

## A hot night for fishing

Posted on Aug 10, Posted by [John Sloan](#) Category [John Sloan - Outdoors](#)

### y JOHN L. SLOAN

The sun was going down. It seemed to hover just above the trees. I was sweating bullets just from reeling. I felt the boat rock and knew the first fish of the night was battling my partner in the back of the boat. It turned out to be the largest fish of the night, close to five pounds. That was a year or so ago but I thought of it on this night.

Then it got dark.

---

Just because it was dark did not mean it was cool. There was not a tendril of moving air. I could hear the blue/black jig hit the water but I could not see it. It was past the scant light from the black light. At the third crank of the reel, I felt that flutter that signifies a fish has picked up the jig. Then the line tightened and I set the hook. It was a smallmouth of a pound. Even the little ones fight-smallmouth.

We worked our way through the dark, the rear boat light and the black light providing just enough light to work by. Now, a breeze hit our faces now and then and not only did it cool us, it kept the bugs away. The insects were not bad, just enough to make you aware of their presence. A jet went over low, preparing to land at the airport. A siren blared somewhere in Nashville.

Big Bird caught another bass of about the same size. I was afraid that was the pattern for the night-small fish and nothing of any size. About then I caught another one-pound smallmouth. The color of the evening was the blue/black combination that I have come to favor at night. I was using a crawfish imitator from Stanley Jigs. They make a good product and in the weight I like. Most jigs today come in weights of over 1/4-ounce. That are too heavy for the type of fishing I do. I wish I could still find the black or dark brown ones in bear hair or fox hair. The smallmouth seem to prefer them.

I drag and hop a jig across the bottom. I do very little, make that, I do no flipping and vertical jigging. Therefore I want a jig light enough for me to handle easily on the 6# line. My choice is 1/8-ounce and if it is deep water or windy, I'll go to 1/4-ounce. I do not want a heavy jig that stays on the bottom and usually hangs up on something. I want one that hops up and floats down.

You do not lose many fish on these jigs. Not only are the hooks good, most of the time, when a fish hits a jig and you set the hook properly, they get hooked in the top lip. It is a tough part of the lip and they don't throw many lures when they jump as smallmouth do. Of course, bass aren't all you catch at night. Stripers and Hybrids are not uncommon in lakes where they abound. Catfish are a regular night time catch. An experienced fisherman can just about tell what he has by the way he fights.

I enjoy night fishing. I always have. I like the dark, even on land. I don't night fish at much as I once did. For a while, starting in late May, I used to fish four or five nights a week. Mostly I fished Center Hill. I like fishing the hill because the high ridges make for good landmarks you can see silhouetted against the sky. Makes for good running in the dark. You are required to have boat lights-a white light on the back and a red/green one on the bow. Now and then you might use a spotlight to check your location or spot a landmark on the bank. Now I mostly fish Percy Priest and there is usually enough ambient light from the area businesses to allow you to run. I try to go on nights when it is not loaded with boats. On this night it is almost deserted.

I make a long cast across the point of the island. I start bouncing and hopping the jig slowly across the point Halfway back, the tap comes. I set the hook hard, the rod bows and the drag clicks. All signs of a good fish. I can't move him. He runs sideways toward the back of the boat, not acting like a bass. Then the line goes limp. Lost him. I think probably catfish. Then Mark and I both catch the same piece of discarded line. I save my lure, he does not.

It is now close to one a.m. Five hours is long enough. We have caught a respectable number of small fish. Even though night is when you are supposed to catch the big ones, on this night, Big Bird and I did not, just the drillers, the bank runners. However, it was an enjoyable night.

A hot night. A hot night for fishing.

Contact John L. Sloan at [bowriter1944john@aol.com](mailto:bowriter1944john@aol.com) .

Tags: Untagged