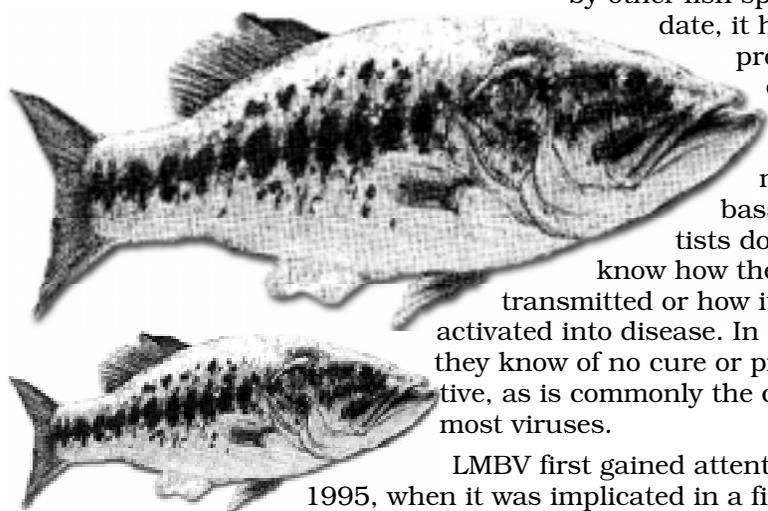


## Largemouth Bass Virus new concern for anglers

**L**argemouth Bass Virus (LMBV) is one of more than 100 naturally occurring viruses that affect fish but not warm-blooded animals. Origin is unknown, but it is of the Family Iridovirus and the Genus Ranavirus, related to a virus found in frogs and other amphibians and nearly identical to a virus isolated in some fish imported to the U.S. for the aquarium trade. Although the virus apparently can be carried by other fish species, to date, it has

produced disease only in largemouth bass. Scientists do not know how the virus is transmitted or how it is activated into disease. In addition, they know of no cure or preventative, as is commonly the case with most viruses.

LMBV first gained attention in 1995, when it was implicated in a fish kill on Santee-Cooper Reservoir in South Carolina.



Since then, the virus has been found in impoundments throughout the Southeast and as far west as Texas. Often, it has been confirmed in bass that show no signs of disease, which suggests that some fish might be infected but not ever become ill.

Some fish kills, however, have been linked to LMBV. Since all those die-offs occurred from June through September, warm-water temperatures might be a factor. No other common variables seem to exist among lakes where kills occurred. Some lakes, for example, contain aquatic vegetation and others do not, suggesting that neither plant density nor plant management triggered the disease to turn fatal.

Some scientists believe that "stressed" bass might be the most likely to die of the disease. Along with hot weather, stress factors might include poor water quality caused by pollution and frequent handling by anglers.

Thus far, LMBV-related kills have been minor in comparison to kills prompted by other causes, such as poor water quality or pollution. These LMBV incidents have re-

*continued on page 3*

### Needed: Volunteer anglers for TVA bass survey

TVA's annual black bass "catch depletion survey" is underway, and local anglers are invited to participate. A catch depletion survey is a user-friendly fish sampling technique that provides information about the number of bass in a lake, their age, and general health condition. The results are used by state agencies to protect and improve sport fisheries.

Volunteers pre-fish selected coves, which have been blocked off with a net, for one hour. Then TVA biologists "deplete" the remaining fish in the cove using electro-fishing equipment. Fish are counted, weighed, and measured; then released unharmed outside the cove. The cove returns to

normal within hours after the net is removed.

A schedule for this year's survey of area lakes is shown below. To participate, call TVA at 256-386-2729 or 865-632-1721 or send an email to [gseeber@tva.gov](mailto:gseeber@tva.gov).

Sampling teams will leave the designated boat ramp at 7:30 a.m. and return around 3 p.m., plus or minus two hours. You may ride in a TVA boat if you bring your own life jacket, or you can follow in your own boat. TVA team members will be happy to return you to the boat ramp at any time during the day. If you plan to stay all day to watch the action, please bring your lunch. A cooler with ice will be available for drinks.

Reservoir	Date	Ramp	Reservoir	Date	Ramp
Wheeler	27-Mar	Second Creek	Pickwick	8-May	Pickwick State Park
	28-Mar	Second Creek		9-May	Yellow Creek
	29-Mar	First Creek		10-May	Rosetrail
	30-Mar	First Creek	Wilson	11-May	Lock Six
Guntersville	3-Apr	Honeycomb Creek		12-May	Lock Six
	4-Apr	Short Creek	L. Bear Creek	5-Jun	L. Bear Creek Dam
	5-Apr	Scottsboro City Pk		Cedar Creek	6-Jun

*Note: Schedule is subject to change.*

# Event Calendar

**FEB 26 - Big River Bassmasters Spring Open, Wilson/Fleet Harbor. All Star qualifying event.**

MAR 4 - Anglers Choice Couples NW AL, Wheeler/Riverwalk, \$100/couple.

