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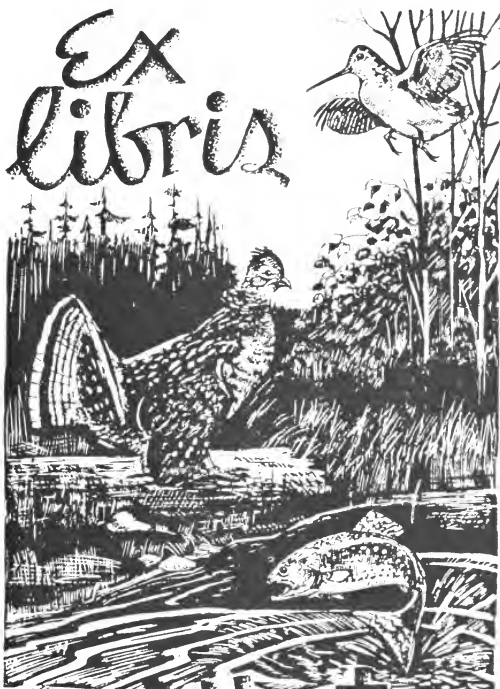
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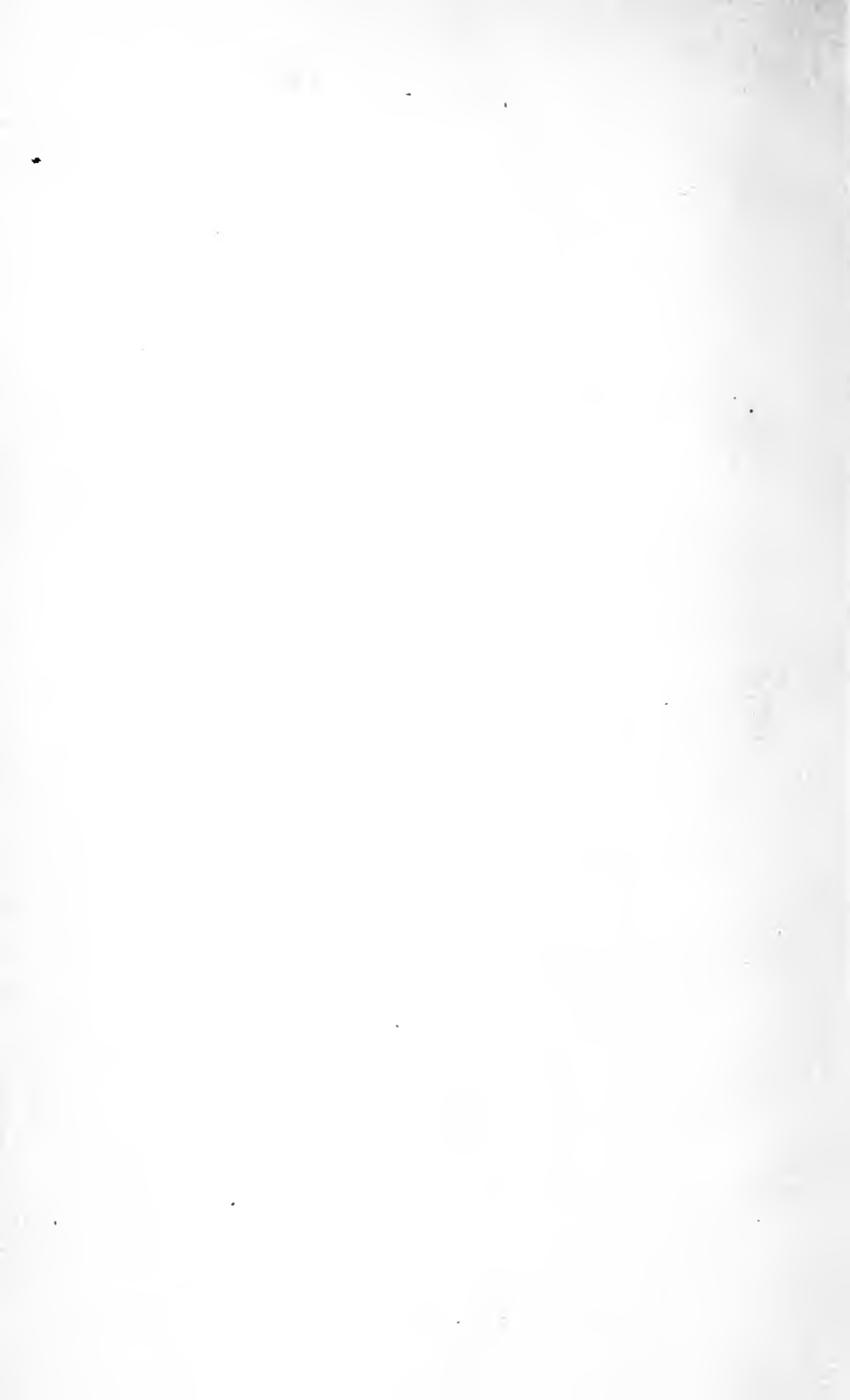
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Don Horter

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# BLACK BASS.

