

## **Deep Crappie Action**

by Steve Welch

I know you have been reading my articles of late and all they talk about is how good the summer crappie fishing is on Lake Shelbyville. Well, I am here to tell you it is red hot action like you have never seen before.

For those that think that crappie only bite during the spring spawn, you need to come and experience this. All you need to do is locate a bunch of brush, down trees and standing trees with horizontal branches. They all must be in the thermocline, which is about fifteen feet down in much deeper water. Rig you up a slip bobber rig that will fish this deep and move, move, move.

I use my side imaging to locate fish hidden within trees. We fish them for about twenty minutes or less then pull up and hit another one. Moving is the key to catching bigger fish. Typically we fish about 30-40 spots a day if they hold fish, more if they don't.

I have special made rods that are eight-feet in length to keep your bobber stop knot off the reel since we just under-hand flip our baits about fifteen-feet over to a marked buoy that I have placed on the brush pile.

We rig these rods with twenty-pound Fireline Crystal braided line then down to a barrel swivel and a fifteen-pound fluorocarbon leader. We use a quarter-ounce weight and a slip bobber big enough to hold everything up. We also use a small number four Aberdeen hook so if you get hung up and you will, you can straighten it out. We don't lose many rigs this way and you can pull those tasty crappie from the thickest of brush piles.

Now what makes Lake Shelbyville such a good summer crappie lake, or any season for that matter, is the sheer number of fish and the depth. The deep clear water allows the fish to stay active right on through the hot summer months. This depth and the summer breezes we get keeps the water in good condition.

A very distinct thermocline develops each summer. This is the best oxygen for the fish and it concentrates them at one depth. So all you need is good cover in that thermocline depth.

You must have good lively bait during the summer so we rigged my Yar-Craft with on-board air pumps to give ample air to as many as fifteen dozen minnows. We rigged the side walls of my boat with quick change disconnects to allow you to place a minnow bucket anywhere you want in the boat and have a nice insulated cooler with on-board air. My minnows are jumping out of the tank all day, they are so lively.

I have a jig pole rigged with my Deep Ledge Jig in some sort of white or pearl and a shad imitating body on it. I can catch fish on it as well but for the most part I am drifting minnows over deep brush like my clients. I just prefer to keep the boat away from the cover so as not to spook them in the clear water conditions we are always faced with in the summer.

Myself and either two or three clients will catch about two hundred crappie every day and moving is the key to always getting our limit. You will catch the bigger fish from a spot pretty quick and by over-staying your welcome you will just catch the nine and a half-inch fish that by now you have your limit of.

I know you think it is just too hot to fish in August but we get a nice southwest breeze each day and you really don't even feel the heat. Just think, sitting in my Yar-Craft in a comfortable seat and pulling in crappie all day long in shorts and shirt sleeves.

At the time of this writing, I still have plenty of openings for summer crappie and don't forget to book your fall trips on Shelbyville and on Kentucky Lake to catch those real bruisers. Just go to [www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.Com](http://www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.Com) and check it for available dates.