MAR 4 - Bassing America, Wheeler/Riverwalk, \$50/person, 972-380-2656.

MAR 4 - Pickwick Lake Outdoor Trail, Pickwick/State Park, \$70/team, \$10 big bass optional, \$20 membership, pays top 15, 901-427-5707.

**MAR 11 - Quad-Cities Bassmasters Open, Wilson/Fleet Harbor. All Star qualifying event.**

**MAR 11 - Bass Stock 2000, Wheeler/Riverwalk, \$100/boat includes big fish, Proceeds for stocking Wheeler w/ fingerlings. Pays 10. First \$1000. 256-233-2277 during day.**

MAR 11 - Guys & Dolls, Lake Demoplois/City landing.

MAR 18 - Giles Co. TN D.A.R.E. Bass-A-Thon, Wheeler/Riverwalk.

MAR 18 - Fishers of Men, Neely Henry/Gadsden State Park.

MAR 18 - Spring Bass Classic, Pickwick/Pickwick Landing.

MAR 19 - Anglers Choice NW AL, Wilson/Fleet Harbor, \$175/team.

**APR - Bulldog Bassin' Open, Cedar Creek/Slick Rock. All Star qualifying event.**

APR 1 - Anglers Choice Couples NW AL, Pickwick/McFarland, \$100/couple.

APR 1 - T&T Tackle Spring Open, Wheeler/Lee High Elk Rvr.

APR 1 - Pickwick Lake Outdoor Trail, Pickwick/Waterloo.

APR 8 - Bassing America, Guntersville/Goose Pond, \$50/person, 972-380-2656.

APR 8 - Guys & Dolls, Lake Tuscaloosa/Binnion Creek.

APR 15 - Wal-Mart Bass Classic, Pickwick/McFarland.

## Short Strikes

Ronnie McDonald, Editor



**We are looking for a few good men, and women, in area bass clubs to keep us posted on club tournament results and events. Each club reporter will receive a Southern Fishing cap and a byline on their monthly reports. Drop us a note, call or send an email.**

**Along that same line- I would appreciate it if each club in the area would let us know the name of the club president and contact information. Southern Fishing is interested in re-establishing and publicizing the inter-club championship tournament that was held in the past. Maybe an annual "Club Championship Classic" hosted by Southern Fishing.**



Published by

Southern Fishing Communications  
152 Allison Drive, Killen, AL 35645

Phone 256-757-9816 Email BassSouth@aol.com

Web site: <http://southern-fishing.com>

All Content ©2000 Southern Fishing Communications

## Lake Michigan to host BASS Masters Classic

"We're going to one of the greatest sports cities in America!" stated Helen Sevier, CEO of Bass Anglers Sportsman Society in announcing that Chicago, Ill., would be the site of the 2000 BASS Masters Classic. The 30th annual "Super Bowl of bass fishing" will be contested July 20-22, 2000 on Lake Michigan with daily weigh-ins being held at historic Soldier Field.

### ...July 20-22, 2000 on Lake Michigan...

Vacationers from around the world are attracted to the award winning weigh-in production and trade show to see the fishing prowess of legendary anglers firsthand. The ASA/ICAST Sportshow will be held in conjunction with this year's BASS Masters Classic Outdoor Show at Chicago's McCormick Place. Visitors will witness the largest collection of outdoor related merchandise ever assembled.

The 45 Classic competitors will launch from the south lot of Soldier Field at Burnham Harbor. Great anticipation and nail-biting suspense will surround the final day weigh-in as the championship crown, \$100,000 and endorsements reaching up to \$1 million will be up for grabs to the winning angler. Crowds topping 30,000 have congregated in the past to experience the final chapter of Classic showdowns - Chicago fans could double this number.

"We are excited and honored to host the world's most prestigious fishing competition, the 2000 BASS Masters Classic world championship. This year, from July 20 through July 22, we will welcome 45 of the world's top-ranked bass anglers, who will meet in Chicago to compete in one of the world's premier sporting events. The City of Chicago is an excellent location for a gathering of this magnitude. We offer some of the best in restaurants, hotels, cultural attractions, and world-class fishing," said Mayor Richard M. Daley.

