

CRAPPIE **NOW!** **DIGITAL MAGAZINE**

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Crappie.com

October 2018 - Issue #92



Tidal Crappie and Fall Ledges



Features

Advanced Seasonal Structure: Fall Ledges....4

by Tim Huffman

October is a good time for crappie fishermen. Temperatures are falling, the air is crisp and the bite good.



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by Vic Attardo

Tidal crappie presents special fishing situations but the rewards for doing it right is worthwhile.



Best Lines for Crappie Fishing....14

by Darl Black

Picking a line for crappie fishing can be confusing: mono, braid, clear, high-vis, 4-pound test, 8-pound? Suggestions from the experts can help make choosing much easier.



A.C.T. Hot Time at Grenada Lake....22

by Ron Wong

The final tournament for this calendar year for the American Crappie Trail was a big success at Grenada Lake, Mississippi



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Opening Cast

The fall season is upon us and the crappie bite is in full swing. I love this time of year. One can catch them shallow, over deep water and on brush piles and laydowns.

The fall season prompts the crappie to feed on the maturing minnows and shad, fattening up for the winter. They stay with the shad wherever they roam in the lake or river.

Typically, the shad feed near the surface, around structures in the water... anywhere the zooplankton are prominent.

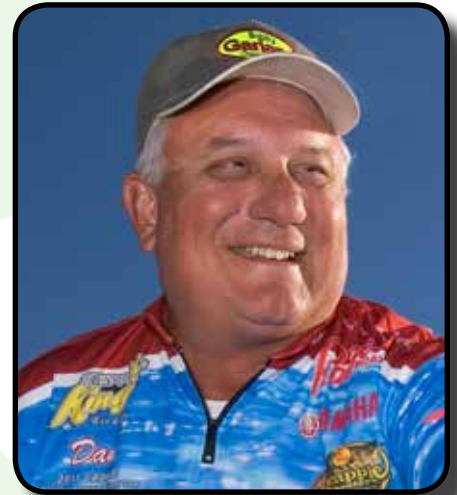
Many different techniques will work, such as spider rigging, pulling crankbaits and jigs, shooting docks, vertical one-pole jigging and casting. This pattern begins after the first or second major cool down. Unbelievable for 2018, we have gotten our first cool down in late August. I believe this will prolong catching these tasty treats.

I like to use Road Runners with a Bobby Garland plastic in the appropriate color smothered in this company's shad scent and if necessary tipped with a minnow. The style I like is the new Slab Hunt'R Minnow and the Pile Diver. When in doubt of the correct color, use the Monkey Milk or Glacier colors. I like to use a contrasting color for the heads such as chartreuse and white, Orange or blue and white all with a gold blade.

Lastly, fall fishing is normally a quiet time on the water as most fishermen also hunt and they are in the woods. Also, as the water cools, water sports subside and quiet, waters lead to awesome fishing days, even on the weekends. God's creations burst forth all around you.

Always remember to take a kid fishing!

God Bless and Good Fishing,
Dan Dannenmueller, CrappieNow Publisher



Cover Photo:
John King displays a stringer of tidal crappie.
Vic Attardo photo.

Seasonal Structure

by
Tim
Huffman

Ledges are structures that can work year round. They can be creeks, rivers or ditches and smaller creeks running into bigger ones. Ledges are the focus point but natural covers, manmade covers and associated flats are all part of the system.

Why

Fish follow the ledges in and out of different depths of water. In the fall they will move back and forth into shallow water chasing shad. Cool nights, shorter daylight times and cooling water determines when and where the baitfish and crappie will be.

Strategy

Fish follow shad in the fall so water temperatures should determine whether a fisherman starts shallow, deep or somewhere in between. As the water cools, the fish move shallower. The shad follow the ledges, too, so they determine specific crappie locations. The only exception to ledge domination is when the shad move up on the flats and crappie follow. These are usually up in creeks or coves.

CrappieNow Publisher and tournament fisherman, Dan Dannenmueller says, "Feeder creeks are a good place to start in the fall. There will be ledges and flats. Search the ledges and look for wood, intersections and forks. When they are combined with shad, it will be a great spot.

"Electronics is a key component of fall fishing. It will show shad, crappie, ledges and cover. Any good unit will show the primary things you need to see. If you have and know how to use advanced electronics, it speeds that search up. It's easy to find a ledge, find a brushpile on that ledge, then interpret what is on the brushpile and at



Dan Dannenmueller with a nice crappie caught on plastic tipped with a minnow. He says changing up sizes, colors and sometimes adding flash, can lead to more fish.

what depth.

"Big fish don't have to move too far. They can live their whole life in a creek or river. They may adjust their depths for the conditions and food, but will stay in the general area. When they are hungry they eat and fall is one period when I believe they feed more often to fatten up for winter."



Dannenmueller says multiple poles in the water is important this time of year. It's not unusual to find a good brushpile on a ledge, spider rig baits into it and leave them there. Sometimes they prefer the baits still or backing away from the brush. It can trigger strikes when they think the bait is leaving.

Stumps can be good, too. The crappie will often hang on the top of stumps waiting for baitfish to swim by. Several methods will work, but again, spider rigging is hard to beat.

Straight spider rigging is a top pick in the fall. Fish may be at more than one depth and they can be scattered if not holding to cover. Any speed, or total stop, can be used as needed.

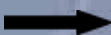
Dannenmueller says, "I like a straight minnow on top and plastic tipped with a minnow on bottom. I use a sinker in between, usually 1/2-ounce. I use a snap swivel on the main line for quick change of pre-tied rigs. I like the medium size plastics

Electronics is a key element to successful fall fishing. A simple unit will work but an advanced one like this speeds up the process.

but in the fall the tiny Itty Bit has worked well, probably because it mimics the size of the baitfish. Another trick is to use scent with a minnow. Stubby Steve's is a natural scent and it helps hold the minnow on a hook so it won't get knocked off as easily. But any good scent causes a fish to hold on longer to any bait to give more time to recognize a bite and set the hook.

"It's not unusual to find fish in 10 to 14 feet of water. This depth makes it easier to fish without spooking them. Also, the middle depths are easier to fish than deep water."

Last tip, don't stay too long in an area if you're not catching fish. Fall crappie are often on the move and so should you. Once found, it's time to work the area, watching



FALL LEDGES

Having bait rigs pre-tied is a big advantage and saves time.



for ledges, cover, shad and other factors holding fish. If fish are on ledges, pay close attention to depths. Crappie can usually be caught in similar locations at the same depth.

Factors

Seasonal: Any season is good for fishing a ledge. In the fall, look for crappie moving up shallower to flats just off the ledge. But, they may be in the wood cover along the ledge. Only by looking and fishing will you know for sure.

Cold Front: Not too many cold fronts in the fall but they will bother fish just like during other seasons. The fish will be more difficult to catch.

Sun: Ledges provide shade so don't ignore that in periods with high sun penetration.

Rain/Clouds: Usually not a big factor except shad might get shallower and fish may scatter.

Current: Never a good thing if it's

relatively strong.

Wind: Can cause boat control issues when spider rigging.

Recreational Boating: Usually not a problem in the fall.

 - Tim Huffman

Dannenmueller's Equipment

Garmin electronics

Driftmaster individual rod holders

BnM 16-foot BGJP poles

Bait rigs hand-tied, similar to Capps/
Coleman rigs

Jigheads: Bobby Garland MoGlo; and
TTI-Blakemore Road Runner.