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WHERE TO CATCH THEM IN QUANTITY WITHIN AN HOUR'S  
RIDE OF NEW YORK.

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Best Methods and Baits fully treated upon, with salient  
Practical Hints upon choice of Rods and Tackle.

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Weather Prognostications and Atmospheric Influences Reviewed.

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—BY—

*Charles Barker Bradford*

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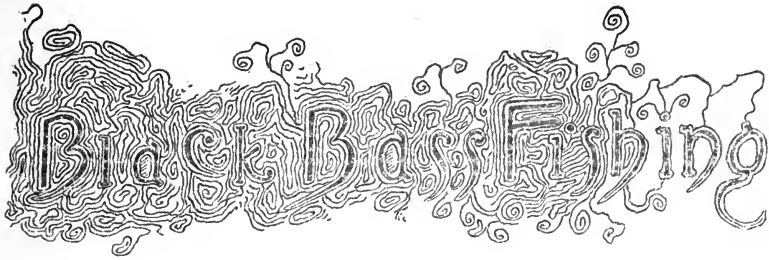
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NEW YORK :  
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Let me live harmlessly, and near the brink  
Of Trent or Avon have a dwelling-place :  
Where I may see my fly or cork down sink,  
With eager bite of pike, or bass, or dace,  
And on the world and my Creator think :  
While some men strive ill-gotten goods t'embrace :  
And others spend their time in base excess  
Of wine, or worse, in war or wantonness.  
Let them that will, these pastimes still pursue,  
And on such pleasing fancies feed their fill,  
So I the fields and meadows green may view,  
And daily by fresh rivers walk at will.

—*Ancient Angler.*





# Black Bass Fishing

There is probably no more welcome news for one fond of black bass fishing than a description and general details of where good sport may be had; and when the individual is a unit in the population of a large city and suddenly learns that this is obtainable within an easy distance, the information is worth its weight in gold, in his estimation, if in no one else's. The main object of this paper on black bass fishing is to supply that knowledge to a large contingent, and also to give a few hints to those, who, fond of fishing, may still be open to a few practical hints. There are possibly many fishermen like myself, who, while not unfamiliar with salt-water sport with rod and line, still know and fully appreciate the pleasure of fishing for the fresh-water black bass.

Salt-water fishing is grand sport, but there are many denizens of a city who have been reared in the districts of fresh-water streams, lakes and ponds, who have not had the opportunities of cultivating salt-water sport, and who even when sur-

rounded with every facility for its pursuit, would still be elated at finding some well-stocked stream near at hand. Anglers, as a rule, are unable to go far a-field in search of fresh-water fishing, and for six years past it was a continual thorn in my flesh, mortifying me considerably, that no information could be obtained of any good fishing that did not necessitate an absence of several days.

Last season, entirely by accident, I ran upon a magnificent place within nineteen miles of New York City. It is a beautiful spot, easily reached without much expense or trouble and within an hour's ride by rail. In all my search, this is the one spot I care to recommend to my readers. Take the cars from Jersey City to Rahway, N. J., and upon arriving there walk to a small village called Milton, half a mile west of Rahway; pass through this, continue half a mile further west, and you will reach Milton Lake. An hour and a half's time covers the distance. I generally take the one-thirty p. m. train, and return in the evening; but trains run almost every hour to and from Rahway.

Milton Lake is a body of water about a mile square, with two outlets, one falling over a picturesque stone dam twenty feet high into a stream about ten feet wide; and the other outlet, a small stream flowing through a mill-gate to the Milton Mills. In each of these streams there are plenty of bass, but in the lake proper and in the little brook that flows into the upper end of the lake,

they are in abundance. I pass the lake itself and follow the little stream for about half a mile until I come to White's Farm. This I have found to be the finest fishing ground. The stream is about eighteen feet wide at the narrowest part and from fifty to sixty at its widest. It rises miles upon miles back in the country somewhere, and runs rippling and chattering over the shallows, surging silently over the pools until it empties into the lake. I have never fished higher than White's Farm, being well satisfied with the sport obtained there, but the resident farmers tell me that there is even finer fishing up stream.

Like the average fisherman, I am more or less superstitious, and having always had good luck at my favorite place (the edge of a fine piece of wood, which, by the way, contain a few woodcock), I do not care to seek further, and, perhaps, fare worse.

