



Hook, Line, and Sinker

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New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen • P.O. Box 294 • New Ulm, MN 56073 Web Site: newulmsportfish.org

Spring Time Crappie Action

by fishing guide Charlie Worrath

Before crappies move to shallow water later in the spring, they hold back in deeper water waiting for Mother Nature to send the right spawning signals. This behavior sometimes referred to as staging before the spawn--occurs when the water is still cold and often murky from early springs rains and runoff.

April and early May water temperatures in northern latitudes may hover around high forties to fifty degrees Fahrenheit. In most cases, you can subtract 5 to 7 degrees to get the temperature several feet down. Also, the visibility may be limited to only a foot or two.

All these factors tend to keep crappies back on their heels, so to speak. The females are full of eggs, but still not willing to move towards the shoreline, and the males won't go anywhere without them.

Yet despite these neutral or even negative conditions, excellent catches can be made, for a number of reasons. First, prespawn crappies are truly hungry. And even though the water is cold, it has risen above winter chill. Spawning cycle that is about to begin also drives appetites and finally, the natural foods are becoming more available. But this early feeding occurs mostly in deep water where most crappies anglers are unaccustomed to finding fish and may not know how to make an effective presentation.

After you locate a school of crappies, you want to vertical fish them. Just as you would when ice fishing, with exception you'll have to use a heavier jig. The purpose of the extra weight is to hold the lure nearly directly below the rod tip. If suspended, reel up and just above the fish. Count the numbers of turns you reel up before you contacted the fish. So you can readily return to the proper depth. I use 1/8 oz. Northland Tackle multiplied colored gum ball jig, tipped with a Slurpies Swim'n Grubs or a minnow, you can hook the bait through dorsal fin or in the mouth out the back of the head. You can also use a bladed jig like the Mimic Minnow Spin from Northern Tackle, which, features a weedless blade wire form that flashes and flutters thru weeds, brush, and timber with a soft plastic trailer and putting soft plastic on a jig that doesn't have it usually increases the appeal. The advantage here is increased visibility in dark water, and contrasting colors really help in that regard.

It's a good idea to keep the trolling motor on slow speed rather than revving it up and down, both of which can create commotion in the water that crappies don't like. Play it slow and steady.

Crappies may not concentrate in really shallow water, until water temperatures approach 50 degrees Fahrenheit, but some big crappies

always arrive early. The only cover will be old reed stalks, new weed growth, and fallen trees, all which can be quite sparse. The cover crappies seek includes rock shelves, rock piles, pencil reeds, and fallen wood. The north shore of shallow, weedy cups within larger bays always draws the first groups. Steep marshy banks with overhanging brush attract fish, too.

Crappies also concentrate in the open, creating perfect opportunities for pitching baited jigs under small fixed floats. They often key on aquatic insects and tiny minnow fry at ice out, which can be perfectly imitated with wax worms, maggots, and plastics.

When you find them on rock piles, pitch to them with slip bobber rigs on 4 lb test line, tail-hooking the minnow on small jigs. Sometimes isolated reed beds out in the middle of nowhere attract the biggest fish. Cast small Northland Reed Runner Spinner Baits, over the top of the weeds.

Crappies may spawn while the water is still in the low 60 degree F range. After spawning, the biggest crappies in the every system scatter and disperse into multiple patterns, and will not be as accessible or as aggressive again until the fall patterns concentrate them. Crappies and all pan fish are great table fare, and relatively easily to catch, so bring some home to fry. Along the way home pick up some Charlie's Gone Fishing or Fishing Fever, fish batter. Just pour into a plastic bag, add some filets and shake till the fillets are well covered. Then place in a fry pan, with the oil heated to 350 degree, for 1 minute on each side or until the fillet turns golden brown. Then sit down and enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Courtesy of Minnesota Fishing Pros At:
<http://www.mnfishingpros.com/>

Club Calendar

April 24thNUASF Club Meeting
May 15th..... NUASF Social Night at Club House
May 29th..... NUASF Club Meeting
June 12thNUASF Social Night at Club House
June 26thNUASF Club Meeting



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From the President

By Jason Kuester

First things first, at the last meeting we elected our winner for the Stoney Award. The Stoney Award goes out to the member who gives time and time again. We all know there are many members that do this and I would like to thank all of our members for making this such a great organization. At the next meeting we will be presenting Ross Nelson with this great award. Thanks Ross for all your hard work and dedication to our club.

As everyone knows we have been trying to get a Fishing Boat for the club to raffle off in September. I have great news! We got a great deal on a 1648 Crestliner boat with an electric start 25 Horse Power motor. We will be selling 1000 tickets at \$20.00 per ticket in books of 5. Prizes are as follows, 1st Place-Boat, 2nd Place-\$1,000.00, 3rd Place-\$500.00, 7th-10th place is \$250.00 each. Tickets will hopefully be here by the next meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting and would like some tickets, please contact Ross Nelson 507-766-0765 rnnuw@newulmtel.net or Ken Sutherland 507-276-1534 ken.sutherland@ci.new-ulm.mn.us or myself at 507-381-2041 jr@newulmtel.net

Note: The tickets come in books of 5 and are \$20.00 each. If you take the tickets you will be responsible for selling them or turning them back in at or before Riverblast in September.