Sinker ½- ounce (1/4 to 1-ounce)

Plastics. A variety with two top picks
being Bobby Garland Minnow Mind'R
and Swim'R. Favorite colors include
Cajun Cricket (multicolor with orange,
chartreuse, other), Glacier (milky
shad color), Sweet Tee with Lemon
(light brown and chartreuse) and
Lights Out (black-chartreuse).

Gamma 10-pound test main line

Scent: Stubby Steve's and Bobby
Garland Slab Jam



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Tidal Crappie

by Vic Attardo

Everyone knows that time and tides wait for no man. Well, apparently crappie, the wonderful fish we love to catch and fillet, are as scientifically informed as the human race, maybe even better.

When it comes to estuary crappie -- those fish living in brackish backwaters affected by the daily dualistic pull of gravity -- are well attuned to the pleasant, and unpleasant, affects of time and tides.

Crappie, of course, don't wear Fitbits, but they are keenly aware of the nourishment they need to survive and the time and place the kitchen is open, especially those kitchens situated in tidal flows.

“add a fresh cut square of crappie meat to the hook point above the soft plastic”

You see, when the kitchen is closed in an estuary, it is really closed. No waiter brings food and the table the crappie previously occupied is not even suitable for sitting. Indeed when the tide goes low, the table is totally empty -- the plates, napkins, silverware, wine glasses all tak-en away. I've seen tidal locales that during one stretch of the flow were filled with chowing crappie and then, a while later, as the tide made its diurnal low, were nothing but a slick of sand and mud.

That's the unpleasant affect of time and tides.

But oh, the good times.

When the tide is about half way to high, into the high, and then the first hour or two as it again rushes out, depending on the site, the crappie have a ball. And so can you.

First the brackish water weeds start to

stand erect, then they sway in one direction, stand nearly at attention for a bit, then turn and sway in the other direction. All sorts of things move with them. Things so small you and I can't see them, unless we wore a microscope grade face mask.

It's amazing how many of those bits of life remained clinging to the weed stalks when the stalks were down and almost dry. Now the stalks swell and the little things go crazy.

Soon small fishes follow along, clouds of fishes in parade silver and white.

That's all it takes to make the crappie come back.

Most were in a deep channel next to the brackish flats. Don't even try to get them to strike when the tide is low and not moving. Great crappie anglers have been trying to do that for years, with very little success. Yes, there is sometimes a suicidal fish but the suicide rates are low.

Then as the water floods into the flats, swirls around docks, fills the holes left by big engine rumblings, works along shoreline reeds and the other greeneries of the brackish flow, it's the right time and the right tide, both for crappie and you.

John King and I planned to fish the tidal rivers of the upper Chesapeake Bay. The rivers are a labyrinth, a network, a warren -- any way you can think of it -- of tidal flows that reach back into the land away from the main bay. Some areas of these rivers never experience the right mixture of salt and fresh water that would make them "brackish" enough to suit crappie. Basic-ly the closer you are to the bay, the least likely this is. But there are areas where the fresh water emitting from tributary creeks, even just run-off, is enough to turn the water chemistry into fa-vorable crappie locations.



King and I have spent years marking those spots and learning when the crappie will make their hungry appearance. Just as tidal bass fishermen have to “keep ahead of the tides” to optimize their catch, when we are looking for a big day we also have to be cognizant of the time, tidal movements and key locations to score. Sometimes we’ll fish a small area hard for an hour, doing a number on the crappie, then we’ll have to move a considerable distance in the same creek, or even to another creek across the bay, to continue catching. And this is not just on the Chesapeake system but also the Delaware River tidal area and a number of tidally influenced water along the Atlantic coast.

And there are a few more variables that make this crappie fishing the most tactically challenging I know.

The amount of water in a creek just isn’t influenced by time changes, it is also influenced by the gravitational forces of the moon. Full and new moons push more water than small moons. It’s the same in the back creeks as it is along the coastal shores. Now don’t get the impression you need the “extra”

We followed the tide into a creek profuse with docks, houses, moored boats and winding ways: so different from the backwater creek we fished first.

water of a full or new moon to catch tidal influenced crappie. In fact, large flows can be a deterrent to good crappie fishing -- things like the water is speeding by a creek point or back-creek dock so quickly that it doesn’t suit the fish, or makes presentations difficult. Sometimes a half moon tide is better.

If there is already enough to spin your head consider one other factor in tidal crappie fishing that can change everything -- the wind. Not only does the tide move water so does the breeze. If, for instance, a southwest wind sucks water out of the backbays, consider what three days of a strong southwest wind might do. It actually prevents the tides from doing their thing. When you think there should be enough water in the creeks, based on the moon, the tides and whether the Baltimore Ravens won or lost their Sunday game, there





is the wind to consider.

One morning when King and I planned to fish, everything was right. (Why take you through a day when it wasn't?)

We had nailed down the tides. The moon was approaching full. The wind had not been much of a factor for a week. And there hadn't been much rain to muddy the creeks. (Did I mention the rain? Oh well.)

We launched, rose out to a wide bay with three connecting creeks and waited a short time until the channel markers in the bay tilted in the direction that showed water flowing back to the flats. King turned to me.

"Do you think it safe to get in there yet?"

I looked a covey of mallard ducks feeding along the reedy shoreline. They were weaving in and out of the stalky edge.

"The ducks think so," I said.

We raised the engine slightly put the boat on plane and zoomed over a sand flat

Short five-and-a-half foot rods teamed with a reel with four-pound test, a slip bobber, a 1/16 ounce ball head jig and a soft plastic minnow or grub will do the trick in many tidal-influenced spots.

that required crossing before entrance into the creek.

One look down the circuitous path with its mild twists and wooden piers in back spaces told us that nature may have smiled on us. The piers weren't exposed and they weren't flooded. The water came up only halfway to the outer pillars and would be rising.

Considering all the other critical essentials involved in tidal crappie fishing, the tackle was the least complex. For this spot, and many others, short five-and-a-half foot rods teamed with a reel with four-pound test,



Add a fresh cut square of crappie meat to the hook point above the soft plastic. It makes all the difference in having the crappie hang on, instead of just pecking.

a slip bobber, a 1/16 ounce ball head jig and a soft plastic of minnow or grub shape would do the trick. A dock shooting rod is good. The soft plastic could be silver/blue, rainbow trout, black/white or monkey milk, often it didn't matter which (unless the water was a little cloudy) and if one color didn't hit a crappie in a few minutes you simply ran through the best until you hit, or your partner hit and then you were both on it.

One thing I add to my technique years ago, taught me by a wise crappie angler, was to add a fresh cut square of crappie meat to the hook point above the soft plastic. It makes all the difference in have the crappie hang on, instead of just pecking.



- Vic Attardo

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Crappie Basics #172

Spider Rig

October crappie, whether in the north or south, will be in general areas where they were in the spring. They may not be as deep, but they will be following shad and the shad will go shallower until the water gets too cool. Many experts prefer to spider rig in the fall because fish are moving and following shad, so multiple baits are an advantage. However, don't ignore cover in areas where shad are found. Keep moving until you find fish, then work hard on that area. TH

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Best Lines for Crappie Fishing

by Darl Black



The year was 1959 when Berkley's Trilene and DuPont's Stren were launched. Although there had been extruded nylon fishing lines prior to these two brands, both Trilene and Stren were far superior to anything else on the market. Nylon monofilament reigned supreme for approximately 30 years before fishing lines comprised of other materials found acceptance.

