

# Fall fishing compliments hunting season this year

Fall angling techniques make autumn time for both rod and gun

Although many outdoorsmen and women have already hunted some game by late October, and others are thinking of nothing but upland game seasons, avid anglers bide their time and enjoy fishing on mild autumn days. This time of year, fish are hungry and feeding continually in preparation for a long winter, making it a great time to tackle game fish. Still, techniques must be altered some to take advantage of this feeding frenzy.

A crankbait may be one of the best lures at this time because gizzard shad are the preferred prey of most sport fish in Kansas' larger lakes and reservoirs. In the fall, young-of-the-year shad are about 2-3 inches long, and a white or chrome, fat-bodied crankbait is the perfect imitation of a gizzard shad. Cast a deep- or medium-diving crankbait along rocky points and rip-rapped shorelines, and retrieve it quickly, so it gets near the bottom and bounces off the rocks.

Ironically, a deep-diving crankbait

may be the best choice even when fishing relatively shallow water. The lure's long lip will deflect off rocks and other snags, and this action can trigger strikes. If the lure does hang up, give it some slack, and it will often float free. Using light monofilament or a small-diameter braided line will allow a crankbait to dive deeper.

When water temperatures cool to the low 50s or high 40s in late fall, it's time to catch Kansas crappie. Reservoir crappie congregate in large schools over deep brushpiles and creek channel dropoffs at this time. Jigs or jigging spoons fished vertically in 12-25 feet of water are most effective. If too many small crappie are biting, try a larger jig with a 2- or 2 1/2-inch shad-type plastic body. The larger bait will more closely resemble shad and may discourage smaller fish.

When concentrations of crappie and white bass are found, use landmarks or GPS to mark their location. If the state experiences a frigid winter and safe ice forms, you can return to the

spots that held fish before freeze-up and catch them through the ice.

Even though autumn weather may be mild, always wear more layers of clothing than you think necessary when fall fishing. No matter how warm it feels on land, it will be much cooler on the water, especially if the wind blows. And don't forget to wear a life jacket; it will keep you warm and may save your life.

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Mouasing Sachao has luck fishing for crappie from the dock.

—Telegram photo by Dana Paxton



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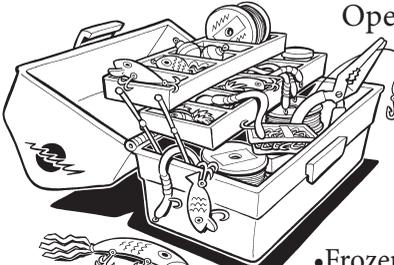
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