



Weedless Crappie Slider "Why&How"

CRAPPIE FISHING

WITH THE

WEEDLESS CRAPPIE SLIDER

INTRODUCTION

First, before getting into the "WHY'S and HOW'S" of crappie fishing, and so that you will better appreciate the all new original WEEDLESS CRAPPIE SLIDER, please let me give you a little history on its development. After fifty years of avid bass fishing, your writer decided to learn the "art of crappie fishing". I found this to be a challenge. And I also discovered that crappie fishing, greatly improved my bass fishing – especially on lunker bass. The visible hides, and the sunken or hidden hides on the deeper channel drops which are necessary for year-round crappie fishing, these same structures also hold big bass. As a result, since learning crappie fishing, many of my trophy bass have been taken from these crappie hot-spots. So...if you are an avid bassman and care nothing about crappie, it will pay you to learn something about the habits of crappie. It will definitely put more big bass on your stringer.

' Of course, when fishing these structures for bass only, fish the larger worm rigs, snagless bass jigs and other similar bass lures. Also, while fishing small jigs for crappie, it is nothing unusual to pick-up bass and other fish with the same little jigs; in other words, crappie and other fish often occupy the same structures.

On my very first crappie fishing with jigs, my buddy and I were very pleased with our results. As beginners, in a short afternoon, we boated 43 crappie. However, we were displeased with the nuisance and aggravation of hanging-up regularly. The crappie were located in heavy cover (brush and sunken tree-tops). Our open-hook jigs had to be worked in the heavy cover in order to catch crappie. And it seemed impossible to work the exposed-hook jigs with out snagging-up fairly often. This was costing us extra fish and costing us jigs and money. We lost around 20 or 25 crappie Jigs that afternoon. On the way home that night, I decided we needed a weedless or snagless crappie jig. I had never seen or heard of one being on the market. In my work-shop,

that night and the next morning. I hand-made several weed less crappie jigs that I thought would work. My buddy and I returned to the lake that afternoon to give them a try. We fished the same number of hours, the conditions seem to be the same, and we fished the same hangie structures. The results: We boated 67 crappie and only lost two jigs! Compared to the afternoon before, we increased our catch by about 50% and with the lost of only two baits. Our trip was far more enjoyable. And we were well pleased with the results of the weedless crappie jigs. From that time, I seriously started to work on developing a weed less or snagless crappie jig for the market. Approximately two years later and around 75 trips to different lakes, the end result is the Weedless Crappie Slider. During this test period, over 2000 crappie were taken (by myself, friends, pro-guides and authorities on crappie). All of these crappie were taken from hangie, hard-to-fish structures--such as heavy brush, sunken trees, timber, logs, stumps, weeds, rocky shelves, etc. The Weedless Crappie Slider came through in flying colors. Not only did the weedless crappie bait appeal to the crappie as well as other crappie jigs, but it proved to be a pure pleasure to fish in heavy cover, without the aggravation and inconvenience of hanging-up regularly. Another benefit was the weedless feature saves you money. You don't hang and lose near as many jigs. From my own personal experience, I have crappie fished all day without losing a head, or no more than 2 or 3 heads per day. And I have taken as many as 5 to 10 crappie on a single grub before it is destroyed. All of these features makes the original Weedless Crappie Slider jig a very inexpensive way of fishing, plus satisfaction and extra fish on your stringer. As you continue with this booklet, here is the first question that comes to your mind. Can I set-the-hook in a crappie with this weedless arrangement? Please believe me, this is no problem. To prove this, during our testing period, we tried to locate the smallest crappie we could find, in order to test the hook-setting ability of the weedless jig. We proved that it was no trouble to set-the-hook into the mouths of baby size crappie. And the bait was not too big for small crappie. Obviously, as a result, it also proved even easier to set-the-hook into the mouths of big crappie or slab size crappie. With the weedless crappie jig, we also increased our catch on big crappie because the weedless jig could be worked deep (without hanging-up) into the heavy cover that holds many big crappie.

HOW TO PROPERLY RIG THE WEEDLESS LURE

In order to keep the lure "WEEDLESS", it is very, very important that it is kept dressed or rigged properly. Please observe the proper weedless rigging (in the pack) from our factory. Also, observe the proper weedless rigging in Fig. 1 In other words, for weedless performance, the: hook-point must be buried in the grub at all times. The hook-point MUST NOT stick through the grub or be exposed the least bit on the outside of the grub. Observe Fig. 2: As illustrated in Fig. 2 if the hook-point is exposed the tiniest bit, the lure WILL NOT be weedless and it can quickly hang-up when it crawls over limbs, stumps, logs, and so on.

