

# Clear Water Crappie ON BRAIDED LINE

BY DAN GALUSHA



**A stringer of nice-sized Bull Shoals Lake crappie, all caught in suspended condition, using braided line, along a creek arm's bluff wall.**

ple feel it will spook the fish in the extremely clear water.

I use the line for its strength, sensitivity, and the ability to act as a surface strike indicator. My selections are 10- and 15-pound test, green Gorilla Braid. The low diameter and green color seem to blend with the water, reducing the risk of spooking fish. Rick Eastwold, local diver and manager of the Bull Shoals Lake Boat Dock, confirmed my thoughts by saying "As you go deeper the green blends in with the water."

The line's strength helps save lures. Most of the time I will use a small Mini Mite, Power Honey Worm as a jig body, tube, Ratso or Rat Finkee jig. If these get hung, the strong line will help pull the lure free. These smaller lures have a lighter wire hook, which allows the heavier line to straighten them, as they are pulled free. I always try the "banjo" technique before pulling the line to free the hook, or run down a small weighed device called an EZ Retriever.

If you fish at deeper levels, lighter bites will be difficult to detect. The sensitivity of braided line will help with the detection of these soft strikes.

A trick of mine is to use the braided line as a surface strike indicator for vertical jigging. This works best with light jigs that will fall slowly, and is extremely productive with suspended fish, and those located along bluffs. After dropping the jig in the water I quickly count off part of the amount of line needed to reach the fish-holding depth. The light jig does not fall quick enough to pull the line straight down, which is a bonus in fishing this technique.

With this fact, allow the extra line to lie on the surface, and watch it as each coil is pulled down. As the

**B**ull Shoals Lake has very clear water, and some great crappie fishing. Combine this clear water condition with the use of braided line, and people in the area will think you are crazy. In fact, most areas with clear water are not a prime choice for folks to use braided line, or so it is thought.

Randy Banks, former resident of Bull Shoals, Ark., says I am the first person he has heard of having success using braided line for crappie on the lake. He says peo-

ple feel it will spook the fish in the extremely clear water. line starts pulling downward, count off some more, and continue this until the jig has reached the desired depth. If at any time the line stops going down, or some appears to be making a slight upward motion, reel up the slack, and set the hook—the crappie has taken the bait on the fall. There are also times when the line will start uncoiling quickly on the surface, again indicating the crappie has the lure.

Additives are used frequently on the jigs. A few favorites for tipping the jigs are a Crappie Nibble, Gulp!

Waxie or Maggot, and wax worm. The number 4 Rat Finkee can also work well with a live minnow, Gulp! 2-1/2 inch Minnow or 3-inch Gulp! Alive! Minnow.

As for the tube jig, I've injected Kodiak's minnow paste in to the tube. It holds for a long time, and works great. The tube doesn't need filled; just use enough paste to scent the bait. Any of these additives may help entice a fish to strike, which for some reason would be spooked by the line.

The details lures and techniques discussed in this article will work in any water clarity. Try them, and I think you will be happy with the results.

If you would like more information about the fishing at Bull Shoals Lake, contact Ricky Eastwold, operations manager, Bull Shoals Lake Boat Dock/Lighthouse Point Resort, P.O. Box 748, Bull Shoals, AR 72619; phone 870-445-4424; website - [www.bullshoalslake-boatdock.com](http://www.bullshoalslake-boatdock.com); email - [boatdock@bullshoals.net](mailto:boatdock@bullshoals.net).

For any questions about this or any other fishing subject drop me a line through the Dan's Fish 'N' Tales® website at [www.dansfishntales.com](http://www.dansfishntales.com), which also provides a link to the Fishing Facts website.

Until next time, get out on the water, and enjoy a great day of fishing.



**Another crappie hits a Power Honey Worm used as a body on a thin wire jig head, while fishing braided line in deeper water along a rocky show.**

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