

## Fall Crappie Lake Shelbyville Good As It Gets

By Steve Welch

Every year I tell my regulars how good the fall crappie bite is and it really is due to stable weather and water over the spring which can be very up and down on water levels and those pesky cold fronts can kill you.

Once we get past the lake turn over period the crappie will move back to the shallows just like they do in the spring. They do this for a different reason though they are not going to spawn but they are looking to fatten up on the gizzard shad that have also moved shallow.

We catch them with a slip bobber or a fixed bobber and a Deep Ledge jig under it with a Midsouth tube on it. The fixed bobber is for working stumps so I can reel it and pop it by the stump. The slip bobber is for throwing it into tight places in brush. Both have their purpose and are killer on shallow crappie.

Once we get into mid-month I put in my three person seating system I rigged up on my Yar-Craft. This allows three of us to set up on the nose and hover over mid depth brush with my custom made Norms crappie rods, some Deep Ledge Jigs and Midsouth tubes and everyone has the same advantage. They can't say well you are over the brush up on the nose and I am way back here in the back of the boat catching nothing. I want my clients to catch as many as I do so they will return. With this system I can actually tell my clients to hold their rod perfectly still and I will gently move the boat back and forth in the brush and get them a bite. The heavy 1/4oz. jigs allows you to do that.

We all have our favorite way to catch these tasty crappie and tight lining a jig is mine. I love the feel of the hard hit you get when they just hammer the jig. The fall is so much fun because the fish bunch up and you can catch a ton of them from one spot.

You can go out and buy about 150 different colors of plastic tubes or solid shad bodies. I stick with just a few colors that mimic both shad colors and visibility in various water colors. My favorite is a Midsouth tube called Smoke Glow. I can shoot the Berkley Crappie nibbles up into it and turn it three different colors. I use my Bait Pump to inject the nibbles and I use white, chartreuse or pink nibbles and since the Smoke Glow is clear it turns the color of the nibbles. Also the Smoke Glow will glow in the dark.

I also use chartreuse glow, red and chartreuse glow, black and chartreuse glow, white sparkle or light blue sparkle. That about covers it for all the water colors I need from stained to dirty to clear.

A few years ago we came up with the idea of a heavy jig with a small hook on it that was perfectly balanced to hang horizontally so you could fish it in any thick brush you wanted. The Deep Ledge Jig was born. We now make it in four different weights 1/4oz., 3/16oz., 1/8oz. and 3/32oz. We also make them with spinners on them in all four weights. We use the smallest 00 blade you can put on them so all you need is the flash when you swim it back and forth in the brush pile. I use the heavy 1/4oz. most of the time even in mid depths when you could get by with lighter. I use it because rather than jig it up and down I swim it back and forth trying to hit branches to get a reaction bite. Big fish seem to really hit this

jig harder than other jigs. I think they can see it better.

My fall dates are filling fast and at the time of this writing I only have ten openings left in October but I have plenty in November and those are really your best dates anyway. You need water temps in the mid-fifties to high forties. You can go to my website at [www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.com](http://www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.com) for openings.

My wife recently purchased a calendar for 2016 because many of you wanted to get your spring dates nailed down. Remember the walleye trips are from May 15th-June 15th give or take a few days depending on the water temps and lake levels. I am also going to be guiding down on Kentucky Lake from March 20th-April 20th. This way I will be there through the entire spawn and we will get to see some real pigs.