

November Best Crappie Fishing Entire Year

By Steve Welch

Gone are my slip bobber rods and minnows. You don't need them anymore. A jig pole and some of my Deep Ledge Jigs and plastic bodies to put on them are all you need. I have in the boat just four rods to vertical fish with and this is all I will have until the end of April.

No jet skis or pleasure boats...all gone--just tranquility. The weather is cool but it doesn't bother me. I tell folks the crappie are a cold water species and they turn up the feeding and get bunched up. The absolute best crappie fishing of the year is November. We limit out each and every day and sometimes in just 90 minutes. Of course we then fish catch and release. A hundred plus is the norm and this is one of our best time frames for a wall mount.

By now I will have done 200 guide trips for 2014 and I still have about 30 to go. It has been a very good year. When asked why this year over the last few I simply say a cool summer and a spring with no floods.

My on-going success has a lot to do with repeat clients and my willingness to let them catch their own fish. I set my boat up so three clients can sit up on the nose of the boat in comfort all day. This way I have in-no-way an advantage. Plus this way I keep the boat right over the brush by nosing up to it and we can keep your bait at the right height because we can see it on my front locator.

If you pull alongside the brush and line your boat from one end to the other with clients you can't tell if they are in the brush or what depth they are fishing. Most times only the guy on the trolling motor is in the brush and pulling fish out one after another. I do this all summer but I place their baits at the right height by using a slip bobber and we then drift them from one end of the brush to the other so once again no advantage for me.

My equipment consists of a custom made ten-foot Norm's rod. A very stiff rod from butt to tip simply because I use a heavier jig than most. I believe in using my Deep Ledge Jig 1/4oz. because I can swim it back and forth in brush and over down trees at precisely the right depth. We try and hit branches and climb over them because you will get a reaction bite on the other side.

A slow falling, lighter jig does allow you to get bites as it falls into the brush but once in there you don't have the feel that you do with the heavier jig so you are hung up more. I have a very small number four hook on them so you can probe the thickest brush and not get hung up and if you do just straighten the hook. I don't like sickle hooks because they won't bend as easy and the fish get them too deep but to each his own. I have caught plenty of crappie all the way up to three-pounds with my tiny number four hook. Even caught a sixty-pound flathead this spring with that tiny hook.

I use Midsouth tubes 90% of the time and have for nearly thirty years. They make the best tubes on the market and I know the owners very well and have been to their home and factory. They have very good chartreuse colors and a ton to pick from plus a tube that will hold up.

I also use Lake Fork, Bobby Garland and many other solid body baits, especially if I want something bigger. The colors I use depends on the color of the water and the amount of sun

penetration for that day. Dark days I like my chartreuse, black or orange colors in both jig heads and plastics. Bright days I use white or pearl.

I will be guiding down on Kentucky Lake the first week of November and the end of October but I still have some openings left in November for Shelbyville so just go to my website at www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.com and check open dates.