Today the marketplace offers several different types of line, each with specific characteristics that may or may not be beneficial to the crappie angler depending on what you desire in a fishing line. An excellent place to collect opinions on lines is at a gathering of crappie anglers, such as

If you are someone who believes crappies might be spooked by a high-vis line, then you may want to go with clear monofilament, fluorocarbon or braid with a fluorocarbon leader.

PA Crappie Camp held on Pymatuning Lake in NW Pennsylvania during May. However, before hearing opinions, we need to identify the types of lines out there.

The Lines

Monofilament is extruded from a single nylon base material. Copolymer is a blend of two nylon base materials to achieve certain

characteristics.

Monofilament and copolymer are both a single strand extruded line, although a copolymer is usually viewed as an “improved” version of standard monofilament. Both lines have considerable stretch (good shock resistance), are buoyant and can be colored (i.e. green, orange, hi-vis, etc.).

Although it is an extruded line that looks like monofilament/copolymer line, fluorocarbon is not nylon; instead it made of carbon molecules. With greater density than nylon lines, fluorocarbon sinks. It also offers great abrasion resistance, has less elasticity than nylon, cannot be colored and is invisible in water.

Referred to as superlines in some circles, the third type of line is made from gel spun polyethylene fibers that are twisted or woven around one another. This line is commonly referred to as a “braid.” Some braids have a coating to make them slick. Braided lines are extremely strong for their diameter, exhibit basically zero stretch, have zero memory and float on water. However, they are not as abrasion resistant as either nylon or fluorocarbon lines.

The Opinions

Ken Smith is a long-time crappie angler with impressive credentials in educating anglers. Given that he is not a tournament angler, guide or pro angler representing a particular tackle company, Ken spends an incredible number of days fishing for crappies every year.

Ken uses one of two techniques all the time. He either: (a) casts light jigs or jig-bobber combo to visible cover; or (b) engages in Hang Gliding. Hang Gliding is an electronics-directed vertical slow-troll jig presentation which Ken developed on his home waters where the number of fishing rods is limited.

“I never use braid for crappie fishing. Don’t see the need to,” continues Ken. “My choices are very simple. For casting, I use a high visibility copolymer line of four or six-pound-test from Vicious, Mister Crappie or Gamma brands.

“Recently I’ve experimented with



Dale Black, President of Gamma Lines (Black Knight Industries), enjoys pitching jigs with floats, using a 6-pound high-vis copolymer line.

2-pound Gamma Panfish for extremely light weight jig presentations. Yes, I do retie more often to avoid possible abrasion in the knot area, but if you need to go to a fine diameter line, this is the one to use.”

For his Hang-Gliding technique Ken employs 8-pound copolymer exclusively. “Hang-Gliding involves wrapping ½-ounce egg sinker directly on the line, with tag end forming an 18 to 24 inch leader from the sinker to 1/32-ounce jig. Then I lower it straight down so the sinker bumps around wood cover as I move the boat on the trolling motor. I lose a lot of jigs but also catch my share of crappies. Line rubbing the rough edge of a molded egg sinker will easily weaken a thin line; therefore I rely on thicker 8-pound nylon line.”

Having used nylon line for years to catch





There is no single line that is best for all crappie fishing techniques. Weigh the pros and cons of each type, then choose the best one for the presentation you plan to employ.

untold number of crappies, Ken sees no reason to switch to more expensive fluorocarbon or superlines.

Bryan Stuyvesant is a bass-chaser turned crappie angler, and one of the new high-tech anglers always looking into the latest advances in fishing equipment and line. "My crappie fishing includes casting jigs, bobber fishing and dock shooting. In these presentations, I incorporate all three types of lines – braid, fluorocarbon and mono – for various purposes."

Bryan continues: "For casting jigs in

Author Note

When I started guiding for crappies a few years back, and supplying rods and reels to customers, I re-evaluated my personal line choices based on the likelihood of customer usage. When grub and tube fishing for bass, I'm big on fluorocarbon. But I realized that trying to spool fluorocarbon line on small spinning reels would be asking for trouble. Fluorocarbon is stiffer than mono and it wants to spring off tiny spools even in pound-test as light a 4-pound test.

Based on my personal experience with braid, I saw other potential problems. Fine diameter braid will always find a way to wrap around the tip of a rod or tie itself into a knot on the spool. If braid does that for an experienced angler, what a mess I would have if I offered it on reels to less experienced clients.

I settled on spooling a 4-pound high visibility copolymer line on all my matching light action B'n'M 7 foot spinning rods, and I've been very pleased with it. I've tested swimming a 1/16-ounce jig on a rod spooled with braid and a fluorocarbon leader versus fishing the same jig on a rod with 4-pound copolymer without discerning any difference in detecting strikes.

I do, however, use braid on crappie rods that are not used for casting, including crappie trolling/pulling rods and deepwater drop-shot rods. In situations with a lot of line out, braid will certainly help with improving both sensitivity and hooksets.

shallow water, I use a B'n'M Sam Heaton 7' spinning rod spooled with 10-pound Seaguar Smackdown – a slick finish braid – and a 6-pound test leader of Seaguar Invizx fluorocarbon. The coated braid allows super

long casts while increasing sensitivity. The fluorocarbon leader makes sure crappies can't see the line."

His B'n'M Sharpshooter rod is spooled with the same braid and a short fluorocarbon leader, too. "That slick coated Smackdown comes off the spool smoothly and quickly – best line I've tried for dock shooting."

Stuyvesant does a change-up on his longer and somewhat stiffer bobber rod. "I use stop-knots for slip-bobber fishing. The problem is stop-knots do not stay put on a slick coated braid. Therefore, I switch to a reel spooled with Trilene XL mono.

"That works great for open water bobber fishing, but in the early spring I'm fishing minnows under a bobber in the mats of last year's vegetation and pads. Hook a pad stem when using monofilament line and you are going to break the line trying to get loose. So in this instance, I use an uncoated green colored braid straight to the hook."

Stuyvesant purchased all the same model reels with extra spools for his crappie rods. In this way he can spool different types of lines on different spools and switch them out as needed. For example, when fishing jigs in deep water, Stuyvesant selects a spool of coated braid that is bright yellow in order to help him see light strikes easier.

Dale Black is a relatively recent convert to crappie fishing. After acquiring Gamma Fishing Line several years ago, crappie anglers

said they really liked his regular copolymer line but what was needed was a high visibility line. The result is Gamma Panfish in Optic Yellow, now Dale's favorite for drifting and bobber fishing.

"The North End of Pymatuning has several major stump fields. My favorite way to fish these areas is by drifting a jig under a light breeze – sometimes with a float, sometimes without. Either way, using high visibility 6-pound-test that floats rather than sinks, enables me to see the slightest line twitch indicating a bite."

When casting or pitching a slip float-n-jig to weed or wood cover with his 10-foot B'n'M Russ Bailey Signature Rod, Dale uses high-vis copolymer. "With nylon-based line the stretch enables me to sling-shot the jig off a snag. You can't do that with a no-stretch braid."

