

BASS: Numbers increase in delta with grass growth

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either go over the top or through the roof to entice lunker largemouths from their vegetative fortresses.

Nothing goes over grass mats like buzzing frogs. Rigged weightless with a wide gap hook inserted into the body or with upturned hooks, soft-plastic frogs look like natural prey as they skitter across the densest cover. Bass commonly erupt through the grass to attack these morsels, engulfing grass, frog and all.

“A buzz frog is one of the few lures than anglers can use in really thick, matted vegetation all year long,” advised Shaw Grigsby, a professional bass angler and television personality. “It’s like a buzzbait that anyone can throw in the thickest vegetation where a regular buzzbait would hang up on every cast. Bass boil a hole in the grass to eat it.”

Some frogs float and others slowly sink. Anglers can run either with a steady buzzing retrieve. With floating frogs, try the hop-and-pop method.



Photo by John N. Felsher

Kevin VanDam, a multiple Bassmaster Classic champion, shows off a bass he caught on a spinnerbait.

Let a frog float on the surface a few moments. Then, pop it vigorously to simulate a live frog splashing in the grass. Ease sinking frogs into open pockets. Let them sink a foot or two before resuming the retrieve.

Buzz frogs create tremendous commotion, but sometimes bass want

a more subtle enticement. Unweighted soft-plastic worms or fluke-type baits slowly crawled over the grass tops mimic snakes, eels or other temptations. Bass see lifelike objects silhouetted in the vegetation and attack. Work slithering soft plastics like a sinking frog. Bass usually slurp these subtle offerings as they sink.

If bass won't come to the surface, anglers might need to dig them out. With a long rod, swing Texas-rigged worms, tubes or weedless jigs toward tiny pockets with pinpoint accuracy. When fishing particularly thick mats, some anglers toss heavy jigs into the air so they crash through the canopy like meteors. This sudden invasion of their lair often provokes violent reaction strikes from startled bass.

“It’s difficult to get a heavy jig through the grass, but that’s where the fish live,” said Mike Wurm, a professional angler. “That’s when I break through the grass with a heavy jig and fish right in the middle of it to get down to them.”

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