Here, where the stream branches off from a wide pond-like section, and slowly flows past two dozen or so fine willows on either bank, I have made a rude seat in one of the trees, and using a coat for a cushion, have spent many pleasant hours; not always fishing, but on hot summer afternoons, shaded from the sun, just letting my line run out in the water, careless about either rise or catch, in quiet repose, looking at the beautiful natural landscape around me, fairly enchanted with its rural splendor. Then I feel that for a short space, at least, I have thrown off the burden of a busy life, and

can quietly absorb all that Dame Nature thus generously affords. I see the silvery sky-reflecting stream winding its peaceful way through the rich pasturage, under the rustic bridge, past the line of undulating willows, that, moving with the faintest breath of air, seem ever bending down to kiss its ripples; past the green banks and orchards, on through clover patches, and sedge-lined promontories, flashing like burnished metal at the rifts, black as night in the pools, dappled and flecked by the mirrored clouds, kissed into "cat's paws" by the faint breeze; on it goes until its farther course is lost in the shadow of the olive-green woods that tower in massive darkness against the soft amber-colored clouds and pale blue sky. The watchful kingfisher, perched on the other side of the stream, eyes me askance but has no great fear at my presence, the splash of a disturbed turtle or the heavier fall of a diving frog calling for his more earnest attention. Bass are leaping in every direction; far up on the hillside sounds the bell of a cow; nearer still calls "Bob White;" robins are piping; the wrens are chirping; a hungry crow dismally cawks, and all these sounds mingle with the music of the millions of trilling nameless tiny insects concealed in the deep grasses below me and in the fluttering leaves over-head.

What greater pleasure can a busy man wish for than to now and again "leave life and the world behind" for a few hours and amid surroundings like these smoke and chat with a congenial friend,

in pleasant shade, until the sun sinks towards the West, and the work of fishing begins.

One can fish equally well from bank or boat. The stream sides are grass-bound and flower-decked to the very water edge, affording dry and safe footing, with here and there a fence to lean against, or hang your impedimenta upon. A little to the left of the farmhouse is the orchard, succeeded by a wood of nut and oak trees, which slope to the banks of the lake, and under whose shade bass may be caught at any hour of the day, be the sun ever so hot. The water here is deep and cool, and I use it as a swimming ground. It is also a fine place to cool drinks in. A bottle of Piper Heidsieck or a bottle or two of beer slung into the depths of the pool with a stout cord, can be drawn up an hour later cool as a snow stream in the mountains. A little distance above a rustic bridge spans the stream, under and on either side of which, just in the shadow line, a dozen or more fine bass, weighing up to four pounds each, may be seen at any time. As one crosses the bridge they raise their weather-eye and look up, but do not move, whilst hundreds of young bass, an inch or two in length, shoot from the innumerable crevices like so many fresh-water shiners. The very foundation of the bridge seems to be alive with them. There are also a number of giant sun-fish here which seldom refuse a bait. At daybreak on fine mornings, when camping there for a day or two, I have caught in less than an hour half a dozen two-

pound bass, not counting other fish and small bass which I tossed back. I used one of Chubb's ordinary silk trolling lines and one of Abbey's spoons, which, by the way, to my fancy spin more freely and better than any others I have used. This I worked sometimes from a small bark canoe and sometimes from a wooden one, which I keep at the farm, and use to paddle up and down the stream between the willows and the bridge, or upon the lake itself.

Many men prefer a boat and oars, but I find a light canoe infinitely preferable. The double paddle makes less splash than the oars, and if one can use the Canadian single blade, it does not make any noise at all. Added to this it is easier managed, one sees where one is going, and it can be lifted with one hand from stream to lake, and lake to stream.

The fish under the bridge are very tempting, but also very wary, and the residents say they are but seldom caught from the bridge itself. One day I cast a yellow-body fly, (a clumsy affair, but the best I had, having lost my fly book on the cars) and as it fell on the water I let it drift under the bridge, more in carelessness than by intent, and as it reached the rich bank of green weeds out of my sight, I felt the tug and magnetic vibration that every angler knows so well. Quick as a flash I dropped from the bridge to the bank, ran knee deep into the stream, and fighting the fish clear of the structure and reeds, landed a three-pound five-

ounce beauty at my side on the bank. "That's the first fish I've seen caught from the bridge," said an admiring native, and it was the only one I ever caught, although my line has dropped there many times before and since.

Now I know the trick. I made a stout cord fast to a stump above the bridge, and let my canoe float down under and through the bridge, then I cast my fly, and a boy sitting in the bows slowly pulled me through again up to the stump. The fish seeing no splash, only the passing shadow of the silent canoe, took my fly readily, and in the early morning I was sure of a fairly good catch. If fished for from the bridge, they will lie there, and never move a fin; the current is weak, and if scared away by a stone or twig, they will return in a second or two, almost to the same spot. I fancy the first one I caught was not a regular "bridge bass," but was one swimming up stream at the edge of the weeds in search of his breakfast. Now if any of my fishing friends think they can catch these bridge bass, I will guarantee to show them (or they can go and see for themselves) from six to a dozen of the beauties lying there at any time.

When I do not succeed with them to my satisfaction, I get some one to systematically drop stones and drive them up stream, where, perhaps out of pure unadulterated cussedness, they seem to readily take a fly. A great advantage of this spot up stream is that the baby bass and sun fish give but little trouble. The principal nuisances are the

large eels. If the line touches the bottom for an instant an eel seems certain to be waiting for it, and I would as readily handle a squid as an eel.

My brother, who frequently accompanies me, is not a fisherman and prefers fishing for eels, and by a rule of contrariness the bass bother him quite as much as the fresh-water "snakes," as I call them, bother me.