On his deepwater jig rod, Dale spools six-pound fluorocarbon. "Fishing mid-depth or near the bottom with a jig calls for a line that sinks and that is extra sensitive – that's fluorocarbon. Because this line sinks, the bow that often occurs in a floating nylon line is basically eliminated thereby increasing the efficiency of a hookset."

"I don't use braid in crappie fishing," concludes Dale. "I know some anglers use braid for pulling crankbaits or long-lining, but those are not techniques I use."

 - *Darl Black*



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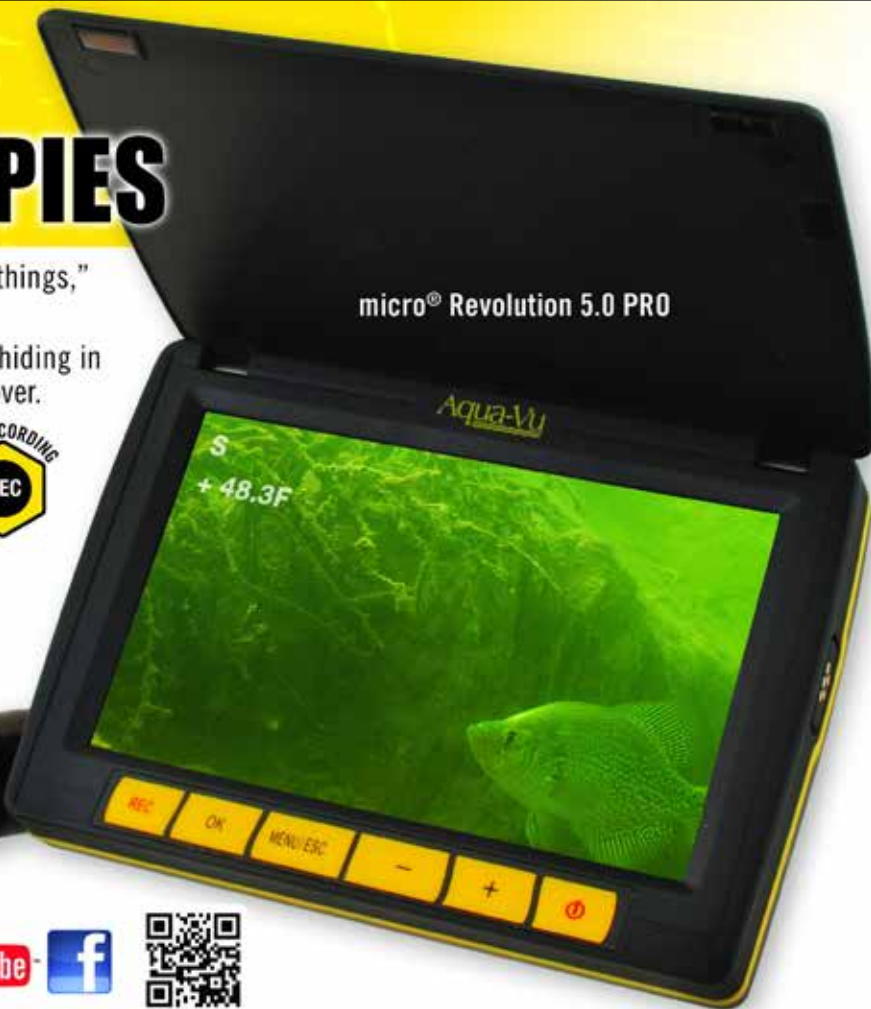
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Lake D'Arbonne, LA	March 28-30, 2019
Ross Barnett, MS	April 26-27, 2019
Grenada, MS	May 17-18, 2019
Kentucky Lake, TN	June 21-22, 2019
Truman, MO	July 27-28, 2019
Ouachita River, LA	Sept 13-14, 2019
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Crappie Basics #173

Get Shallow

“A good tip for October is to just get out and crappie fish. My home lake is Truman, so in the fall we dip the trees. The fish are starting to feed up. They move up the creeks and get shallow just like they do during the spawn. I like to sling a jig under a bobber up in the shallows. My favorite colors here are black-chartreuse, orange-chartreuse and blue-white.” Mark Huey



2019
Crappie USA

Tournament Trail Schedule

Crappie USA

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Barkley/Kentucky Lakes, Kuttawa, KY	11/02/18 - 11/03/18
Lake Wylie, Belmont, NC.....	03/01/19 - 03/02/19
Lakes Marion & Moultrie, Santee, SC.....	03/15/19 - 03/16/19
KY & Barkley Lakes, Paris, TN.....	03/22/19 - 03/23/19
Lake Cumberland, Somerset, KY.....	04/05/19 - 04/06/19
Lake Barkley, Cadiz, KY.....	04/12/19 - 04/13/19
Green River Lake, Columbia, KY.....	04/19/19 - 04/20/19
Grand Lake/St. Marys, St. Marys, OH.....	04/26/19 - 04/27/19

www.crappieusa.com

by Noel Fernandez

“October is the time to look shallow if they are not deep,” says Noel Fernandez. “The fish will usually be shallow early and stay there. Later, they will move deeper.

“You have to move around a lot when you’re not catching fish. Also, change colors and jig size. Just changing from a pumpkin head to a white head might mean the difference in getting bites.

“Experiment with baits a lot. I use a tiny open snap (no swivel) to make changing baits easy. I also use three or four type spinners above my jig. I put them on my line, like a gold willow leaf blade. Sometimes they like it and sometimes they don’t.”

Noel Fernandez, Missouri, has been fishing tournaments for decades. His sponsors include Stump Jumper, Bobby Garland and Crappietown



1st Annual Texas Jack-n-Jill Crappie Classic Tournament

Team Reeve announced today that the 1st Annual Texas Jack N Jill Crappie Classic Tournament will be held November 3, 2018 on Lake O' the Pines. Team Reeve has teamed up with the Crappie Anglers of Texas, Crappiemasters, the Magnolia Crappie Club of Mississippi, the Capitol Crappie Club of Missouri, and the Central Arkansas Crappie Association to bring this first-of-its-kind tournament to Texas. Teams composed of one male and one female member will compete for cash and prizes, and all sponsor proceeds will benefit the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition (NOCC). Tournament hours are 7:30 am - 2:30 pm and angler teams must be in the weigh-in line by 3:30 pm at the Johnson Creek Park Pavilion. This tournament is open to the general public and 100% of the \$100 per couple entry fee will go to the anglers.



“As an ovarian cancer survivor, it was important for me to try and bring awareness of the signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer to a wider audience of women, and men”, said Rhonda Reeve, Tournament Chair and member of Team Reeve. “The NOCC is on the forefront of raising awareness for ovarian cancer and has been instrumental in supporting the discovery of an early screening test for this deadly disease.”

For rules and entry forms go to www.jacknjillclassic.com. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor or have raffle items to donate email rhonda@reeveaugustine.com.

Hot Time at Grenada Lake

by Ron Wong



Daytime temperatures of mid-90's greeted 121 teams at Grenada Lake for the final American Crappie Trail tournament for 2018. Tournament talk during registration was all about catching a lot of fish but not being able to catch bigger fish. Most everyone was saying catching crappie was not a problem, but lots of undersize fish were being caught. At Grenada, a crappie must be 12 inches to be a legal-size fish. Actually, this is a great sign that the lake incurred an excellent spawn the past two years.

