

A Little Twist to Spoon Fishing

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A couple of years ago I decided to make myself a better spoon fishermen. I put one in my hand and fished it all summer long. I learned to fish several retrieves and some different rigging techniques. No other bait mimics a falling baitfish better than a spoon.

The big picture came together once I started really finding schools of bait on bottom or just off it and concentrating on staying with the bait rather than worry if I was near fish.

Some days I cast along side a deep channel and let my bait go to bottom and pop it off bottom slowly reeling it back to me. Some days I only slightly pop it off bottom and some days I might pop it about four or five feet up then just let it fall back to the bottom on a slightly slack line. You must stay in touch with the spoon or you will miss the strike.

Then there are days that I hover over baitfish and fish the spoon vertically, jiggging it just enough to get a fish's attention. It takes good electronics and the ability to interpret what they say. My boat is rigged to the nines with quality electronics. I have a 997 Humminbird side-imaging system on my dash to scan out to each side of my boat to find schools of bait. I have a Lowrance GPS/ depth finder on my dash with lake mapping to help me find river channels and sheer drop-offs. I have another Lowrance GPS/depth finder on the nose of my boat to share the waypoints and info my Lowrance on my dash has stored in it. I am still a big Lowrance man so I still believe the down sonar on the Lowrance is still the best thing out there.

I decide to master the art of the jiggging spoon to make me a better white bass fisherman, but it has opened my eyes to how many other species key in on this wounded looking bait fish imitator. I have caught huge blue catfish and channel catfish and really big buffalo with this rig.

The idea was to keep in touch with the deep schools of whites if they should move down the channel on me or suspend out in deep water, as they tend to do. I could throw the spoon a mile and whites couldn't resist it free falling through the school towards bottom. I modified it a couple of years ago and it has become my go to bait all summer long.

I simply took a dressed treble hook, or a treble decorated with some white buck tail and tied it about a foot above the spoon. Now I have tripled my fish catches. If the whites aren't hungry enough to eat the big seven-eights ounce spoon they will pounce on the dressed treble.

Then another thing happened. Huge buffalo love this tiny little dressed treble. Yeah you heard me buffalo on a lure. I have become so successful at catching these huge and I mean huge fish, pushing forty pounds. Clients actually have me switch from the whites over to vertical jiggging the buffalo. Two-minute course on how to jig the spoon and you are ready. We have had days of twenty-five fish with the smallest a mere fifteen pounds. Normally we never even spend more than a couple of hours doing this as it is just a back up on a slow day. Once we get into hot weather this pattern works every day. I brag I can get you a fish over fifteen pounds in less than ten minutes, they have become so predictable.

Clients have come to love this so much that my buddies all give me hard time for making money on a so-called trash fish. They call me the Buffie King. My clients love this so much that my DVD how to videos will soon include a white bass slash buffalo combo. It should be done sometime this summer.

Anglers young and old, male or female love the hard fight of a big fish, doesn't matter what specie it is. Believe me these buffalo can fight. They can reel off fifty yards of line before you can turn them around and jump; man they can clear three feet of water. Kids go nuts for this and I have several records for the kids getting the biggest fish of their life in my boat.

This probably will not work on every lake but Lake Shelbyville is full of big buffalo. You get out there early in the morning during the summer and they are out there porpoising by the hundreds like huge dolphins.

So for those of you who just want a tug in the hottest month of the year this really works and will get you through those dog days of summer.