaf matter, twigs, etc.) and trash floating back there, and the fish will get around that. It provides food (washed in worms, etc.) and cover.

"So, while that fresh water was running in, I've had some incredible days running those back-

bay pockets and casting into these spots. I'll throw right to the bank where the water's running in, and I'll cast to each spot several times to see if any fish are present. In this situation I like baits that have some flash and action, like spinner baits or shallow crank baits. If the water is dingy, which it frequently is, I'll go with bright colors like chartreuse or orange.

"And one more thing," VanDam emphasizes. "If this pattern is going to produce, it'll do so immediately when the water starts running in - during the rain or right after it.

The fish know when this special condition exists, and they'll move to it within minutes of when the water starts entering the lake. So don't delay in trying this pattern." VanDam concludes, "I'm telling you, when this is working, it can be the best thing going on the lake. It's not uncommon to catch a limit from one spot. If you find the right place, the baitfish will be concentrated there, and the bass will be feeding on them like wolves." ■