An all time high of 121 teams participated in the tournament with a record total purse payout of \$80,175 in prize and cash. This is the largest total payout of a regular season

Winners of the American Crappie Trail at Grenada, MS, Stephen Sullivan and Jamie Roberson.

crappie tournament ever. In just two short years, the American Crappie Trail has grown the competitive crappie fishing scene to unheard of heights. 24th place paid \$850, which was won in a tie by the teams of Tony and Mike Sheppard and Kevin Hawkins with Ben McGurt.

Stephen Sullivan and Jamie Roberson took first place winning a Ranger RT188C boat rigged with a 115 Evinrude motor. The



team of Stuart Baum and Steve Perotti won the big fish award with a crappie weighing 2.65 pounds. This fish was worth \$2315.

So, how did some of the top teams catch their fish? Stephen Sullivan and Jamie Roberson, members of the Magnolia Crappie Club, won the tournament with 14 crappies weighing 28.17 pounds. They fished the mid portion of the Skuna river using double minnow rigs and a combo double rig (one hook with just a minnow and the other a Mid-South crappie tube in blue/chartreuse or lime/chartreuse colors rigged on a Roadrunner head also tipped with a minnow). They said 75% of their fish came on the double minnow rig which was fished in 5 to 8 feet of water in an old slough that was laden with stumps and stake beds. Light winds afforded the ability to fish very slowly and they stayed in the same area both days of the tournament. On the second day, the wind picked up but with the use of a Silent Stalker attached to their

Many slabs were caught during the tournaments. John and Autumn Williams had a few big fish.

War Eagle boat, they were able to fish silently through their area. Several tips that helped them in the tournament were: using 16 foot B'n'M BGJP rods and two 18 foot poles in the front, the War Eagle boat had two 60 quart live wells which kept the fish healthy and longer fishing rods to put the offerings farther away from the boat. Stephen and Jamie caught over a hundred fish daily while using around 4 pounds of minnows each day.

Finishing in 3rd place was the team of Kevin Rogers and Matt Beckman winning \$6,200. They fished in a creek channel that feeds the Skuna river. Using a double rig with a $\frac{3}{4}$ ounce egg sinker, each hook was a $\frac{1}{32}$ -ounce orange jig head rigged with a



Bobby Garland Grenada gold colored Stroll'R. Each lure was tipped with a small minnow. They found the fish to bite better power trolling at 0.9 miles per hour. On Friday, first day of the tournament, they caught over 100 fish by power trolling. The double rigs were fished on 16-foot Jenko spider trolling rods. This was the first tournament that Kevin has fished without his Dad, Charlie, in a number of years. He said it was a pleasure to fish with Matt as he is his protégé. Moving forward, they will become tournament partners. To see how Kevin and Matt caught their fish during the ACT tournament at Grenada, go to Bobby Garland TV on the YouTube channel as Kevin & Matt's performance is there now.

Finishing in 5th place winning \$3,700 was the team of Jason and Parker Eichwurtzle, members of the Magnolia Crappie club. This father and son team were happy to finish this high against so many good teams. Parker who just turned 13 years old, has a passion for fishing since he first started at around 4 years old. He fished his first tournament when he was 10 years old. Jason said as he was growing up, he fished with his Dad and now the roles are reversed. Jason told us, "It is an unbelievable feeling and to see how he (Parker) has grown up". They caught their fish at Grenada in the Skuna river by pushing a homemade 1/8-ounce bladed jig tipped with a big minnow fished on the bottom in 8-11 feet of water on Friday. They used a 1-ounce weight as they moved at .08 to 1 mph both days. On Saturday, because the spillway gates were opened the night before, their fish moved up in the water column in the same area, so they caught as shallow as 2 feet using 16-foot Denali rods.

With the 2018 tournament season now over, the American Crappie Trail is turning its' attention to the first tournament of 2019 at Guntersville Lake on February 15 – 16, 2019. Soon afterwards, the 2018 Championship tournament will be held on D'Arbonne Lake, March 28-30. This will be a very unique tournament as it is a daily elimination tournament.

 - Ron Wong

Grenada ACT Top Ten
28.17 S. Sullivan-Jamie Roberson
27.94 Matt Saterfiel-P Hemphill
27.50 Kevin Rogers-M Beckman
27.30 Robert Ward-G Crenshaw
27.16 Jason & Parker Eichwurtzle
26.59 Tommy Moss-B Cahoun
26.54 Daniel Porter-J Aldridge
26.40 Tony Hughes-Jeff Riddle
26.38 Ronnie Capps-S. Coleman
26.32 K Watson-Drew Morgan





Crappie in Foil

Each month I highlight an ingredient in my recipe. This month that ingredient isn't edible but a major contributor to your success when grilling tasty crappie fillets.

History of Foil

We take it for granted now but aluminum foil hasn't been around all that long. First there was tin foil, and many of us still call aluminum foil "tin" foil much like we call aluminum cans "tin" cans.

Tin foil was marketed commercially from the late 1800s into the early 20th century. Aluminum was first used to replace tin in 1910, when the first aluminum foil rolling plant began operating in Switzerland. The first use of aluminum foil in the United States was in 1913 for wrapping Life Savers, candy bars and gum. By the mid 20th century aluminum foil was commonplace.

Tin foil, less malleable than aluminum foil, tended to give a slight metallic taste to food wrapped in it. Yuck!

Aluminum foil is commonly used for barbecuing more delicate foods, such as mushrooms, vegetables and fish; food is wrapped in foil prevents the loss of moisture when placed on the grill. While we aren't barbecuing crappies, the foil is essential for our recipe, keeping all the good tastes in place.

So pull off a couple of strips of foil and let's cook some crappie fillets.

Crappie Fillets

2 pounds crappie fillets
3 teaspoons lemon juice
3 tablespoons butter
1/2 teaspoon basil
1/2 teaspoon dill
Salt and pepper

Rub fillets with butter and place on aluminum foil with the edges turned up. Sprinkle lemon juice, basil, dill salt

and pepper on fillets. Fold foil over fillets and tightly seal edges. Grill or bake for approximately 15 minutes or until fillets are white and flaky.

I save the juices from the foil to use like gravy. Umm, most tasty!