So...to insure mostly snag-free fishing, inspect the bait regularly (while fishing) and keep the hook-point buried or hidden in the grub. When threading on a new grub, start the hook-point in the top center of the grub and come out the side of the grub about 1/8 inch from the top. In other words, get just enough bite on the grub to fill the little off-set in the hook. The custom and special hook is designed for simple "Texas style" rigging.



Fig. 1. (Proper weed less rigging for Crappie Slider)

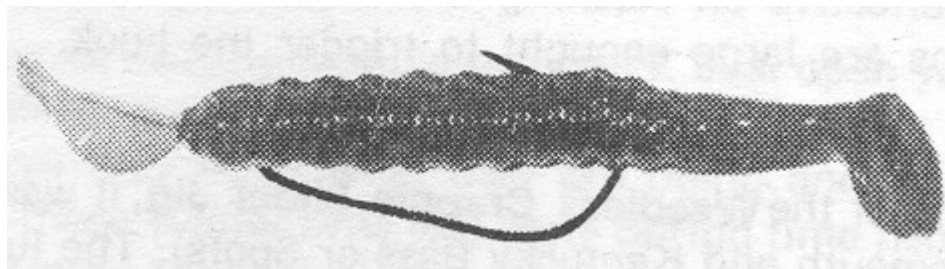


Fig. 2. (Improper weed less rigging hook Crappie Slider.) point exposed lure not weedless)

SLIDER VIBOR-TAIL GRUB and CUSTOM HOOK

The small vibor-tail grubs are super-soft in texture and designed especially for crappie fishing. Their extra-softness provides easy hook-setting. The small vibor-tail is designed to vibrate (or wiggle) at very slow retrieves, and the grub features a round body. By taking advantage of this round body feature, it will make them last longer and, it is more economical. After catching a few crappie on the grub and it becomes worn or rotten, it can be un-rigged from the Slider jig head, turned a quarter or half turn, and re-rigged. This gives new and fresh places on the grub for re-rigging. The vibor-tail will work at all angles. For crappie fishing, it doesn't seem to matter how the tail is turned. However, if possible, its best to rig the tail down (as illustrated in Fig. 1). The grub, when worn, can be pinched-off about 1/4 inch from the head. This will give a fresh rigging, and the slightly shorter grub (at times) can be more appealing to the crappie. The custom and special hook and head (also designed by Charlie Brewer) is ideal for weedless crappie fishing and light-tackle bass fishing. The hook with its offset (for Texas style rigging) features a keen and needle hook-point. This insures quick and easy penetration through the soft-grub and into the mouth of a fish. The slope or SKI-like-nose of the lead head also allows the lure to crawl over debris and heavy cover in a snag-free manner.

SETTING THE HOOK

The tap, bump, or strike from a crappie is like no other fish. It is so faint that it is very hard to detect. The sensation of a crappie hit is like a tiny "peck" or "tick" on your bait. However, when you feel this slight signal from the crappie, set-the-hook INSTANTLY; DO NOT HESITATE. Be fast on the draw – so to speak. Waiting one or two seconds to set-the-hook, it seems, is too late. Apparently, it appears, the crappie inhales your bait and blows it out all in the same breath. So when you feel a tiny peck, tick, or tap from the crappie, or have a hunch that something touched your bait, set-the-hook IMMEDIATELY. As your bait is rigged weedless, its best to set-the-hook a little harder and longer than you would with conventional open-hook jigs. However, you will discover that hook-setting with the weedless rig is about as easy with open-hook jigs. For more successful crappie fishing, its more desirable to fish a rod with medium back-bone (not too soft or limber; nor too stiff). When fishing in heavy cover (brush, sunken trees, etc.) the crappie usually hits the weedless Slider when it drops after crawling over a limb. As a result, when you feel your weedless lure crawl over under-water limbs or structures, get on your toes. This is when a strike is normally felt.