Among my troubles I must not forget the mud turtles and snappers. They, too, are a nuisance when baiting with worms, and anyone who desires a few of the "shell-backs" can be abundantly accommodated.

For more than two miles of this lovely stream any man who knows how to handle a rod or throw a fly can land, or at least hook, some of the liveliest two to three pounders he could wish for, and although bass vary in their tastes at different periods of the day, I know nothing better than the common trolling spoon as a regular thing. There is one pool where I would almost be inclined to wager that I could get a strike with either spoon or fly every ten minutes during the first two hours of daylight, or from five to eight in the evening. That is saying a good deal, but it is a fact.

The best fish I caught last season was when I was going up stream in the canoe near the mouth of the lake and close to the right side. By a sudden movement I shot under some willow branches. I was just letting my line run out after a weed strike and was holding the paddle in my left hand, with the line be-



tween my teeth, using my right hand to give a good push to clear the boughs, when "zip, zip!" a beauty seized my bait as I floated out. I got nervous, upset my canoe and rolled into the water, but waded on shore and landed my fish. He weighed four pounds, seven ounces, live weight, and I have his head and tail and a clear conscience to prove it.

The last half day of the season I was fishing at Milton Lake, and I caught eighteen fine bass, and two eels, the latter as large round as a policeman's club and as dirty and slimy as usual. Eels always remind me of a skinny circus contortionist. When I am unfortunate enough to hook one, I generally make a clean cut of two yards of silk line, hook and all, and tie him up to the fence, or bow stay of my canoe. I would willingly let all of them go again only from a lingering remnant of a boyish superstition that they would go and tell all the bass how horribly indigestible my bait was.

I remember catching a big snapping turtle, weighing about twelve pounds, in the lake one day. When I pulled it up, my companion grabbed it, and I really think I would have jumped overboard but for the fear that others might be around to make things more pleasant for me for jumping "from the frying pan into the fire." I suppose a salt-water fisherman would have yelled and danced for joy; I am not built that way. When I fish for bass, I want bass, and when I fish for turtles—No! I would not want them even then.

The next one that takes my bait can have pole, line, hook and all.

The bass in the lake are innumerable, but they are more difficult to catch than those in the stream, a fact which pleases the true fisherman, who fishes to match his skill and science against the instinct and cunning of the fish, rather than with the one sole intention of making his bag larger than that of any preceeding angler.

Remember the lake bass want *sport* more than *food*, and the bait must be handled in a lively manner to bring success. Some fifteen years ago this water was stocked by some wealthy Jersey men, and, from what I can learn, not half a dozen expert anglers have visited its waters in the past ten years, and there is no record of anybody ever having fished the stream I here describe

Last season I only met three strangers at the lake, but they never seemed to catch anything beyond eels, turtles, sunfish, and a few two inch bass, the name of which they did not even know, and I got into their bad graces by telling them they ought to return the bass into the lake. They thought I was a crank, in fact one of them told me so. These men were salt-water sports, and one man who came there from Newark, N. J., was actually baiting with shrimps for fresh-water bass and had no less than eight hooks upon his line, all baited with shrimps. This man also told me that there were no decent fish in the lake, and strange

to say, this appears to be the general opinion of the few visitors.

I met one good fly fisherman a year ago, who had several fine beauties on the bank. He had taken his stand behind my tree before I arrived, and he was an artist. We became good friends and promised to meet again, but have not done so as yet. He agreed with me that the lake was full of beautiful fish, and that they were a trifle hard to catch, which fact we both agreed was very good for the interests of the true lovers of the art of angling.

Another fine place for bass within an easy distance of New York is Greenwood Lake, which lies half in New York and half in New Jersey. It is on the Erie railroad and has several good hotels and a club house open during the summer. Guides are to be had at a moderate figure, and the fishing during the last three seasons has been good.

Lake Ronkonkoma, Long Island, is another good fishing ground. Take the Long Island railroad to the depot at Ronkonkoma ; from there stages run to the lake during the season. Distance, about two miles.

Tuxedo Park is confined to members of the Tuxedo Park Club, and has a fine supply of large and lively bass, which take a fly remarkably well.

At Lake Hopatcong, N. Y., bass are plentiful, but without a guide little good is to be done. It lies on the Morris and Essex railroad, two hours ride from Hoboken. During the summer a very good house, the Hotel Breslin, is open. This hotel was

first opened last year, is exceedingly moderate in its charges, is well fitted throughout, and is by far the best house of them all. There are several guides at the Lake, the best average of them being Morris Decker, who has an island in the lake on which he lets out tents to camping parties, supplying them with all necessaries at reasonable terms. He is well posted in the various feeding grounds, and with him good sport is a certainty, if the weather is right. There are some very large bass here. Mr. Eugene C. Blackford has caught several at four and a half pounds, and five and a quarter pounds. One was caught three years ago weighing eight pounds two ounces. There are plenty of good pickerel, and anglers are but little annoyed by sun-fish or eels. There is a fine fishing club-house on Bertrand Island, which is very exclusive. The best bait here has proved to be live bait, minnows, or frogs. Now as regards bait for still-fishing, I have tried almost everything at odd times.