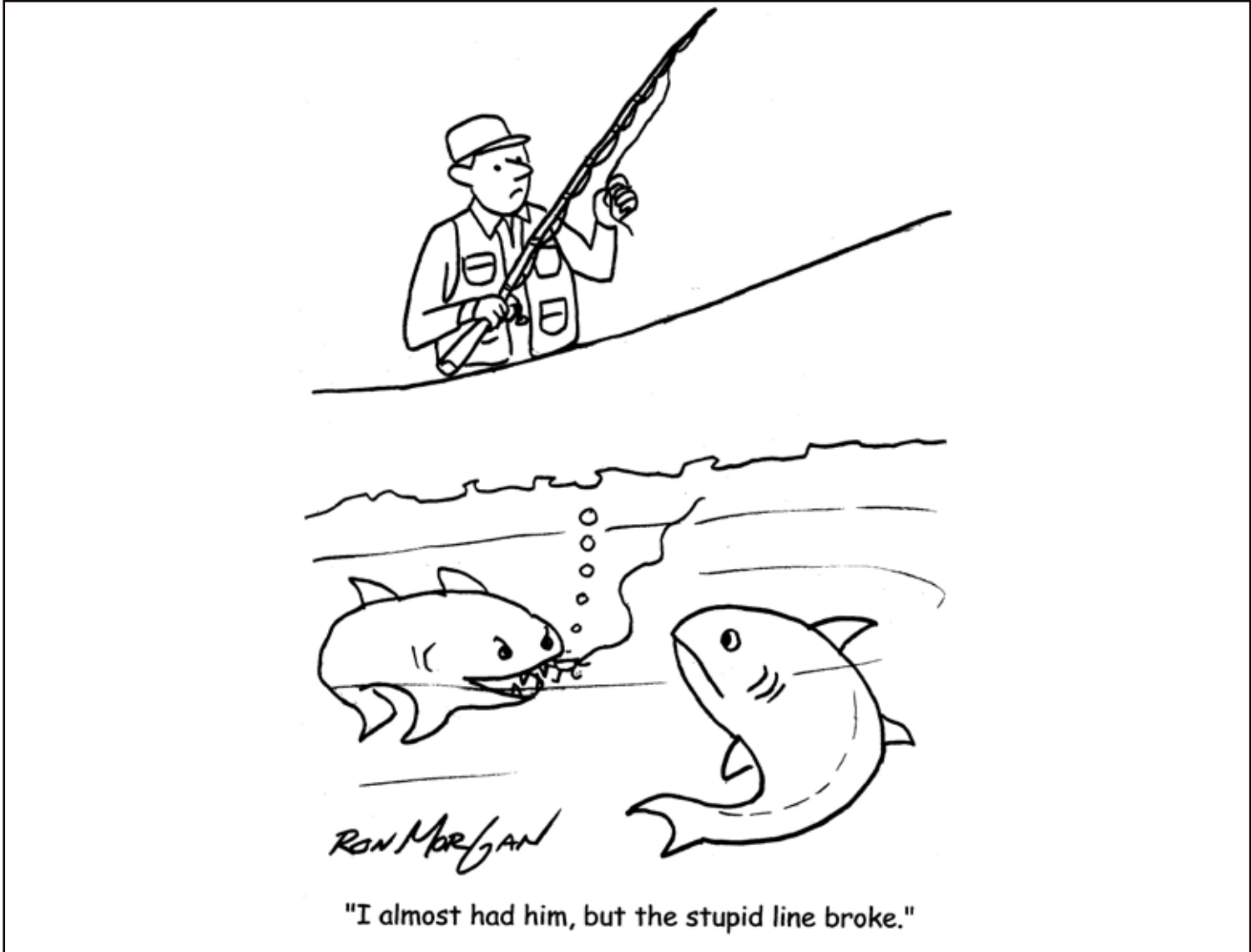
Southern Beans and Rice

1 1/4 pounds dried pinto beans
7 cups water
1 small ham hock
1 chopped medium onion
2 minced cloves garlic
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 thickly sliced pound ring smoked beef and pork sausage
10-ounce undrained can tomatoes with green chilies
1/2 cup uncooked regular rice

Sort and wash beans. Combine beans, water, ham hock, onion, garlic, and salt in a large Dutch oven. Bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to medium, and cook 45 minutes. Add sausage, tomatoes with green chilies, and rice. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Remove ham hock, shred ham from bone with a fork, and return ham to bean mixture. Makes 6 servings.



Fishing Funny's



Club	Contact	Link
AMERICAN CRAPPIE TRAIL	Matt Morgan	FACEBOOK
BAYOU STATE CRAPPIE ASSOCIATION	Brandon Jennings	FACEBOOK
BEAVER LAKE CRAPPIE ASSOC.	Peyton Usery	FACEBOOK
CAPITOL CRAPPIE CLUB	Austin Kneeskern	FACEBOOK
CENTRAL ALABAMA CRAPPIE CLUB	Dan Dannanmueller/Jonathan Phillips	FACEBOOK
CENTRAL ARKANSAS CRAPPIE CLUB	Jason Westerberg	FACEBOOK
CENTRAL ILLINOIS CRAPPIE CLUB	Joe Schrader/Greg Foley	FACEBOOK
CHATTANOOGA CRAPPIE CLUB	Mike Johnston/Jim Edmister	FACEBOOK
COOSA RIVER CRAPPIE CLUB	J CULBERSON	FACEBOOK
CRAPPIE ANGLERS OF TEXAS	JAY Reve	FACEBOOK
CRAPPIE MASTERS	Mike Valentine	FACEBOOK
CRAPPIE USA	Darrell Van Vactor	FACEBOOK
CRAPPIENUTZ MS	Robert Smith/Joe Faircloth	FACEBOOK
EAST TENNESSEE CRAPPIE CLUB		FACEBOOK
EASTERN MISSOURI CRAPPIE CLUB	Steve Perotto	FACEBOOK
FISH THE CAROLINAS	Nate Quan	FACEBOOK
FLORIDA CRAPPIE CLUB	Darrell Cole	FACEBOOK
GRAND LAKE CRAPPIE SERIES OH	Jeff	WEBSITE
HOI CRAPPIE CLUB	Chad Anderson	FACEBOOK
INDIANNA SLAB MASTERS	Joe Long/Damon Phillips	FACEBOOK
KANSAS CRAPPIE CLUB	Hoe Bragg/Frank Haidusek	FACEBOOK
LAKE OKEECHOBEE CRAPPIE SERIES	Derrick Moore 954-650-0456	FACEBOOK
MAGNOLIA CRAPPIE CLUB	Michael Nowell/Roger Womack	FACEBOOK
MIDDLE TENNESSEE CRAPPIE CLUB	Toby Ivey	FACEBOOK
NORTHEAST GEORGIA CRAPPIE	Kevin Strong	FACEBOOK
NORTHEAST OHIO CRAPPIE CLUB	Dan Elko/Robert Elko	WEBSITE
OKLAHOMA CRAPPIE TRAIL	Darrell and Brian	FACEBOOK
PEACH STATE CRAPPIE CLUB	Robert Smith	FACEBOOK
SHOALS AREA CRAPPIE ASSOCIATION	Keith Dodd	FACEBOOK
SOUTH CAROLINA CRAPPIE ASSOC	Jerry Bundrick	FACEBOOK
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS CRAPPIE	Chad Hamson	FACEBOOK
SLABMASTERS TOURNAMENT TRAIL	Jamie Moore/Dan Sidle	FACEBOOK
SPRINGFIELD CRAPPIE CLUB IL	Jerry Jallas/Rick Montooth	FACEBOOK
TRUMAN LAKE TOURNAMENT SERIES	Roger Mann 913-963-6350/ANGLERS PORT MARINE	FACEBOOK
TWIN LAKES CRAPPIE CLUB		FACEBOOK
ULTIMATE PANFISH LEAGUE/UPL		FACEBOOK
WAPPAPELLO CRAPPIE CLUB MO		FACEBOOK

MAGNOLIA CRAPPIE CLUB

WOLF LAKE

AUGUST 25th

1. Adam Calcote/Nolan Beck	8.73
2. Jimmy D Smith/Ricky Smith	8.63
3. John McNeese/Chase Ehlers	8.48
4. Rabbit Rogers/Pat Jeffcoats	8.25
5. Johnny Walker/Mark Blake	8.15

