

November Crappie Deep Ledge Jig Time By Steve Welch

Crappie fishing is a cold weather sport and they love to hit a crappie jig in cold weather. A couple of years ago my partner Alan Corzine and I kicked around the idea of developing a jig that was heavy enough to fish vertical in heavy brush and be able to bump it into branches on purpose and create reaction strikes from big crappie. An oversized head with inset eyes that were prism colored to reflect light and since they were inset the eyes would stay on and with a clear coat over the whole jig that would also insure that the eyes would stay on. I also wanted a small number four light wire hook to aid in fishing heavy cover without getting snagged. The Deep Ledge Jig was born. My partner is an engineer by trade so he did all the solid works design and sent them off to a machine shop to be cut on a C&C machine. We now have four different weights 1/4, 3/16, 1/8, and 3/32 and we have a spinner model for the 1/4 that uses the smallest willow leaf blade on the market and this is my big fish jig that I use on Kentucky Lake. We offer all the jigs in either number four or number two hooks or even number one so folks can use them for walleye if they like.

It is the 1/4oz. that I use 90% of the time even fishing in four-feet of water when you could get by with a lighter jig. Crappie can key in on the big profile better. I preach at all my seminars in the winter on how good these jigs work and for folks not to be afraid to use a big jig and tube or solid body bait for crappie. My crappie baits run about two to three inches and I want a big bait. The shad in the fall or big so the crappie are looking for a big meal. But it is the weight of these jigs that make them work you can bump into brush and crawl it over a branch and once on the back side the crappie just hammer it. I know they hit this jig harder than any other I use because they can see it and since we always use braided line with no stretch the bite feels even harder.

I have a special seat system in my boat that allows three anglers to set on the nose of the boat and we all vertical fish a jig over the front of the boat watching their own individual jig on my Lowrance Hds 10-inch screen. This way I can keep an eye on my clients so I know if they are fishing the right depth over these brush piles. For years I was guilty of just pulling up on a brush pile and dropping my jig down in it right to the bottom in the thickest part of that brush pile. I learned from fishing Kentucky Lake how many times the biggest fish on that brush pile take up residence right on top and by going to the bottom you missed that fish all together. Don't get me wrong I still fish the thickest parts of that brush pile on bottom I just don't do it first.

November and early December are by far my favorite two months to crappie fish. The crappie are bunched up on brush in the ten to fifteen foot range and even slightly deeper and by using a long 11 foot crappie rod you can fish the length of the pole for the most part and we just fish vertically down in brush. I tell folks you feel a solid pop on the rod you have a half-second to pop back and then simply swing that fat crappie in the boat.

I have tons of brush piles to just bounce between and the last time I checked I had just over two thousand waypoints on my Lowrance so we won't run out of places to catch crappie. We tend to fish a brush pile about ten minutes then move to the next. My feeling on this is by that time you will caught the biggest fish off that brush pile and by staying and pounding it more you are not going to leave enough fish on it for it to restock.

The weather in November isn't bad if you have coveralls and warm boots. We almost have the lake to ourselves and the pelicans and eagles are soaring over head to add to the serenity. So come on out and give fall crappie fishing a try and you won't be disappointed. You can go to my website at www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.Com for availability and you can go to my on-line store from the website to purchase the Deep Ledge Jigs.