LINES

Many times, its almost impossible to feel the weak strike of a crappie in your rod. If so, the crappie is missed. The result, watching your line is very important. Sometimes you may see your line do a little something unusual, like blink, quiver, or move a little. This could be a crappie hit. Set the hook FAST, even though you did not feel the crappie hit in your rod. Your writer greatly improved his crappie fishing by using the bright gold, yellow fluorescent, and other high viability lines. This type of line is much easier to see, and it allows you to detect the crappie strikes that you cannot feel in your rod. If you lack confidence in this bright line, use a short leader (3 or 4 foot long) of clear mono line. For crappie fishing, whether bright or clear line, I highly recommend 4 and 6 lb. lines. These small lines cast much easier and with less effort; they will cast the very light crappie lures much smoother and further; they offer less visibility to the fish, and light lines allow your lure to flex and breath better. Personally, from many experiences, I simply catch more crappie on light lines. Also, I have observed that most avid and expert crappie fishermen use 4 and 6 lb. lines. However, many crappie fishermen are in the habits of using heavier lines. This is necessary, in most cases, to rip and tear loose their jigs that hang-up; but with the WEEDLESS CRAPPIE SLIDER this is no big problem. The Weedless Crappie Slider doesn't snag-up too often, and it is not necessary to use heavy lines to free them from continuous hanging. Light lines (4 and 6 lb.) will hold any size crappie if you do not over-horse the fish and play the fish in a sportsman-like-manner. In addition, light lines are a must in order to properly cast and present the very light weight crappie jigs to the fish. Last but not least, when fishing small lines, trim back and retie your knot regularly.

THE WEEDLESS CRAPPIE SLIDER IS EFFECTIVE

ON BASS AND OTHER FISH

The Crappie Slider has been on the market for many years. To date, by phone and mail, we have received numerous reports from fishermen coast to coast on the catches and results with the Crappie Slider. Besides being effective on crappie, they are reporting that it is an excellent small mouth lure (in streams and lakes). Also, we are receiving many good reports on stripes (white bass), walleye, yellow perch, trout, blue-gill, and even salt water fish that are being taken on the Crappie Slider. Many large mouth are also taken on the Crappie Slider. Pictures of bass in the 8 and 9 pound class have been sent to us, that were taken on the Crappie Slider while crappie fishing. Both the small mouth and Spot (Kentucky Bass) have an eye on small lures, and the Crappie Slider has proved very effective on these fish. In fact, just about everything that swims will take-a-poke at small lures. The result, they are great for getting action and catching all kinds of fish. The small Crappie Slider grub can also be fished with small opened-hook jig heads. By swimming it along in mid-water, your writer has made excellent catches with it on small mouth, spots, large blue-gill and just about everything that swims.

LOCATING CRAPPIE

During the Spring time, when crappie move into shallow water (around brush, bushes, stumps, weeds, sunken trees, ledges. etc..) to do their spawning or bedding, they are the easiest to locate and easiest to catch. At that time, they are more aggressive and eager to gobble up live-bait or your jig. Crappie are always (or nearly always) related to wood structures – such as brush, fallen tree-tops, timber, stick-ups, stumps, and so on. According to authorities, they lay their eggs on some kind of wood structure. During this bedding time, the crappie are not too deep, maybe 2 to 6 feet deep. At times like these, it's best to fish the very light 1/32 oz. or 1/16 oz. Crappie Slider. Also, if necessary to slow the bait down a little, some of the lead can be trimmed-off the Crappie Slider Head. This can be done with a knife, file, or side-cutter-pliers. Most of the Spring time crappie structures are visible to your eyes. However, some very productive structures are sunken or buried right under the surface, and these are not visible to your eyes. A depth-finder, graph, or fan-casting is a good way to locate these hidden structures, and they can be potential hot-spots for the crappie. During the Spring time or spawning time, look for these structures in fairly shallow water; and, normally, they are not located too far from the shore-line. After spawning time and as the weather gets hotter, the crappie will leave the shallow shore-lines and migrate to deeper water. Now, they are harder to locate. Normally, look for them along the channel-drops of the creek or river channel; and, of course they will be deeper - maybe 8 to 15 feet deep. In many areas and lakes as the weather-gets hotter, the crappie become much harder to locate. However, the very good crappie fishermen will continue to locate and catch them. Here in the South land, my favorite time for crappie fishing is during the late Fall and Winter months Crappie seem to like the cooler or colder waters and they tend to become fairly active during the late Fall, Winter and early Spring months. Here in the Tennessee area (and it can vary in different parts of the country) the crappie begin to move into the creek and river channels around October or November. These channel-drops are usually located off-shore and, as always, the crappie will be related to wood (wood material). Look for them around sunken brush, submerged trees, stumps, etc. along the channel drops. Here is where a good depth-finder really comes in handy. A graph recorder unit is

even better for locating these underwater crappie hot-spots. Of course, markers and anchors are handy for marking the sunken structures. Most of these structures are not visible to your eyes. If the weather doesn't get too cold or severe, the crappie bite all Winter. In this area, February, March, and part of April are prime times for crappie before they migrate to the shallows for spawning. As stated before, during these cold weather months, the crappie can be located on the creek and river channel drops. Of course, at this time, they are usually fairly deep. However, due to weather conditions, they can also move into the shallow shore-line structures.