Bass are very peculiar fish as regards feeding. Sometimes they take one bait right along all day, and at other times will change morning, noon, and night, also from sunshine to cloud. I generally start in the early morning with grasshoppers, and if that does not suit them, I vary it to the helgramite—known to naturalists as the larvæ of the horned corydalis, locally called “dobsons,” “dobsell,” “hellion,” “crawler,” “kill-devil,” etc.—a live minnow, small green frog, small bull-head, or a “lamper”—local name for small lamprey eel.

The dobson is the most stable bait for still fishing, and a good plan is to pass a piece of silk under the shield in the back and then pass the hook through that ; the same scheme is equally good with grasshoppers. Towards evening, I found worms a very good bait, except when rain threatened.

In using a minnow, I pass the hook up through the lower lip and out the nostril ; it then lives a long time. Some anglers hook through both lips, the lower one first. Hooked either way, a dead minnow moves like a live one. I always treat a minnow as Izaak Walton spoke of a frog, "as if I loved him."

The angler cannot be too careful of his minnows. I change the water frequently, not waiting for them to come up to breathe ; it is then too late, and they cannot be resuscitated. In hot weather I place a piece of ice in flannel on the top of the pail. A little salt added to the water is a great improvement, about as much as will lie on a silver quarter, to two gallons of water. Fifty minnows to a five gallon pail with a handful of weeds to keep the fish from bruising themselves, is about the right proportion of fish to space.

Of all baits the old Florida "bob," I think, is still the most effective. It was mentioned by Bertram, in 1764, and is still used. It is made by tying three hooks back to back, invested with a piece of deer's tail somewhat in the manner of a large hackle, studded with scarlet feathers, forming a tassel or tuft similar to that used on the trolling spoon.

If this be thrown with a sweeping surface draw under trees or bushes, it is almost irresistible.

On the spoon I always run a lamper or a minnow, and for slow water, like the stream at Milton, or for lake fishing, I manufacture one as follows: A spoon not more than three quarters of an inch in length. If you cannot buy one so small, get one made by some working jeweller or metallist. Then slide a round black bead as large as a pea on your line just above your hook, letting the spoon be above it. This will be found to spin in the slowest water, and, as every bass fisher knows, the slower the rate of progression, the better, so long as the spoon is spinning. I seldom use any sinker at Milton Lake, there being little or no current, and the trees as a rule keep off any wind. In the stream I generally drift down, letting my line float in front of the boat, and getting well down stream troll back up stream, to drift down again. For the benefit of the tyros I may here remark, that success in trolling for bass, I think, depends largely upon a perfect knowledge of the depth of water, and that the bait should be kept about eighteen inches from the bottom all the way. I study the pools in my favorite streams, locating them by trees, etc., on the bank, and then judge the depth my bait lies at by the angle at which my line runs from my mouth or pole to the water. This will, with a little practice, tell me at what depth my bait is swimming. Dobsons and small bull-heads I obtain by striking the large rocks in the rifts and

shallows with another large stone, and setting a net fixed upon a bowed stick behind it. The bull-heads and dobsons will float, stunned, into its meshes. I have also found them clinging to old spiles supporting a dam, or submerged stonework. They may be kept alive any length of time if placed in a can containing rotten wood. They are the best shallow water bait for still fishing. My experience is that it pays better to buy bait than hunt for it, which takes up time and tires one.

An all important point is the best day for fishing from a weather point of view. We all know the varied ideas and superstitions of fishermen, and truly there is a great deal to be said in favor of many of the theories when backed by actual observation.

Bass are found in different localities at different times ; in the early part of the season they will be found on the rifts where, of course, the water is warmest ; the best bait at this time is the helgramite and larvæ ; as the season advances they will move to the deeper still water that lies under the bushes and trees, taking insects and flies ; and later still, they will be found in the deep holes, lying under rocky ledges, or where gravel has fallen from the banks and been washed away by the spring freshets. At this period the best bait is small minnows, crayfish, molluscs, etc. Yet without rhyme and reason, I find they may at any time be found in deep water one day and in the shallows the next.

As a rule I fish the shallows until the reeds, rushes, and other aquatic plants fringing the deeper waters are well grown; then I try among them, finding flies give the best sport.

For bait fishing, it really does not appear to make much difference what weather is around, so that the wind is not a cold or chilly one. The fish in deep water are not so easily affected as those in the shallows, and very good sport may be had even in a stiff breeze, if moderately warm and fine. In fact *some wind* is necessary for black bass fishing, and it is better to have too much than none at all. One reason for this is, that wind ruffles the surface of the water and renders it more difficult for the fish to see the-angler.