*(Editor's note: This should be an interesting event with the big lake's clear, deep water, variety of fish and a reputation for building big waves in a very short period of time. I must admit I didn't even know there were bass in Lake Michigan.)*



## Lizard Assassin!

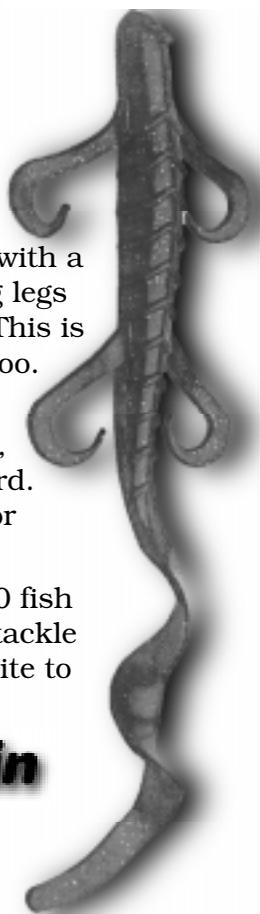
Bass Assassin has a 5.5" lizard with a superior body design, swimming legs and an enticing ribbonlike tail. This is an excellent Carolina rig lizard too.

These lizards are impregnated with scent and flavor enhancers, freeze dried crawdad and hog lard. There is also a slit in the belly for improved hooking.

Look for the Lizard Assassin's 20 fish catching colors at your favorite tackle shop, or contact us on our website to conduct your own taste test.

## Bass Assassin

Lafayette Industrial Park  
Rt 2, Box AA • Mayo, FL 32066  
(904) 294-1049 FAX (904) 294-3495  
[bassassassin.com](http://bassassassin.com)



## How hypothermia affects most adults

Water Temperature (Degrees Fahrenheit)	Exhaustion or Unconsciousness	Expected Time of Survival
32.5 32.5 to 40 40 to 50 50 to 60 60 to 70 70 to 80 Over 80	Under 15 minutes 15 to 30 minutes 30 to 60 minutes 1 to 2 hours 2 to 7 hours 2 to 12 hours Indefinite	Under 15 to 45 minutes 30 to 90 minutes 1 to 3 hours 1 to 6 hours 2 to 40 hours 3 hours to indefinite Indefinite

## Cold water can take it's toll quickly

**B**e aware that cold water, less than 70 degrees F, can lower your body temperature. This is called hypothermia. If your body temperature goes too low, you may pass out and then drown. Even if you are wearing a Personal Flotation Device (PFD), your body can cool down 25 times faster in cold water than in air.

Water temperature, body size, amount of body fat, and movement in the water all play a part in cold water survival. Small people cool faster than large people. Children cool faster than adults.

Personal flotation devices can still help you stay alive longer in cold water. A PFD lets you float without

using energy and they will protect at least part of your body from the cold water. A snug-fitting PFD is better than one that is loose-fitting.

When you boat or fish in cold water, use a flotation coat or deck-style PFD. In cold water they are better than vests because they cover more of your body. You may also consider attaching a fold-down ladder to the transom of your boat for winter fishing. You will not likely be able to climb back into a boat after going overboard without one—particularly if you are fishing alone. A ladder could be the difference between life and death.

*Bass virus continued from page 1*

ceived considerable attention, however, because they involve the nation's most popular game fish. Thus far, no evidence exists that LMBV has caused a long-term problem on any fishery or will have a long-term impact.

### What are the signs of LMBV

Most bass that carry the LMBV will appear completely normal. In those cases where the virus has triggered disease, however, dying fish will be near the surface and have trouble swimming and remaining upright. That's because LMBV appears to attack the swim bladder, causing bass to lose their capability to maintain buoyancy. Diseased fish might also appear bloated.

Adult bass of two pounds and more seem to be the most susceptible to disease. Sores may appear on some fish but are caused by secondary infections of bacteria or fungi.

### Is largemouth bass virus a new disease

No one knows. Because LMBV has been confirmed in so many places at nearly the same time, some scientists suspect the virus has been around for awhile. Others suggest that "genetic sequencing information" indicates that it may be relatively new.

### Where has largemouth bass virus been found

Since 1995, LMBV has been found in 12 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. Other states, including Maryland and Virginia, have monitored for the virus, but did not find it. During 1997-1998, monitoring at 75 lakes in eight states detected the virus in six locations.

Fish kills that may be attributable to LMBV have occurred at: Santee-Cooper, SC (1995); W.F. George Reservoir (also known as Lake Eufaula), Ala. and Ga. (1997 and 1998); Greenwood Reservoir, SC (1998); Sardis Reservoir, Miss. (1998); Sam Rayburn, Texas (1998); Lake Fork and Lake Conroe, Texas (1999); Toledo Bend, Texas and La. (1999); Lake Ferguson and Tunica Cutoff, Miss. (1999), and Atchafalaya Basin, La. (1999).