Mark your calendar for August 13th this will be the day for the kids fishing contest at Riverside Park. We will need many volunteers for this event. We will have more info on this in the upcoming newsletters.

Spring is in the air and what a great time to bring our friends and family to the New Ulm Area Sport Fisherman Club. We are always looking for new members to join. If you know of someone bring them along and show them how much fun we have at our club. As always, bring a friend and each of you will receive a free refreshment of your choice!

Hope to see you at the next meeting!!

Page 2



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The *Hook Line and Sinker* is published monthly by Joyce Reese graphic design for the New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of respective writers and not to be construed as the opinion of the NUASF or its members. Send all correspondence and submissions to New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen, P.O. Box 294, New Ulm, MN 56073.

The NUASF Board

President - Jason Kuester (381-2041); Vice-President - Gary Sprenger (359-9358); Secretary - Ross Nelson (507-766-0765) Treasurer - Tony Miller (354-2457); Board Members: Ron Ludewig (507-276-6093), Mike Buechner (354-2739 s), Ken Sutherland (507-276-1534).

Monthly Meeting March 27th, 2014 Members Present: 50+

I. Secretary Report

- A) Motion made by Jim Liebl and seconded by Jim Hulke to accept report as read.
Passed unanimously.

II. Treasury Report

- A) Balance
1) Motion made by Scott Sparlin and seconded by Jim Lieble to accept report as read.
Passed unanimously.
B) Ice Fishing Contest Report
2) Total income from the contest was great

III. Old Business

- A) Membership update.
1) Membership stands at 183 – 34 Due. Membership drive: 5 with 1 new member
B) Area Lakes and Rivers Report.
1) Lake of the Woods - Good
2) Big Stone – Big Perch
C) Club House and Grounds Update.
1) Thanks to Orv Rannow and his grandsons for cleaning off the roof of snow.
2) Make sure all the garbage is taken out after the meeting. Smell of fish after last meeting was bad.

IV) Other Old Business

- 3) Remember club members Jerry Merkel and Larry Waibel who passed away since our last Meeting.

V) New Business

- A) Kari Beran –Pro Kinship for Kids
1) Report of the events they did over the last year. There are about 118 kids enrolled.
2) Motion made by Scott Sparlin and seconded by Jim Liebl to donate to Pro Kinship for this coming years' projects. Motion withdrawn by Scott. Motion made by Orv R. and Seconded by Tom Simonson to donate more money. Passed unanimously.
B) Jason Kuester boat raffle update. Both Ranger and Crestliner sold the boats we were looking to purchase. Jason purchased a boat from Mapleton Marina. They gave us a great discount. Thanks to Mapleton Marina for a great donation. It will help us greatly with all our projects thru the year. Boat should arrive around April 18th. We should also contact Mankato Tent for a tarp for the boat.
C) Bergs Landing. We decided to give a \$50 gift certificate to the berg family. for the use of their anding on Clear Lake this pasted year.
D) History of Swan Lake was given by Scott Kudulka with the DNR
E) Iowa Hatchery Trip Report Tony Miller
1) It may be open by the end of April. A tentative date of April 21st has been set.
2) See Tony Miller if you wish to sign up for the trip.
F) Scott Sparlin Report
1) Community cleanup for Water Quality bag collection will be done in the fall.
2) There is a dumpsite on a creek by Klossner that needs to be cleaned up, more info to follow.
3) Le Sueur River Watershed project.
4) Riverblast Report. Motion made by Kim Olson and seconded by Ted Suss to make a donation to Riverblast. Passed Unanimously.
G) Studtmann Memorial Ice Fishing Contest Report.
1) There were no fish caught this year so the annual award was given to everyone that Attended the event.
2) Cash was raised and then matched by the Studtmann family for the Mecklenburg Scholarship fund.
H) Kids Summer Fishing Contest is set for Aug 13th We should consider giving away a Lifetime angling permit. Jim Hulke will check it out.
I) Stoney Award
1) Nomination: John Rolloff, Ross Nelson, Wes Ludewig, Studtmann Family
2) Ross N. is awarded the 2013 Stoney Award by a very close vote.

VI) Other New Business

- A) Food for next meeting Brats. Bring a dish to pass.
B) Boy Scout report about what they did over the past year.
C) Thank You was received from Natalie Warren w/ the Wild River Academy.

VII) Adjourn @ 9:15

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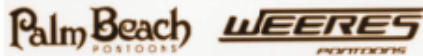
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