This is a point of greater importance than is commonly supposed. Fish both see and hear well, and the idea that they cannot see is based upon the great difference visible between an artificial fly and a real one. As a matter of fact few men could tell the difference between them *when in the water*, the surface being covered with froth and suds from an eddy or foam and bubbles from a rapid, the surface ruffled by a fresh breeze, and shadowed by drifting clouds. I have frequently seen bass dart like an arrow and seize the bait from a distance of thirty feet. A sombre suit of clothes, the hue of which mingles with the foliage or verdure, is a wise precaution, for fish undoubtedly see, and see remarkably well.

How often have we seen a bright glistening sub-



stance like a sleeve button or a coin, dropped into water and swallowed immediately? I have known bass to be caught on a bare bright hook, and the funny stories one laughs at about wintergreen berries and fish scales proving attractive bait are not so much out of probability.

In the Southern States a belief exists that bass are always on the feed when the moon is above the horizon, particularly at rise and set; many old experienced fishermen will only fish during the last quarter until the new moon. The same variety of ideas exist regarding rain; one angler believes that bass will not bite before a rain, another during a rain, and still another after a rain. As a matter of fact they feed irrespective of rain, but of course we have all found the best time is undoubtedly just *after* a rain, because of the great number of insects and larvæ that are washed or shaken into the water from the overhanging branches of trees and bushes.

One reason why they do not take the bait so well just *before* the rain is because of the lull that takes place, causing the water to become flat and still, so rendering objects, especially the angler, more distinct. The bass is a very wary fish, and requires but little to make them uneasy and shy. Night and morning is the best time for bait fishing, unless the weather be cold; then from about 3 to 6 p.m. For fly fishing, two hours after sunrise and one hour or two before dark will be found the most tempting time.

In lake fishing it is always best to run out to the

deep water and fish in towards the shallows or feeding grounds, as the boat being in the deeper water is not so conspicuous to the fish in the shallows. When a bass is hooked, I always work toward deep water, so as to play the fish freely and avoid snags, rocks, weeds, etc.

If fishing from a bank, I get as near the level of the water as possible, and when a fish is hooked, I head at once to the deepest water practicable.

I find it a good plan to let the bass have the bait from two to ten seconds, according to the way he takes it; then strike at once, giving him line freely, but keeping the thumb on the reel as a drag. Click reels are an abomination. I never jerk the rod, but hook with a twist of the wrist, remembering the golden rule that from the moment a bass takes the bait until he is landed *the line must be kept tight*, as one second of slack line will lose him. The point of the rod I keep bent by the pull of the fish, which is made to fight for every inch of line. I reel in whenever practicable and kill the fish on the line.

I never let a fish get among the weeds; I coax him off if possible, but if this is not practicable, I give him the butt, and either get him away or break the pole, which is preferable to losing the fish by weeds or snags. When thoroughly exhausted, I land him, of course, but am never in a hurry. If a pole net be used I sink it under him and gently lift it until the fish falls into it.

In order to appreciate black bass fishing to the

full, considerable attention most assuredly must be paid to suitable tackle. Any boy may catch sunfish, suckers, or trout with a bean pole, a piece of cord for a line and a rude nondescript bait. Black bass are a fish of an entirely different type, and the day when a black bass rod was considered to mean one weighing two pounds and measuring sixteen feet, with a chalk line, and a reel like a small clock, is delegated to the far off past of ten years ago. Some few of the old anglers made their own rods, and scored heavily in their takes of fish, to the wonder and amazement of the other fishermen who still adhered to the old heavy pattern.

My idea of the best rod for black bass fishing is the happy medium between the trout fly rod, and the trout bait rod. The one I generally use is eight feet three inches long, weighs nine ounces, is three-jointed, the balance perfect, and the bend true from tip to butt. It was made by H. H. Kiffe, 318 Fulton street, Brooklyn. I have killed many bass with this rod during the past two seasons, some weighing as high as four pounds, and have also caught pickerel weighing eight pounds with the same pole. The butt is white ash, and the second joint and tip finely selected lance wood. The butt has a wound grip, and the metal tip is of the four-ring pattern, the strongest and lightest made. I prefer standing guides. Some people prefer Greenheart or Wasahba for tips, but lancewood or red cedar is the best, I think.

The great fault in many rods is want of "back,"

which results from a too slender butt. This produces a double action in the rod, and prevents a clear satisfactory cast. In England this quality was made a specialty for salmon rods some years ago, it being supposed that it increased the length of the cast. Recent experiences proved this to be a fallacious idea, and such a rod required quite an education to use with any degree of accuracy.

If a man can throw a minnow thirty yards with any degree of accuracy, he should be well satisfied, as that is more than sufficient for average bass fishing.

A peculiar, but, I think, mistaken idea is that a rod should be in proportion to a man's size. One can understand this idea in regard to a gun for which a man should be measured as for a coat, but with a rod it is different, and should be made to vary with the type of fishing practised. The difference in weight being only a few ounces exposes the foolishness of this theory. All that matters is the question of balance; if that is all right, the size or weight matters very little.

A more important point is, that a cheap rod is always a dear rod, in price alone. As in anything else, work and quality of material go for everything, and if a good sound rod is required, a fair price must be paid to some good maker for it.