### What are the impacts to bass populations

Scientists do not know enough yet about the virus to determine if it will have long-lasting effects on bass

populations. Surveys on lakes following a kill suggest that fish populations remain within the normal range of sampling variability. There has not yet been any lakes that have had a second fish kill, following the first documented event, that can definitely be attributed to LMBV.

### What are the impacts to fishing?

Following some kills, anglers have reported catching fewer bass, especially bigger fish. But indications are that an infected fishery will recover within a year or two. More largemouth bass are killed annually in the U. S. by other known diseases than by LMBV.

### Are other fish and animals affected by largemouth bass virus

LMBV is a virus of the type that affects only cold-blooded animals. Researchers have found it in other bass and sunfish species, and even in trout, but, thus far, it has proven to be a fatal disease only for largemouth bass. Other members of the sunfish family found infected with the virus include smallmouth bass, spotted bass, Suwanee bass, bluegill, redbreast sunfish, white crappie, and black crappie.

Amphibians, reptiles, and other fish species could be carriers of LMBV. Scientists have found LMBV to be

*continued on page 4*

## Your bass rig deserves one of our F-Series trucks

Give our truck sales and leasing specialist a call to find out what we have for hauling bass. You can't catch a deal if you don't go fishing.



**Call Carl "Bubba" McDonald**  
Truck Sales & Leasing Consultant

LONG-LEWIS FORD  
OF THE SHOALS

256-386-7800  
2800 Woodward Avenue, Muscle Shoals, AL 35661

# Just one more cast

By Dave Grillmeier

**A**s a bass fishing sportsman, I have had the delight of being able to fish in many bass tournaments here in central Florida. I have always had fishing in my blood, starting as a young child.

Fishing has always been more than a sport to me, it's been a way to relieve stress brought on by our normal lives. My story starts on September 10th, a Friday night, as my partner and I usually set out for evening of fishing at a nearby lake. Both Brian (my partner) and I have been on the lake when the normal thunderstorms move through the Orlando area. We both have always had a deep respect for lightning and as with most sportsman, we know when it's best to hit the barn and be safe.

Brian and I were at the lake that night only for about a half hour, when a storm was moving closer to us. The sky's began to get that purple glow and a mist of rain had started. I told Brian that we needed to stay close to my van since that night we were fishing on the bank of a canal that fed the lake. We both had made the comment that we didn't want to get fried like a fish.

As the storm got closer, so did the lightning. I told Brian it was time to go, and I walked past him on my way back to the van to stow away my gear. Brian being the die hard fisherman he is, just wanted one more cast. I grabbed my graphite rod and walked back to the edge of the canal, also to get one more cast before leaving. Just as I cast my worm to the other side of the canal, lightning hit me.

As it happened, I knew what was going on, but could only think about my family and kids at home. I laid at the edge of the canal, waiting for Brian to come help me, which seemed like forever.

The lake bordered the airport here in Orlando, and Brian started running to a nearby hanger to call for help. I could only wait, as I couldn't feel my legs and my arms wouldn't work. I was sure that I wouldn't make it out of the field alive, the thoughts that run through your head are so unreal.

Help did come, and so did the storm. By the time the fire rescue showed up the storm was in full force,

so hard you could not see the other side of the canal 20 feet away. I remember even the fireman that night saying if they didn't get me out soon, they would be the next victim. News that the hospital helicopter could not make it to the site because of the weather made me realize the severity of the situation.

I did make it to the hospital and spent 30 days in the intensive care burn unit. My body covered with burns over 60 percent of my body. Anyone who has ever been burned and has had to endure the scub rooms and the treatment given to heal such severe burns can understand what I went through, as for others who can only imagine....you can't. I had two different sets of surgery and skin grafts to repair the damage to my legs.

While in the hospital I was given the normal titles....FLASH.....SUPERMAN and my wife's favorite SPARKY. Its OK with me, I call my self names too.

I'm now in physical therapy to help me regain use of my legs. I'm glad to say I have made great progress during therapy.

The physical damage it's self is almost gone, but the mental damage will take a longer period of time to overcome. I have now the need to inform as many people as I can. I think I have learned a lesson that doesn't need to be repeated.

All of us that have spent any amount of time on the water knows that sometime no matter how bad the weather gets, we have fished in lightning and severe storms.

You don't have to be on the lake to get hit from lightning. You can be in your own yard, on a bike or the playground, it will still find you if you don't follow simple rules like the 30-30 rule.

This rule states that if you see lightning and can hear the boom before the count of 30, the next place that lightning could hit is right where your standing. And don't go back outside until no lightning strikes for 30 minutes.

I hope you all keep this information in the back of your head, and next time your on the water you'll think "Is it worth one more cast".

*Bass virus continued*

98 percent identical to a virus found in guppies and "doctor fish," a freshwater aquarium species imported from southeast Asia. This suggests that LMBV could have originated with importation of an exotic species.

