

May on Shelbyville Means Choices, Walleye, Crappie or Both

By Steve Welch

Last year we experienced something that I have never seen on Lake Shelbyville and that was perfect conditions for a walleye bonanza. This all started about three years ago. They introduced sauger into the lake and back that with great numbers of walleye from utilizing the rearing ponds to release bigger walleye into the lake. I have seen the sauger make a spawning run up the Kaskaskia and hopefully they will successfully spawn. Unlike the walleye who need more turbid water and struggle to reproduce. They are a put and take fishery.

Like I said last year conditions were perfect with little rainfall and water levels just enough to get the stumps on the flats and points successfully covered. This doesn't happen most years since Shelbyville is first and foremost a flood control lake and it bounces all over the place in the spring.

If we get normal rainfall this year, the numbers are there. The sauger have exploded and we have plenty of walleye. To catch these fish I tell anglers in my winter seminars to just go bass fishing. You say what, all you need to do is mark with your GPS as many stumps on points and flats with close proximity to deep water. March is when to do this since the lake is at winter pool and you can see these stumps.

Then you arm yourself with just a few baits like 1/8oz. Big Dudes, Sonar's or Gay blades or my 3/8oz. Candy stripers. I also like Blue Fox Vibrex spinners number 3 and of course a jig and twister or Charlie Brewer Slider. Tip it with a small piece of night crawler if you like. Pretty much all you need, location is much more critical. We then approach these stumps, much like a bass fisherman and make short cast running your bait along side the stump making several different angle casts.

May for walleye means get out there early. We normally launch before sunrise to take advantage of the walleyes keen eyesight and to reserve yourself a spot as this can get crowded with other anglers. My early start is for other reasons as well. I am trying to get three quick limits so we can go get three limits of crappie as well. Those are my tough choices to crappie fish the spawn or to get in on the walleye fishing's small window of opportunity. You see this run and gun pattern on these shallow stumps only lasts from mid May until July 4th. I have been crappie fishing by this time for three months.

I am a crappie fishing fool by nature and the spawn on Shelbyville is May. This is the month that the big pigs show themselves. If you are going to get a two-pound fish this is one of the best months. Shallow fishing with corks is the norm and nothing is cooler than a big crappie inhaling your jig in less than two-feet of water.

So all in all May is just about the coolest month we have and lots of choices at one of Illinois premier lakes. I now have a second boat to handle more trips and I have openings myself for walleye and white bass trips. The summer white bass season is approaching fast so if you want to catch hundreds of fish in a single day then you better get in touch with me. Just go to my website at www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.Com