The line is a most important item, and it is always best to give a good price for a hand made line turned out by a good firm. The braided line to me is the perfection of excellence. I do not like a

tapered line at any price. Next to the silk line I prefer the silk grass lines of the Japanese.

The finest hooks in the trade are made in England, where special attention has been paid to this industry for over two hundred years, the town of Redditch being supported almost exclusively by the hook factories. The best are the "Sproat," "Cork-shaped Limerick," "Round Bend Carlisle," and "Hollow Point Aberdeen." The hook is of the most vital importance to the fisherman, and the best shape is that where the point of the barb is turned round towards the shank. First class hooks are always japanned or black; the inferior ones are blued, and these, if subjected to a heavy strain will straighten right out. The black bass is extremely liable to cause this, as it always struggles hard both in and out the water from the moment of hooking to the final gasp. A hook with the proper bend will never pierce foul, but will strike right through the mouth, never springing out.

Regarding flies, every man has his own opinions and fancies. My own favorites are the "Marston," "W. H. Hammett," "Keader," "Silver Ibis," "Vermont," "Imperial," "La Belle," "Royal Coachman," "Blue Jay" and "Claret," made by C. F. Orvis, of Manchester, Vt.

As to spoons, most people use far too large a spoon for bass, I am sure; even the dealers do not recognize this fact, and are continually pressing pickerel spoons upon their customers who do not happen to know better. My idea of a bass spoon

is one no larger than one-third of an ordinary teaspoon for the hand-line, and for rod use one even still smaller.

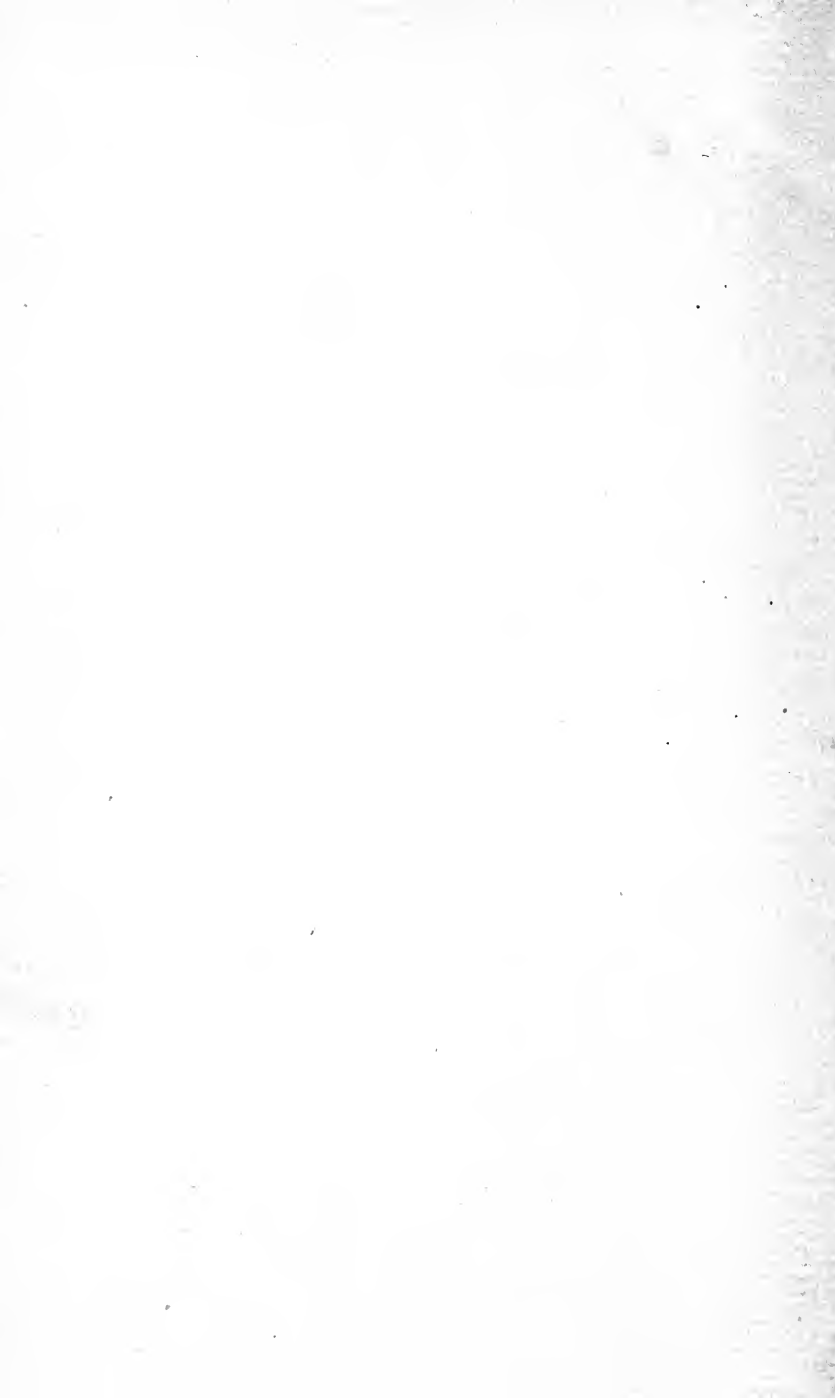
Artificial insects may be used in surface fishing, but only the most skilful anglers should expect success, as the manipulation of them requires exceedingly delicate service.