## **Are infected fish safe to handle and eat**

Yes. LMBV is not known to infect any warm-blooded animals, including humans. But common sense should prevail at all times: Thoroughly cook fish that you intend to eat. Also, fish that are dead or dying should not be used for human food, regardless of the cause of the illness.

## **What can and is being done**

As with many fish viruses, little is known about LMBV. But because of the popularity of largemouth bass, state and federal agencies, universities, and private interest groups are working hard to learn more about the virus and its impact on the resource. Universities involved with LMBV include Arkansas-Pine Bluff, Auburn, California-Davis, Louisiana State, Mississippi, Mississippi State, and Texas A&M.

## **What the experts think**

Because so little is known about LMBV, scientists have few conclusions to offer regarding the virus. They do suggest, though, that LMBV probably will become an enduring element in ecosystems and a component in

natural selection. In other words, it could serve as a population control. On the positive side, thus far there is no evidence that LMBV has the potential to cause anything more than sporadic fish kills.

## **What anglers can do**

Anglers can help minimize the spread of LMBV virus and its activation into a lethal disease by doing the

*continued on page 5*



**OUTPOST 72**  
**Hickory Smoked BBQ**  
Full Service Bakery • Catering • Banquet Facilities  
5627 Hwy 72, Killen 256-757-5146

# Area pros finish high in the BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational

Lake Okeechobee - Jan. 20-22, 2000

Randy Yager, benefiting from his outstanding first day catch on his partner's fish, brought in four bass during the final round to win the BASSMASTER Florida Invitational with a three-day total of 13 bass weighing 37 pounds, 11 ounces. It was the first Tournament Trail victory for the 35-year old insurance claims adjuster, and brought him \$42,000 in cash and merchandise prizes.

Second place went to Okeechobee guide Larry Wright, who finished with 14 bass weighing 36-14, while Virginia pro David Dudley claimed third with 14 bass weighing 36-1. Roger Schofield of Killen, AL captured fourth with 34-4, while another local angler, David Eng of Okeechobee, finished fifth with 33-6.

Yager fished a black 3/8 ounce Picasso jig as well as a 3/8 ounce white Picasso spinner bait around open holes in the vegetation in a part of the lake known as the Dyess Ditch. Although it was his first time to fish the massive south Florida lake, Yager is no stranger to fishing vegetation.

His home waters, Lake Champlain, Vermont, and the St. Lawrence River in New York, are both filled with vegetation. "I just found an area of the lake that looked good and started fishing," said Yager. "I'm absolutely amazed at the number of bass in this lake. I just kept fishing the same area over and over, because I knew the fish were there.

"All I did was pitch the jig to an open spot in the grass, shake it, and then lift it up. I never felt any strikes. The fish were just there."

Wright, a veteran Lake Okeechobee guide, had all his bass the final morning by 7:45 a.m., despite water temperatures that had fallen as low as 59 degrees. He used a 3/8 ounce Hildebrandt spinner bait around thick hydrilla in Fisheating Creek. He used 10 pound test line to try to generate more strikes, but paid dearly when he lost one fish he estimated would weigh at least 8 pounds.

David Dudley captured third by pitching and flipping a Zoom Brush Hog into holes in the vegetation along the north shore, one of three areas targeted by nearly all of the 321 tournament competitors. At times, as many as 80 to 100 anglers were within sight of each other in these areas.

**Roger Schofield of Killen, AL** and David Eng of Okeechobee were two anglers who did not fish in the crowds. Schofield targeted bass on top of a shallow ridge in the Kissimmee River just seven miles from the weigh-in and fished it with a Carolina rig Chompers lizard; and Eng fished the Rim Canal on the northeast side of the lake, also using a Carolina rig Gambler plastic worm to claim fifth.

## Area Pro's

PLACE	NAME	CITY	STATE	FISH/DEAD
4th	Roger Schofield	Killen	AL	15/0
34-04	297			\$9,000
12th	Timmy Horton	Spruce Pine	AL	14/0
30-08	289			\$2,700
62nd	Gregory Pugh	Cullman	AL	11/0
20-01	239			
98th	Bret King	Lenoir City	TN	7/0
16-01	203			
117th	Ray Brazier	Lawrenceburg	TN	9/0
13-14	184			
196th	Chris McCollum	Moulton	AL	4/0
8-01	105			

For national tournament results visit  
**PROanglers.com**



## Quad-Cities Bassmasters January Tourney

By Travis Tucker

January 22, 2000, Wilson Lake, Fleet Harbor.

The morning started with sleet and freezing rain with a high of only 33 degrees. Good tournament anyway. Quite a few fish were caught despite the cold and rain. Congratulations to L.W. Wagnon and Troy Clemmons on capturing first place. L.W. also won lunger with a 3lb-5oz largemouth.

