



Angler's Notebook

by Jerry Bush



A downrigger trolling weight

photo-Jerry Bush

It can be very frustrating to locate fish and not be able to hold over their position. An 8- or 10-pound downrigger trolling weight makes a perfect anchor for most unpowered vessels including rowboats, canoes and kayaks. They include a hasp or loop for easy clip attachment, require little space for storage, and yet their mass is sufficient to hold most unpowered vessels in place.

Paddling anglers are well advised to carefully consider their choice of personal flotation devices. Regardless of how many built-in compartments the manufacturers add to the vessels, there never seems to be enough storage space. A life jacket that includes pockets, clips and D-rings will help anglers organize and easily access premium items.

Because all canoes and kayaks are not created equal, perform a good bit of research before purchasing a vessel for angling purposes. Performance is influenced by a host of characteristics. A) As a rule, stability is enhanced by extending the width. In most instances, a slender vessel will move along the water's surface with less effort than a

wider craft. B) If you intend to carry the vessel, consideration of weight and length is of prime importance. C) Some materials cut through water better than others. For example, boats manufactured from Kevlar usually outperform canoes and kayaks manufactured with plastic. D) Plastic vessels are usually more durable than those made from fiberglass. E) The keel's style determines whether the craft is best suited for straight line rowing or enhanced maneuverability. F) A larger canoe or kayak is necessary if it is to be used for hauling gear for extended excursions. G) Do not overlook the style of the paddle itself. If possible, ask the retailer to test pilot several styles.

Though casting distance is somewhat hampered by posture, fly fishing from paddle vessels, such as canoes and kayaks, will provide rewarding panfishing expeditions. Bluegills, crappies and sunfish are often willing to hit poppers and other dry flies dropped softly near lily pads and reeds. Because most of this vegetation comes to the surface in shallow water, the unpowered vessels are perfectly suited to accessing these areas.

Fishin' from the Kitchen

Bluegill Club Sandwich with Homemade Tartar Sauce

by Wayne Phillips

After a morning of fishing, nothing hits the spot like a club sandwich filled with tasty bluegill.

Ingredients for four servings:

Bluegill Club Sandwich

- 1- to 1½-pounds bluegill fillets, boneless and skinless
- 1 cup cornmeal
- ½ cup canola oil
- 12 bacon slices
- 12 slices wholegrain bread, lightly toasted
- 2 tomatoes, sliced
- Lettuce leaves
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Homemade Tartar Sauce

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 2 green onions, finely minced
- 2 small cucumber pickles, coarsely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. fresh tarragon, finely minced
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Procedure

Combine ingredients for tartar sauce and refrigerate for 30 minutes, so the flavors can combine. Coat bluegill fillets with cornmeal. Fry the bacon and fish. Drain the bacon and fish on paper towels. On a piece of toasted bread, layer lettuce leaves, tomato slices and bacon. Top with a slice of bread. Liberally spread tartar sauce on the bread. Layer the bluegill pieces. Top with more lettuce and the remaining slice of toasted bread.

Serve

Cut sandwiches in half. Sliced pickles, grape tomatoes, green olives and potato chips are ideal with this sandwich.



photo-Wayne Phillips

Hints

For a complete meal, serve with coleslaw and either a pasta salad or potato salad. Personalize your tartar sauce by using herbs and other flavor ingredients. Lime or orange can replace the lemon. Dill, basil and Italian flat leaf parsley go well with fish. Capers or chopped green olives can be added. For more acidity, add white wine vinegar. A couple drops of hot sauce will give it some heat.