

TRY NEW WAYS

to catch crappie, like bobber jigs and light flies

BY JOHN N. FELSHER

Anglers can catch crappie all year long with many different methods including live bait, artificials and sometimes a combination of the two. While the old proven techniques still work, try these methods for something different.

Bobber jigs

Finicky crappie frequently prefer very small, subtle baits. However, extremely light baits don't cast very well. Therefore, add a clear float about the size of a quarter to the line to increase casting heft. About 18 to 24 inches below the float, depending upon the water depth, attach a tiny feather jig, fly or soft-plastic temptation. Rig it to sit just above submerged grass, the bottom or other cover.

Let the bobber sit for about 15 to 20 seconds and then pull it a foot or two. Yank it just hard enough to make the bait rise in the water and then sink again. To work baits faster, pause more frequently and for shorter duration. When fish want more subtle action, let the float sit for longer periods so the hairs on a fly twitch with water movements. People could also add a nightcrawler chunk, scented pellet or other enticement for added taste and flavor.

Light flies

As water cools, crappie often feed in the shallows. Use a long pole to deftly place tiny baits in tight sweet spots, like a pocket between two limbs on a fallen tree or an opening in a grass



Photo by John N. Felsher

Daniel Felsher shows off a crappie he caught on a Beetle Spin while fishing in the Mobile-Tensaw River Delta near Mobile. Small spinnerbaits like beetles make excellent crappie enticements.