### Individual stats:

1. L.W. Wagnon 13-8 (6);
2. Johnny Bryan 9-6 (4);
3. Jack Nesmith 5-13 (3);
4. Thad Embry 4-11 (2);
5. Wallace Smith 4-9 (2);
6. Jeff Moore 4-5 (2);
7. Mark Johnson 3-15 (2);
8. George Williams 3-15 (2);
9. Jim Bowman 3-9 (2);
10. Heith Embry 2-1 (1);
11. Bobby Erwin 1-15 (1);
12. Alex Crittenden 1-12 (1)

### Team stats:

1. L.W. Wagnon - Troy Clemmons 13-8 (6);
2. Johnny Bryan - Bobby Erwin 11-5 (5);
3. Jack Nesmith - Thad Embry 10-8 (5);
4. Wallace Smith - Mark Johnson 8-8 (4);
5. Jeff Moore - Alex Crittenden 6-1 (3);
6. Jim Bowman - Johnny Smithson 3-9 (2);
7. Brad Renegar - Heith Embry 2-1 (1).

Lunker Largemouth - L.W. Wagnon 3-5 Lunker Smallmouth - Heith Embry 2-1.

A total of 28 fish were caught and 28 released with no dead fish. Twenty-one largemouth and 1 smallmouth. Total weight for tournament was 59 lbs. - 7oz.

*Bass virus continued*

following:

- Clean boats, trailers, and other equipment thoroughly between fishing trips to keep from transporting LMBV-as well as other undesirable pathogens and organisms-from one water body to another.
- Do not move fish or fish parts from one body of water to another. And do not release live bait into a fishery.
- Handle bass as quickly and gently as possible if you intend to release them.
- Stage tournaments during cooler weather, so fish caught will not be so stressed.
- Report dead or dying fish to state wildlife agencies.
- Volunteer to help agencies collect bass for LMBV monitoring where appropriate.
- Educate other anglers about LMBV.

### For more information on LMBV

Contact the fisheries office of your state Conservation Department for more details and updates. Call the B.A.S.S. Conservation Department at (334)272-9530 or write via e-mail to [conservation@bassmaster.com](mailto:conservation@bassmaster.com) if you need contact information for your state fishery agency. The full proceedings of a LMBV workshop will be available by February 18 on the Internet at [www.group-solutions.com](http://www.group-solutions.com).

Source - B.A.S.S. Conservation Department

**Gene's Bait & Tackle**

Falcon Rods ■ Carhartt ■ Pro Rainer Rainwear ■ Wrangler

GUIDE INFORMATION FOR AREA LAKES

15261 Hwy 72  
ROGERSVILLE AL 35652  
256-247-7700

# Bassin' basics

## Plastic lizards

**P**lastic lizards are versatile lures that mimic live salamanders or newts. Many anglers believe these creatures are predators of bass eggs and that they provoke an aggressive response from bedding bass. Like plastic worms, lizards can be rigged in a number of ways.

### PLASTIC LIZARDS vs. PLASTIC WORMS

Although plastic lizards are similar in many ways to plastic worms, these differences should be noted: 1. The plastic lizard is a bulkier lure. It is therefore heavier and easier to cast when un-weighted, and easier for the bass to see when visibility is limited. 2. The plastic lizard has more action. Besides its tail, it has four legs which writhe when the lure moves. 3. The plastic lizard resembles a salamander, which is thought to be an egg predator of bedding bass.

### WHEN TO FISH PLASTIC LIZARDS

Spring is regarded as prime time for lizard fishing by most anglers. However, these lures can also be fished successfully in summer and fall as well, especially on a Carolina rig. In early spring, lizards are usually best when the water is stained to murky. However, you should also try lizards in clear 65 to 75 degree water when bass are bedding or holding around flooded bushes.

### WHERE TO FISH PLASTIC LIZARDS

1. Close To Shallow Wood Cover. Fish around stumps, logs, brush in early spring, when the water is from 45 to 60 degrees. 2. On Largemouth Spawning Beds. These lures often provoke vicious responses from bedding fish. 3. Around Shallow Flooded Bushes In Clear To Slightly Stained Water. Rigged weightless, lizards may be used as a sight fishing lure under these conditions. 4. Rigged Carolina Style On Deep Structure. This includes the ends of points, channel dropoffs, ditches, humps and submerged roadbeds. Just about anywhere you'd fish a deep diving crankbait or plastic worm. 5. In Thick Weed Cover. The bulkier profile of the lizard makes the lure more visible than a plastic worm in dense grassbeds. 6. On Top Of Surface Weeds. Properly rigged, a lizard can scoot over the top of pond scum, lily pads, matted hydrilla or milfoil and the like, and draw an explosive strike from a bass. 7. In Deep, Clear Lakes At Night In Hot Weather. The added bulk and action of a plastic lizard make it a good choice for night fishing.