HOW TO FISH THE WEEDLESS CRAPPIE SLIDER

The techniques or methods of fishing the Weedless Crappie Slider is about the same as using all other crappie type jigs. However, there are two techniques of fishing the Crappie Slider that I highly recommend. These techniques are fished most by avid, devoted and expert crappie fishermen that I have observed and fished with. One technique or method is the slow (very, very slow) steady retrieve, and the other is the "pull and drop" method. The slow, steady "do-nothing" retrieve seems to be the most popular and the most productive. The "pull and drop" method is also highly productive, but it takes a little more experience and know-how to fish this technique. However it may be, it will pay you to learn both techniques. At times, depending on the mood and location of the crappie, one technique can be more effective than the other.

THE SLOW, STEADY RETRIEVE TECHNIQUE OF FISHING THE

WEEDLESS CRAPPIE SLIDER

Simply cast your crappie Slider to likely structure or target and SLOWLY (VERY, VERY SLOWLY) retrieve it back to you. Hold your rod perfectly still as you retrieve. DO NOT ADD EXTRA ACTION TO THE CRAPPIE SLIDER; just retrieve it ultra slow, smoothly, and steadily. Crappie definitely like a "dead-acting" slow moving bait. Extra actions from you (jerking and twitching does not necessarily appeal to the crappie. So, don't waste your time and energy doing this. Besides, it will be much harder to detect the faint-hit of a crappie. To feel the "almost nothing" hit from a crappie, you need your line tight against the bait. A tight line, or reasonably tight line, will transfer the tiny signal (tick or peck) from a crappie much easier, opposed to your line being too slack. Now, to be more detailed, let's continue with the slow, steady retrieve technique. It is often referred to as the "tight-line" method, which means keeping your line tight against your bait at all times. Let's assume, for illustration, that you are using the light 1/16 oz. Crappie Slider. If you wish to fish shallow, simply cast the light lure to likely structure and start retrieving (SLOWLY) as soon as it hits the water. Now your lure will swim along fairly shallow – maybe two or three feet deep. If you wish to fish a little deeper, simply cast to likely structure and let your lure pre-sink a few feet before starting your slow retrieve. Your lure will swim or slide along a little deeper if you let your lure sink to the bottom before starting your slow retrieve, it will swim and travel along even deeper. Naturally, if you are fishing the slightly heavier head (the 1/8 oz.) your lure will sink or swim along even deeper with the above procedures. It is a matter of probing for the location of the crappie, whether they are shallow, medium depths, or deep. When we speak of slow (very slow) retrieves, we are talking about taking 3 to 5 seconds to make one complete revolution of your reel-handle. Keep in mind that crappie like very slow "dead acting" baits. Of course, the gear-ratio of your reel can determine the slow speeds of retrieve. For example, if your reel has a very slow gear-ratio, then you may have to retrieve a little faster compared to a reel with a high gear-ratio. When fishing visible or hidden (sunken) structures, it is best to cast your Weedless Crappie Slider slightly beyond the structure and let it sink to the bottom.

When you start your slow retrieve, your lure will crawl through and over the underwater limbs and branches of the brush pile, submerged tree-tops, and so on. By fishing this way you will be presenting your lure to the location of most crappie. As stated before, when your weed less jig crawls and drops over a sunken limb, log, stump. etc.. this is when you are likely to receive a crappie strike. The weedless feature of the Crappie Slider allows you to swim it through heavy-cover (where most crappie are located) without the fear and aggravation of hanging-up. To insure this, be sure to inspect your Crappie Slider often and keep it dressed and rigged properly for snag-free fishing. Of course, nothing is perfect. Weedless lures will hang-up occasionally – due to the head getting wedged in the forks of a limb, hook-point being exposed, and so on. When fishing for crappie during the colder months, located on the deeper channel-drops, it is best to fish the heavier 1/4 oz. Crappie Slider Head. The crappie could be 10 to 15 feet deep, and deeper. The heavier 1/4 oz. head will sink to these depths much quicker. The heavier heads are also more useful on windy days. However, when fishing the lighter heads (1/16 oz. or 1/8 oz.) more depth can be obtained by pinching on a "split-shot" about 10 to 12 inches above the bait. Different sizes and weights of "split-shots" are available on the market, but, as a rule, the very light weight crappie jigs are more desirable and productive. Just be patient, let them sink to the correct depths, and fish (swim) them along very, very slowly. In other words, use heavier weights only when it is absolutely necessary.

