

## **Deep Red Hot Crappie Fishing**

**By Steve Welch**

Crappie fishing has always been thought you chase them in the spring when the Dogwoods are blooming and for 99% of the fishermen this still stands true today.

The crappie just don't quit eating they just move out to deep structure and most anglers aren't comfortable with fishing anything that isn't right on the bank. I get a kick out fishermen they buy a 70,000 dollar boat, 20,000 in tackle and 6,000 in electronics then turn the boat around and throw at the bank.

Today's electronics are night and day different than when I got my first boat some 30 years ago. I have on my Yar-Craft walleye boat four Lowrance hi-def units and all of them are networked together to share info and give me the ability to look at any transducer from any locator on the boat. I also have side imaging and down-scan on both the front and rear of the boat. This allows me to scan out to the side and see trees or brush and fish hiding within them. I can then mark a GPS waypoint from my location and then motor right over to the new spot and start catching fish.

I have so many waypoints on my system that we just bump from one spot to the next all day long and then I can work an entirely different set of brush the next day to keep them fresh. We are always moving about every fifteen minutes because it is my belief that in that time frame you will have caught any big fish from that brush pile since they are dominant.

Lake Shelbyville has a split limit on crappie which allows you to keep ten crappie ten-inches or larger and five crappie under ten-inches so we are always looking for bigger fish. This lake has long been known as a numbers lake and it is so full of crappie that it is not unusual for three anglers in my boat to get over a hundred a day, day after day. To get your biggest fish you need to move often and look at a lot of brush.

August for at least three years now has been my favorite month to catch crappie. The hot weather bunches them up in deep brush and it is August that you can actually catch fifty from just one spot. They don't quit eating you just need to know the locations of a bunch of brush piles because they are always hungry.

We get a nice southwest breeze during the summer and we use it to drift minnows over the deep brush with slip bobbers. I use a special slip bobber that will catch wind on purpose because that lateral drift is what you need to fire up a school of crappie. Once my clients discover this method and how well it works it is possible to drift four corks over the brush at the same pace and see all four go down at the same time. We simply call it fishing the drift and it is deadly.

I pull over a deep brush pile with my trolling motor and take notice as to what depth the very top of the brush is and not a rouge branch but the main brush pile. I then instruct my clients to set their slip bobbers at that depth. We use a custom eight-foot rod so measuring is made easier. Plus casting is easier since you can keep the bobber stop off the reel and just underhand flip it just past the brush pile.

Keeping ten to fifteen dozen minnows alive is hard in the summer so my boat has a custom on-board air system that allows us to place our minnow tanks anywhere in the boat we want. Plus we have oxygen to help keep the bait lively as well.

I have several openings in August and early September then I am guiding down on Kentucky Lake most of the month of September and right now those trips are booked. I will be back for the very good fall jig fishing on Shelbyville so keep your eyes peeled on my website for openings.  
[wwwLakeShelbyvilleGuide.com](http://wwwLakeShelbyvilleGuide.com).