I believe that the black bass will eventually become the game fish of the country. Trout streams are drying up by reason of trees being cut down; mills and factories being erected, and dams holding the water half stagnant during half the year. This must eventually deal a death blow to the trout, and even now the votaries of black bass fishing outnumber those of the trout ten to one.

One last piece of advice I offer you, is to always reel the line carefully after fishing, as a man would clean his gun after shooting. Guide it to its place with the thumb, and run it from side to side of the reel like cotton on a spool. This will let it dry evenly and prevent all bunching and snarling. It is just as easy to do this as not, and the habit once gained will become a mechanical act, and save you lots of trouble and time before and afford you good pleasure after you begin fishing.

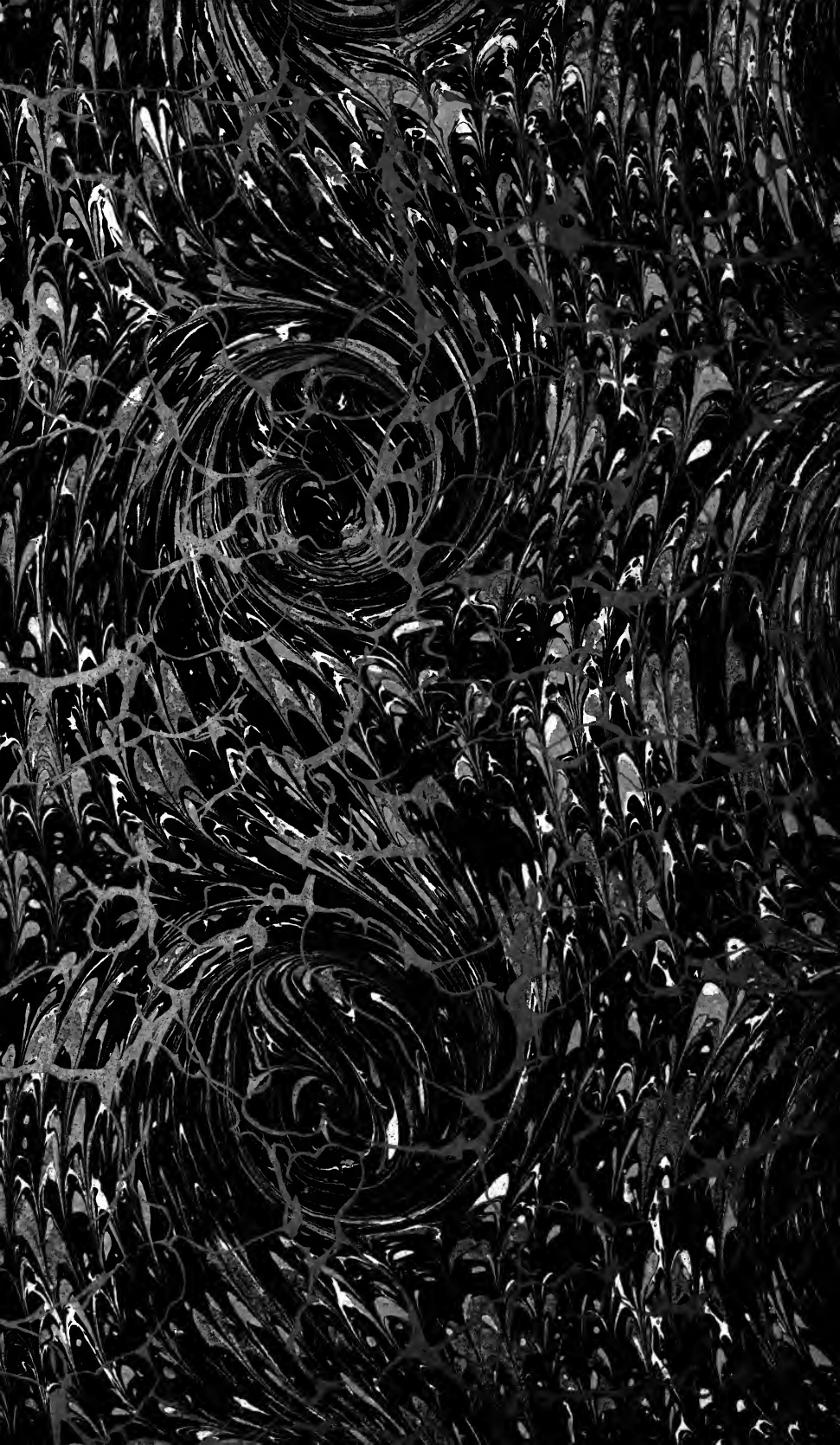












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