

Arlington Anglers

Spring Crappie Tactics



Bob Diebold
Arlington Anglers Fishing Club

My limited experience with crappie fishing consisted of finding a tree or stump in the water and dangling a minnow along side. If that didn't work, I was in trouble!

Jim Kopjo, a.k.a. "The Crappie Professor," gave me (and the Arlington Anglers) a bunch of schooling that will help bring home those tasty little fish time after time.

Jim shared his tactics and techniques primarily for the spring period when the crappies are more concentrated, prior to suspended summer time roaming in the lakes. The ideal temperature for crappie spawning is 62 to 68 degrees measured at the spawn depth. Low light days with clouds, mist, or rain are best. To find that warm water, look for shallow bays, flats, north shores, isolated areas, etc. The spawning depth is dependent on the water clarity: the clearer the water, the deeper for the spawning beds.

During the spawning period, the crappies will be aggressive and fishermen should be able to use artificial baits. If the water is stained, use bright colors. If the water is clear, use natural colors.

One technique is to cast 1/16th or 1/32nd oz. jigs with plastic tails. Another popular technique is using slip bobbers with Mini-Mites, ice jigs, or jigs with tails. A third method might be drifting blade baits or slow trolling small crank baits off the first drop-off.



Jim Kopjo, The Crappie Professor, describes spring tactics for crappies at the Anglers meeting on 5/19/09.
PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS

As fishing gets tougher, a variety of bait will work: nitrogens, crappie nibbles, spikes, wax worms, and minnows.

Another key point is that the crappie has binocular vision. This means that the lure/bait must be presented in front of and above the crappie to get the desired strike.

Jim Kopko 708-485-2518 has a wealth of crappie knowledge and is willing to share with fishermen everywhere. He runs crappie guide services on Shabbona Lake near DeKalb and Lake Evergreen near Bloomington, both in Illinois.

Talking about crappies, the Arlington Anglers enjoyed the best crappie fishing in some years on the 1st weekend in May on their outing to Clinton Lake and Camp Quest. Twenty-three fishermen in ten boats enjoyed many crappies, big bonfires, poker games, delicious fish fries, and profuse amounts of camaraderie.

Join us for the fall Clinton trip in October. Dates to remember: June 6 - Outing at Lake Delavan; June 16 - Meeting: Speaker Larry Conn on Walleye Techniques; June 27— Outing at Diversey Harbor for perch; July 21— Meeting with Speaker.

Come to one of our meetings to find out more about our club, activities and outings.

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. We meet at Dick's Sports Store (Flr.1-NW) near Woodfield Shopping Center in Schaumburg, IL, .5 miles north of Higgins, on Martingale Road. Door prizes, speaker, raffles, fishing reports: Give it a try!

For further information call our President Tom Curtin at 847-639-7858 or visit our website at <http://arlingtonanglers.com>



Brian Stuart could not keep the crappies off his line at Clinton Lake, including this nice 14" fish caught on May 2nd. PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS