

Christmas Ideas For The Outdoorsman

By Steve Welch

I have had so much pressure from regulars to put out my 2016 schedule that my first week I booked half my walleye trips for May and June. I rig my boat up to fish just for them from May 15th on through June 15th. Sometimes you can go a little longer. I am also guiding on Kentucky Lake from March 20th on through April 20th. Some of those trips are gone as well.

A gift certificate of a guided fishing trip for that special fisher person in your life is by far the best thing they will have setting under the Christmas tree. All you need to do is go to my on-line store and purchase one and my wife will mail you a certificate to put under the tree good for a guided trip for two anglers. Everything provided but your lunch.

Our on-line store is another place you can go to stock his or hers tackle box with one of a kind lures that you just can't go down the tackle store and purchase. These are all handmade.

Just because it is December does not mean that I am not still out chasing crappie. We are supposed to have a mild winter and you can still catch crappie on through December and this is when they are bunched up and we get the biggest fish of the year.

It is all about jig fishing and downsizing. I have been fishing the big baits all through November my 2 and even 3-inch baits on heavier jigs the fish can see plainly. The crappie are all about bulking up for winter. Once we get into December I switch over to my smallest 3/32oz. jigs the 1 1/2 –inch plastics and even go down to light mono that falls slower.

The crappie have slowed down and the water temps are in the high thirties but this does not mean they are not active. I have seen plenty of days that the fish are so bunched up that you can get thirty or more off the end of a down tree. This is when we always get a couple over two pounds. Lake Shelbyville is more known as a numbers lake that you can catch a million crappie but few huge ones. Well this is not the case in November and December. The big fish pull out of the rivers and make their way back to the lake and if you can intercept them your chances of a wall hanger is pretty good.

I will be at several in-state fishing shows starting with the Let's Go Fishing Show in Collinsville at the Gateway Center on January 8,9,10. Then off to the Interstate Center in Bloomington on January 22,23,24. Then we head way north to Tinley Park February 13&14. Then lastly we go to the Elmwood Show March 5&6. We will once again be giving seminars at all the shows and have a booth set up to display our products and book trips for 2016.

You can visit my website at www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.com and go to our store or stop in and check out our fishing forum called Illinois Fish Talk. Feel free to join and post anything you like about the outdoors.