

Lake Shelbyville, Best Summer Crappie I Know Of

By Steve Welch

Once you learn about the thermocline and how to catch fish in it and slightly above it you have figured out how to fish for crappie on Lake Shelbyville my home lake.

I used to say the fall is the best crappie fishing we have all year and it is pretty good but it is July, August and early part of September that now gets the nod. We get our three or four person limit each and every day as soon as those water temps get up into the high seventies low eighties. I have strings of forty days straight or more limiting out.

Why is it so good? The thermocline sets up about mid- July at about 15-18 feet. Then all the fish in the lake take up residence at that depth. All you need is brush that is in deeper water with the top of it at about fifteen feet.

We use a slip bobber set up with fourteen pound Fireline Crystal braid and a quarter ounce weight a barrel swivel tied to fifteen pound fluorocarbon leader and a number four light wire hook and lastly a slip bobber big enough to hold it all up. I use the pre-tied bobber stops made by Thill. The string is smaller in diameter so it will go through the eyelets. I pull it as tight as I can get it with needle nose plyers then trim the ends off and then hit it with a lighter to seal the string. This set up will last all summer.

We use custom made rods that are eight feet in length with a good backbone to allow you to land just about anything. Why eight feet in length. The bobber stop can stay off the spinning reel once you learn how to flip your rig under hand with eight feet of line out. This way you don't get the bobber stop stuck on the line on the reel.

We throw a marker buoy on the brush then get back and use the wind to allow us to drift the slip bobbies by it. The movement of the minnows is critical.

Imagine a hundred crappie in the middle of the summer each and every day. We sometimes get a sixty fish limit from just one stop. The cool breeze you get on this huge lake makes you think it is a nice spring day.

These trips are also my best family friendly trips and I routinely have kids in the boat about every day. Action is the word and kids love this and who can't see a bobber go under then reel in their own fish. I love taking the kids and help making memories for their family.

My boat is set up for this summer fishing. I had this boat in mind for just this purpose and in my nine and half month season I am fishing slip bobbies about four months of it. I have a deep walleye boat with comfortable seats that line the length of the boat. It has no console to get in the way as it is a Yar-Craft 2095BTX tiller boat.

We went one step further and put in ports to plug in your minnow tank anywhere you want to fish. We added on board air all over the boat to keep your bait lively all day long. We also have a twenty pound oxygen tank to aid in keeping those minnows wired up.

This boat has the electronic set up that is second to none. The rear has a pair of Lowrance ten-inch hi-def units with GPS, sonar, side imaging and down scan. The front of the boat has a pair of eight-inch Lowrance HDS with GPS, sonar and downscan. All are networked together making it possible to see any transducer from any screen and add or delete waypoints from all the units at the same time.

With side imaging you set out sixty feet or more and see what is in the brush without ever fishing it. The branches look just like the real thing.

You must try this to see that crappie are not just caught in the spring and you will be hooked. Just give my guide service a call at 217-762-7257 or just go to www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.com