BIG FISH

1. Jerry Gross/Debbie Gross	1.49
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KANSAS CRAPPIE CLUB

MELVERN LAKE

SEPTEMBER 1st

1. Morstorf/Niemeyer	6.03
2. Mazurkewycz/Frazier	5.83
3. Bragg	5.4

BIG FISH

1. Bragg	1.29
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TRUMAN LAKE TOURNAMENT SERIES

TRUMAN LAKE

SEPTEMBER 1st

1. Albin/Snider	10.02
2. Lewis/Beckman	9.75
3. Vallentine/Vallentine	9.56
4. Linton/Fajen	9.45
5. Filbeck/Filbeck	9.44

FISH THE CAROLINAS

HIGH ROCK LAKE

SEPTEMBER 8th

1. John David Perrel/Phenice S Perrel	9.64
2. Danny Potts/Brian Shore	9.24
3. Kevin Hawkins/Benjamin McGuirt	8.25
4. Thomas Sprouse/Randy Wilson	8.1
5. Charles Harding/Edward Smith	7.69

BIG FISH

1. Kevin Hawkins/Benjamin McGuirt	1.95
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FLORIDA CRAPPIE CLUB

LAKE MONROE

SEPTEMBER 8th

1. George Parker/Tim Eberly	9.12
2. Darryl Cole/Terry Cole	9.08
3. Al Green/Alan Green	9.03
4. Wendell Connor/Scott Lawson	9.01

BIG FISH

1. George Parker/Tim Eberly	1.14
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HOI CRAPPIE CLUB

ILLINOIS RIVER

SEPTEMBER 8th

1. Chad Anderson/Terry Davis	5.56
2. Danny Whitecotton	5.33

BIG FISH

1. Chad Anderson/Terry Davis	1.13
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Wally Marshall™

**Mr. Crappie Premium Line**

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- Graphite composite rods with split grip handle

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INDIANA SLABMASTERS

MIISY/SALLY/ROUCH-CHOICE

SEPTEMBER 8th

1. Rick Hancock/Eric Millsaps	6.76
2. Nathan Noblitt/Shawn Bales	5.93
3. Gary Reed/Blake Morris	5.3
4. Chris Moore/Chuck Brettnacher	5.14
5. Troy Williams/Larry Kivett	5.07

BIG FISH

1. Nathan Noblett/Shawn Bales	1.43
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MIDDLE TENNESSEE CRAPPIE CLUB

WOODS RESERVOIR

SEPTEMBER 8th

1. Jamie Johnson/Roger Johnson	8.02
2. Terry Spray/Tyler Spray	7.75
3. John Wells/William Barnes	3.14

NORTHEAST OHIO CRAPPIE CLUB

SHENANGO LAKE

SEPTEMBER 8th

1. Andy/John	7.5
2. Dan/Bob	5.68
3. Wes/Kolby	5.28
4. Steve/John	4.15
5. Chad/Bill	4.14

BIG FISH

1. Andy/John	1.58
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14th Annual

CHATTANOOGA CRAPPIE CLUB

PRESENTS

BASED ON 100 BOATS

FORGOTTEN CHILD FUND



- VENDORS
- FOOD
- KIDS ACTIVITIES



Please see our facebook page for more info

FISHING EXTRAVAGANZA

3 Fish Bass Limit

1. \$1,000
2. \$800
3. \$500

Entry Fee: \$25 per boat
Plus a \$5-\$10 unwrapped toy per person

7 Fish Crappie Limit

1. \$1,000
2. \$800
3. \$500

"FILL UP THE TOWBOAT"



**October 13th, Chester Frost
8:00am**



TWIN LAKES CRAPPIE CLUB

Fish Anywhere

SEPTEMBER 8th

1. Tony Sheppard/Mike Sheppard	7.83
2. Max/Tuff	6.53
3. Justin Elder/Rod Hudson Chris Collins James Thomason	TIE
	5.65

BIG FISH

1. Tony Sheppard/Mike Sheppard	1.57
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CHATTANOOGA CRAPPIE CLUB

CHESTER FROST PARK

SEPTEMBER 9th

1. Mike Johnston/Kyler Brewer	7.62
2. David Elliot/David Stephens	6.19

BIG FISH

1. Mike Johnston/Kyler Brewer	1.16
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AMERICAN CRAPPIE TRAIL

GRENADA LAKE

SEPTEMBER 14th - 15th

1. Stephen Sullivan/Jamie Roberson	28.17
2. Matt Saterfiel/Peyton Hemphill	27.94
3. Kevin Rogers/Matt Beckman	27.5
4. Robert Ward/Grant Crenshaw	27.3
5. Jason Eichwurtzle/Parker Eichwurtzle	27.17

BIG FISH

1. Matt Gregory/Rick Davis	2.54
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BEAVER LAKE CRAPPIE ASSOC.

BEAVER LAKE

SEPTEMBER 15th

1. Jeff/Seth	8.41
2. Blake/Buck	7.78
3. Morrie/Rance	6.98
4. Colton/Chris	6.56
5. Xieng/Lee	6.44

BIG FISH

1. Shane/Don	1.77
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EAST TENNESSEE CRAPPIE CLUB

DOUGLAS LAKE

SEPTEMBER 15th

1. Darren Caughron	7.29
2. Wally Porter/Aaron Porter	6.54
3. Matt Xenos/Don Speer	5.81
4. Ken Bluechek/Denise Bluchek	5.22
5. Jeff Stiles/Therese H & Jeff Loos/ Mark Taylor TIE	4.67

CRAPPIE USA

CARLYLE LAKE

SEPTEMBER 22nd**AMATEUR DIVISION**

1. PA Cox/Jase Heuberger	7.81
2. Patrick Stone/Patrick Vowell	6.82
3. Josh Dudley/Jason Dudley	5.81
4. Chad Schaeffer/Mark Becker	5.71
5. Michael Arnold/Jason Shingler	5.58

PRO DIVISION

1. Kris Mann/Terry Mann	7.99
2. Eric Millsaps/Allen Reed	7.94
3. Scott Moses/Fred Slinger	7.58
4. Willis Knutt/Nick Warnecke	7.34
5. Ron Weaber/Mont Weaper	7.33

BIG FISH

1. PA Cox/Jase Heuberger	1.45
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HOI CRAPPIE CLUB

EVERGREEN

SEPTEMBER 22nd

1. Chad/Kristen	3.9
2. Jake/Chuck	3.31
3. Mike/Pat	3.18
4. Danny Whitecotton	3.08
5. Quentin/Nick	2.7

BIG FISH

1. Chad/Kristen	0.77
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MAGNOLIA CRAPPIE CLUB

ARKABUTLA LAKE

SEPTEMBER 22nd

1. Jerry Gross/Debbie Gross	15.69
2. Adam Calcote/Nolan Beck	14.95
3. Dale Abernathy/Eric Stover	13.98
4. Joe Lowrey/Jay Carr	13.72
5. Johnny Walker/Mark Blake	13.58

BIG FISH

1. Bob Robinson/Elizabeth Robinson	2.57
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MIDDLE TENNESSEE CRAPPIE CLUB

TIM'S FORD

SEPTEMBER 22nd

1. Rodney Edwards/Coby Edwards	7.43
2. Robert Baker/Larry	7.02
3. Terry Spray/Trent Spray	5.61
4. Roger Johnson/Jamie Johnson	4.94
5. Kevin/Hunter	4.71