HOW TO FISH THE "PULL N' DROP" TECHNIQUE WITH THE WEEDLESS CRAPPIE SLIDER

The "pull and drop" technique is often fished by the more experienced and advanced crappie fishermen. However, with this method, it is a little harder to feel the weak-hit of a crappie, and it is a little harder to see a crappie-hit in your line; but, the long-time experienced crappie fisherman does not have any trouble detecting the faint strike of a crappie with the "pull and drop" technique. Obviously, this comes with time and experience. Here is the advantage of the "pull n' drop" method: it allows the weedless jig to be worked deep (down into) the heavy-cover that may be holding crappie. The crappie located down inside the cover or structure are hard to get to any other way.

Here is how to fish the "pull n' drop" technique:

Step No.1 - Cast your Crappie Slider to likely target or structure.

Step No.2 - While holding your rod-tip high (about 10 o'clock high) let your lure sink the desired depth.

Step No.3 - After your lure sinks to your desired depth, take up your extra slack line with your reel handle. Hold the rod tip still doing this

Step No.4 - When your line is tight against your lure, pull or draw your lure with your rod tip. Do this "SLOWLY" by raising your rod tip upward for a foot or so, or from about 11 o'clock high back down to 10 o'clock high. This will give your lure some slack line, and it will allow your lure to swim or fall downward into deeper water.

Step No.5 - After your lure has fallen a few feet under the slack-line. take up the extra slack line that is left with your reel.

Step No.6 - Proceed to pull or draw your lure forward again by raising your rod tip upward.

Step No.7 - Again, give your lure some slack-line by lowering your rod tip. The result, your lure will fall almost straight down under the slack line.

Step No.8 - The above procedures are repeating over and over again until your lure is well past the structures likely to be holding crappie.

With the "pull and drop" technique, here is what your Crappie Slider is doing. It will be swimming along and dropping, swimming along and dropping, and so on.

When your Weedless Crappie Slider drops or tails straight down under your slack-line, it will drop and weave itself down, and inside the limbs (for example) of the heavy-cover. Crappie can be hidden under the hides or heavy cover. As a result, the Crappie Slider being weedless, it can be fished to seek-out the hard-to-get crappie. As stated earlier, the "pull n' drop" technique for crappie is harder to fish and get results; that is, if you lack experience; but it is a deadly technique in the hands of expert crappie fishermen. However, unless you are real experienced at crappie fishing, it is best to fish the "slow steady retrieve" method. It is always dependable and productive, and much easier to fish. By comparison, the "pull n' drop" technique is very easy to fish for bass, because the strike from a bass is a little harder, more positive and easy to detect. Also, the bass will hold to the grub or 4" worm much longer.

CONCLUSION

Keep in mind that crappie are a great fish to school-up or hang together. Normally, when you locate one or two of them, there are usually many more at the same place or close-by. Also, crappie are very depth minded. In other words, when one or two are caught, the entire school of them will be laying at about the same depth. If you only crappie fish but desire to learn about bass fishing, it will pay you to read and study the bass booklet. Fishing the Slider techniques for bass and crappie are almost identical. All you need extra are some 4" or 6" plastic worms, or the 3" or 4" bass type grubs. Super soft grubs and worms are preferred. Also, the skinny or pencil-type worms are more desirable when rigged weedless on the Crappie Slider Head. Combining bass fishing and crappie fishing on the same trip, may be a good way of saving your day. At times, crappie fishing may not be good due to the conditions. etc. You may resort to bass fishing and do ok; or, it could be the other way round. From many experiences, I have found that it is almost impossible to crappie fish on very windy days. Also, on windy days, it is easier to locate bass structures that are protected from the high winds. From my observations. I have noticed that good, patient crappie fishermen make very good bassmen - especially with plastic worms, grubs, jigs and other similar type bass lures. If interested, Crappie Slider Heads and Crappie Slider Grubs are available. Slider 4" worms, 3" bass grubs, and 4" bass grubs are also available.

