

Get Crankin'

We're now in the period that is the so called "Dog Days" of Summer. You'll hear comments like "The bite's tough all over", "There's too much for em' to eat" or "It'll get better come fall", etc. Well it just doesn't have to be that way. With a minimum of investment in gear and a willingness to learn, your catch rates can remain consistent.

Your highest percentage option during Summer and Late Summer is to pull crankbaits. Leave the live bait at home next outing and spend the entire day using nothing but hardbaits and I think you'll be pleasantly surprised at the results.

The equipment you'll need to start out; is as follows: A good quality line counter reel will let you place your baits at the desired depth and return them there. A 8 to 9 foot rod with backbone and a soft tip section will hold up to the strain of deep diving plugs and absorb the shock from large fish, as well as provide some give while using Fireline. I use Fireline exclusively due it's lack of stretch and ability to get your cranks down about 25% deeper than mono. Hookhider Rods Planer Board model is my standby. Quality rod holders are a necessity to relieve the strain of holding your rod and I like those made by Ram. There are several good Planer Boards to choose from. I rely on Church's version as they are the easiest to place on and remove from your line while providing you with the peace of mind that they won't "pop off" and force you to chase them down. Your most valuable tool will be a little book called "Precision Trolling". It gives you the dive curves of virtually any plug available. Just refer to the bait you are using, find the depth you want and it will give you the amount of line out necessary to achieve it. It also has some very enlightening information on the various aspects and techniques of trolling that I think you will find helpful.

The lures that you will choose, is your final consideration. Don't let the amount of choices overwhelm you. Stick to a few basic styles and depth ranges and you'll be fine. At this time of year I use of lot of cranks made by ReefRunner as they have a very aggressive and hard wobble which I feel sets them apart from all the other edible creatures, thus drawing the fish's attention. The fish will often slash at these out of anger or curiosity rather than hunger. Note how many fish are hooked in the side of the head.

The areas you will want to target are mid depth flats and basin areas. The fish are fat and lazy and will use the deeper water for lounging and security. Simply let out enough line so that you achieve the desired depth, usually within a foot or two of bottom and begin trolling in the 1.8 to 2.5 mph range. You will also want at least one bait riding approximately one half up or higher in the water column. It's amazing how many fish are suspended. If they are, begin adjusting the other lines accordingly. You can experiment with speed by trolling in S curves. The outer lines will speed up dramatically and the inside lines will all but stall. If the fish show a preference, adjust your speed accordingly.

Keep an open mind, step away from your traditional tactics and I think you'll find trolling crankbaits is the most effective way to beat the Dog Day blues.

DENNIS FOSTER
16 2ND AVENUE
MELLETTE SD 57461

PHONE: 605 - 887-3451
CELLULAR: 605 - 450-1069
E-MAIL: dennis@nvc.net

MEMPHIS, TN 38104
USA

E-MAIL: info@eyetime.com
WEBSITE: www.eyetimepromotions.com