



**Setting nets:** Tom Seal pays out the walleye nets. This day the weather was very mild, good for work but bad for a high fish count. Walleye seem to prefer spawning in high winds and the white-capped waves they bring.

# Secrets below the Surface

A photographic essay  
by Jim Avelis



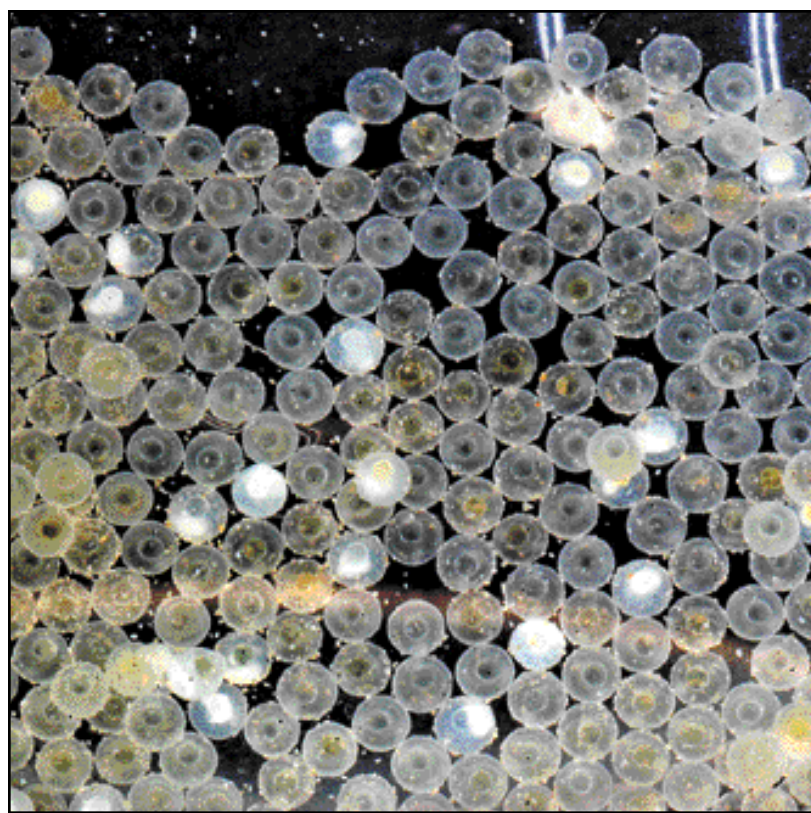
**Back home:** Robin Bruegmann returns a female walleye to the waters of Brookville Reservoir after she had yielded her eggs.



**Done for now:** Back at the boat ramp, Rhett Wisener unloads fish to tanks on a pickup truck. While out on the water, light is provided by the lamp poles, one at each end of the boat.



**Didn't make it:** Dan Jessup, manager at the Cikana Hatchery outside Martinsville, Ind., siphons off unfertilized/dead walleye eggs from a MacDonald Hatching jar. Each year, on average, the state will harvest some 35 million walleye eggs from Brookville Reservoir. They grow to maturity at Cikana, then are sent as fry to other hatcheries or grown to fingerlings. Sullivan Lake receives some 25,000 saug-eye, a hybrid of walleye and sauger, that fare better in those waters.



**Developing:** Walleye eggs develop at the Cikana Hatchery near Martinsville, Ind. It takes about 11 days for the fry to hatch after fertilization, depending on water temperatures. The white or mainly white eggs are ones that did not get fertilized.



**Drive to work:** Nicholas Phillips is at the tiller guiding the boat to the spawning grounds. He and Tom Seal set the nets about 5:30 p.m.