### RIGGING PLASTIC LIZARDS

These lures have become much more popular in recent years as the popularity of alternative rigging method has soared. 1. Texas Rig. Here, the lizard is rigged with the hook point buried back into the body of the lure, just as when Texas rigging a plastic worm. A worm sinker is used; this can be either pegged or allowed to slide freely on the line. 2. Floating Rig. Rig the lizard on an abrasion resistant mono leader and use a swivel. 3. Carolina Rig. Substitute the lizard for a plastic worm. Vary the leader length according to bottom conditions. 4. Split Shot Rig. In clear water, use a 4 inch lizard on 4 to 8 pound line. Use a light wire worm hook rigged Texas style and pinch a split shot from 18 to 24 inches ahead of the lizard. 5. On A Leadhead. Rig the lizard open-hooked on a 1/16 to 3/8 oz. leadhead. This is ideal when fishing a clear, rocky lake, especially at night. 6. Jig Trailer. A plastic lizard may be used as a jig trailer when flipping or pitching heavy cover, especially weedbeds.

### PLASTIC LIZARD TACKLE

Tackle used will depend on conditions. In clear, shallow water, a stiff 6 to 6 foot 3 inch spinning rod and 8 to 10 pound test line will work. In stained water, use a

---

***Spring is regarded as prime time for lizard fishing by most anglers.***

---

worm rod, pitching rod, or flipping stick and heavy mono or high tech line. In open water when Carolina rigging, use a 6 1/2 to 7 foot baitcasting rod and 10 to 17 pound test leader line. In open water when splitshotting, use a medium action spinning outfit and 4 to 8 pound test mono.

At night, use a medium heavy spinning rod and 8 pound test line or a medium heavy baitcaster and 12 to 14 pound test line.

### BED FISHING PRESENTATION

When bass are spawning, either rig the lizard weightless with a worm hook that will slowly sink it, or with a light worm sinker or split shot. Cast well past the bed and reel slowly so the lizard drags bottom as it moves toward you. Bottom contact will supply the needed erratic action. When you see the bass pick up the lizard, set the hook hard. Vary the speed of retrieve and inject intermittent pauses as necessary to trigger a response from the bass.

### LIZARD SIZES AND COLORS

Lizards come in 4, 6, 7, and 9 inch sizes. In gin clear water, the 4 and 6 inch sizes are best. In low visibility situations or where bass run unusually big, try the larger sizes. Live salamanders and newts come in a rainbow of colors. Many are drab brown, black or olive green; others are bright red, orange or yellow. Some aquatic varieties are white. In nature, certain bright colors, especially yellow, are warnings that the creature may have an unpleasant taste or even be dangerous. Predators learn to avoid these creatures.

Wasps, bumblebees, coral snakes and electric eels all have bright yellow markings and so do many salamanders. A plastic salamander with bright yellow or red dots or stripes may trigger bass to strike under some conditions, but if you aren't getting a response from the fish, switch to a more discreet color.

Many anglers report success using lizards in watermelon green, brown and black. If more visibility or a trigger component is desired, try combining an orange or chartreuse tail or legs with these drab colors. Colors may be fine tuned in the boat by using one of the worm dye products available.

Tips courtesy of the Bass Lure site, <http://users.1st.net/basslures/lures.htm>.

## GRAY'S TACKLE SHOP

2813 JACKSON HWY, SHEFFIELD

(256) 383-2716

STAN SLOAN BLACK LIGHTS  
CASTAWAY & ALL STAR RODS  
REEL CLEANING & REPAIR  
LINE WINDING

**BIGGEST SELECTION IN  
NORTH ALABAMA**

MINNOWS • WORMS • CRICKETS

QUANTAM • ZOOM • V&M • SPIDERWIRE • ZORRO

CALCUTTA • LEWIS • AMBASSADOR

GIUDO'S • TACKLE LOGIC • BEARLET

1999  
All Star  
Bassin'  
Team



**We can give you  
six good reasons  
to fish the All Star  
competition.**

Only \$20 annual registration  
 Compete for \$1000 Top Rod title  
 Compete for \$250 Top Hawg Award  
 Compete for \$300 in sponsor awards  
 All Star Team banquet  
 Free limited competition T-shirts  
**Fish two tournaments at once**  
**The All Star Bassin' Team-**  
**the best tournament deal going.**

**Qualifying Tournaments**

Big River Bassmasters Open-Wilson/February 26  
 Quad Cities Bassmasters Open-Wilson/March 11  
 Bulldog Bassin Open-Cedar Creek/April