BIG FISH

1. Rodney Edwards/Coby Edwards	1.57
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TRUMAN LAKE TOURNAMENT SERIES

TRUMAN LAKE

SEPTEMBER 22nd

1. Beach/Beach	10.98
2. Stocking/Sherman	10.68
3. Lewis/Beckman	10.62
4. Linton/Fajen	10.55
5. Mcxlure/Dehn	10.11

BIG FISH

1. Beach/Beach	2.43
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GRAND LAKES CRAPPIE SERIES

GRANS LAKES

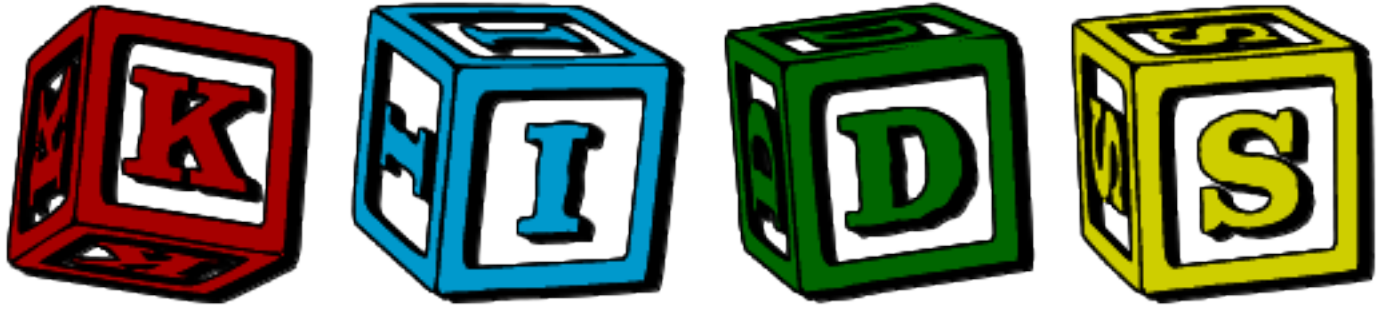
SEPTEMBER 23rd

1. Jeff Toben/Mike Bell	7.81
2. Charlie Hildreth/Myron Etchison	7.49
3. Herb Richey/Jeanetta Mack	7.18
4. Dustin Chrisman/Austin Chrisman	6.62
5. John Pruitt/Bruce Menchofer	6.58

OCT	6th	LAKE OKEECHOBEE CRAPPIE SERIES	LAKE OKEECHOBEE	1st QUALIFIER
OCT	6th	NORTHEAST OHIO	BERLIN LAKE	CLUB
OCT	6th	SPRINGFIELD CRAPPIE	LAKE SPRINGFIELD	CLUB
OCT	3rd - 6th	CRAPPIE USA	LAKE CUMBERLAND	CLASSIC
OCT	12th - 13th	CRAPPIE ANGLERS OF TEXAS	LAKE FORK	TSCC
OCT	13th	BEAVER LAKE CRAPPIE ASSOC.	BEAVER LAKE	CLUB
OCT	13th	CENTRAL ALABAMA CRAPPIE CLUB	TBD	CHAMPIONSHIP
OCT	13th	CHATTANOOGA CRAPPIE CLUB	CHESTER FROST PARK	FORGOTTEN CHILD FUND
OCT	13th	COOSA RIVER CRAPPIE CLUB	NEELY HENRY	CLUB
OCT	13th	FISH THE CAROLINAS	JORDAN/HARRIS 2 LAKE EVENT	CLUB
OCT	13th	FLORIDA CRAPPIE CLUB	LOCHLOOSA	CLUB
OCT	13th	KANSAS CRAPPIE CLUB	TUTTLE CREEK	CLUB
OCT	13th	MAGNOLIA CRAPPIE CLUB	GRENEDE LAKE	CLUB
OCT	13th	PEACH STATE CRAPPIE CLUB	LAKE EUFALA	CLUB
OCT	13th	SHOALS CRAPPIE	WHEELER LAKE	CLASSIC
OCT	13th	TWIN LAKES	KY DAM & 68/80 BRIDGE	CLUB
OCT	13th - 14th	HOI CRAPPIE CLUB	CLINTON LAKE	2 DAY CLASSIC
OCT	13th - 14th	TRUMAN LAKE TOURNAMENT SERIES		
OCT	14th	GRAND LAKES CRAPPIE SERIES	GRAND LAKES	CLASSIC
OCT	20th	CENTRAL ILLINOIS	DECATUR	OPEN
OCT	20th	CRAPPIE MASTERS	CARLYLE LAKE	Early Bird Nat Qualifier
OCT	20th	EAST TN CRAPPIE CLUB	TELLICO	CLUB
OCT	20th	MIDDLE TENNESSEE	NORMANDY	CLUB
OCT	20th	SOUTH CAROLINA CRAPPIE ASSOC	SANTEE	CLUB
OCT	20th - 21st	INDIANA SLAB MASTERS	FREEMAN/SHAHER	CLASSIC
OCT	21st	WAPPAPELLO	WAPPAPELLO LAKE	CLUB
OCT	27th	COOSA RIVER CRAPPIE CLUB	WEISS LAKE	CLUB
OCT	27th	NORTHEAST OHIO	SANDUSKY BAY	CLUB
OCT	27th - 28th	BEAVER LAKE CRAPPIE ASSOC.	BEAVER LAKE	Championship
OCT	27th - 28th	SPRINGFIELD CRAPPIE CLUB	MARK TWAIN	CLUB



CRAPPIE



Learn 2 Fish With Us Instructs Youth On Fishing At Get Up And Go Day

Learn 2 Fish With Us and NPAA members Karen Karch #121 and Greg Karch #138 along with Learn 2 Fish With Us volunteers attended Get Up And Go Day which was held on Saturday, August 5th. Get Up And Go Day was held at the Timber Rattler Stadium in Appleton, Wisconsin. This event is hosted by PBS and was created so kids could get involved in activities that are held outside.

Learn 2 Fish With Us had a fishing educational booth where kids could learn about fishing from fish identification, knots and casting. The Learn 2 Fish With Us volunteers and NPAA members worked with each youth to help instruct them on casting so they could cast for the first time or become more accurate at casting with some tips. If the youth had a good cast they could catch a Backyard Bass!! And trust me, many Backyard Bass were caught!!! All youth were winners as each youth received something that was fishing related from hats, coolers, line cutters, shirts and more thanks to Learn 2 Fish With Us sponsors.

A HUGE thanks goes out to the Learn 2 Fish With Us volunteers for their help in educating our future anglers. Thanks to Greg's and Learn 2 Fish With Us sponsor's: National Professional Anglers Association, Shakespeare, Berkley, Dave's Musky Club, Thrivent Financial, Writing By Design LLC; Mercury, Triton Boats, Future Angler Foundation, The Boat Doc, Off Shore Tackle Company, Plano, Northland Tackle,

TTI Blakemore Fishing Group, Bass Pro, Maui Jim, Mad Wraps LLC and The Reel Shot as these events would not be possible without their support.

Is your group looking for a fishing clinic in 2019, send an email to Greg at CaptainGreg@Learn2FishWithUs.com and he will get in contact with you.

To learn more about the following organizations check out their websites Learn 2 Fish With Us at www.learn2fishwithus.com, NPAA at www.npaa.net and Future Angler Foundation at www.futureangler.org



**The beautiful water
and mountains
of Flaming Gorge, WY/UT**
photo by Tim Huffman

**Wishing you many big slabs!
See you next month,
CrappieNow Staff**