Shoals Youth Bassmasters Open-Wilson/May  
 Shriner Open-Pickwick/May  
 Lakeside Garden Club Open-Pickwick/Oct. 21



**2000 Southern Fishing All Star Bassin' Team**

*1999 Southern Fishing  
All Star Bassin' Team*

Registration for competition

**REGISTER EARLY FOR A FREE ALL STAR COMPETITION T-SHIRT**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email address \_\_\_\_\_

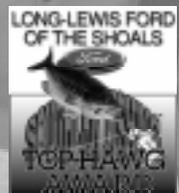
Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ **ONLY REQUIRED IF UNDER 18**

**Enclose check for \$20 payable to Southern Fishing if mailing.**

Be sure to register with the same name you will be using in the qualifying tournaments.  
 All contestants under 18 require parent/guardian signature.

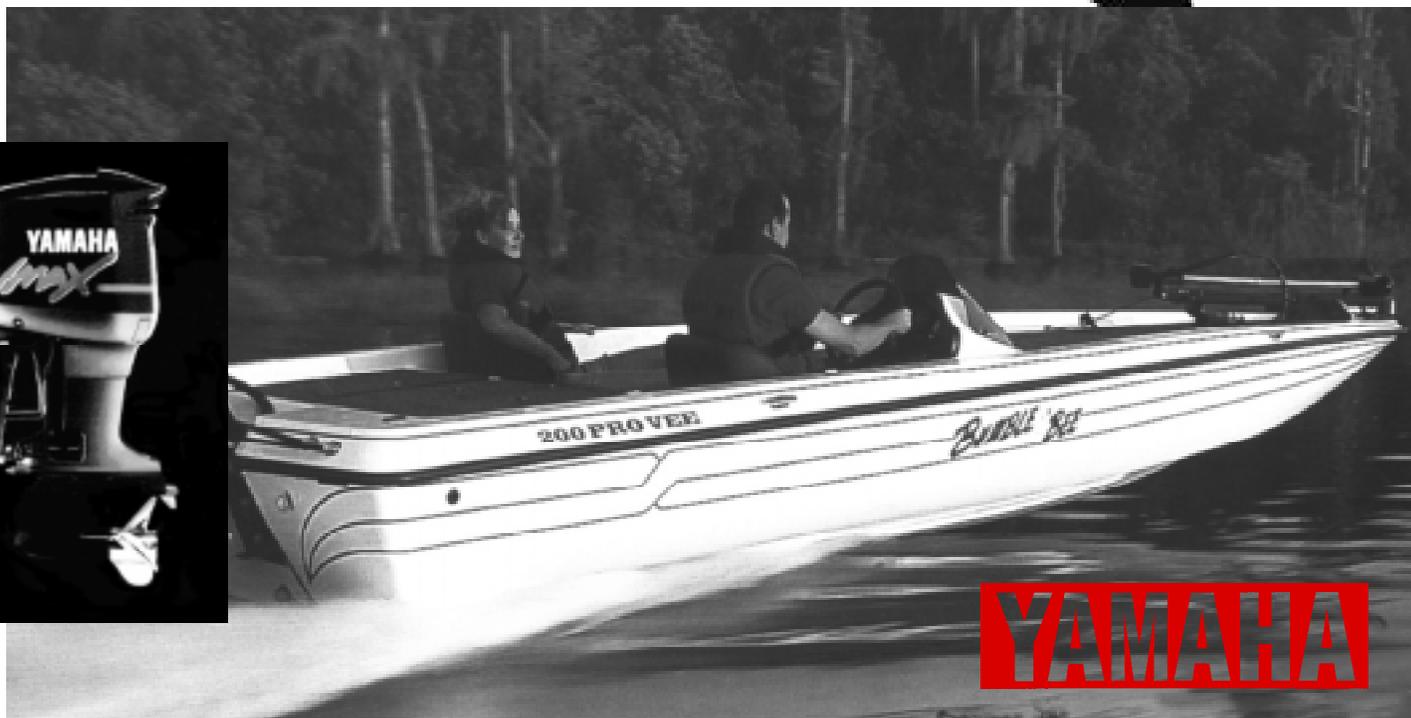
**Mailing address: Southern Fishing, 152 Allison Drive, Killen, AL 35645**

*Sponsoring organizations of the open qualifying events have no financial or legal connection with any Southern Fishing entity.*



# YAMAHA

## OUTBOARDS



**YAMAHA**

**RUSSELL SPORTING CENTER**

256-764-0251 TOLL FREE 1-800-844-4561  
2602 FLORENCE BLVD., FLORENCE, AL 35630

Visit our website at  
[russellsportingcenter.com](http://russellsportingcenter.com)