

Using The Right Catfish Bait On The Mississippi River

There are of course many different types of bait you can use to catch Catfish on the Mississippi River. Consider for a minute what a Catfish might normally eat in this habitat. The choices are many; the Mississippi River contains a very diverse habitat of fish and other forage for a Catfish to feed on. Live fish would be my first choice of bait to use. Any sort of live fish will do, but I do like to follow two principles when selecting live bait. First choose a fish that is available or better yet abundant in the body of water you are fishing. The hardy white sucker that inhabits much of the Northern Mississippi River is a much better bait in Minnesota than it would be in Mississippi for instance. Fishing the Southern Mississippi River waters a large shiner might make a better choice. I like to catch my own bait when I fish the river. Using a minnow seine, cast net or baitfish trap I know the small bait I catch will be matched to the available forage. Do be sure to consult the laws of the state you are fishing. Different states have different laws concerning the use of each of these items. You can fish live bait in several different manners. Sometimes I like to suspend my bait under a bobber and cast it into the water and let the current move it from spot to spot. This works best in backwater sections of the river where the current is not so fast. If the current is too fast it is not a good idea as Catfish are a bit sluggish and do not slam into moving baits with the same ferocity as many other game fish. As the current gets faster you need to put and keep your bait on the bottom of the river. This of course is accomplished by the use of a lead sinker. You should use a sinker that is large enough to hold your bait in one spot without moving. You need to select a sinker that allows you to put your line through it so the fish does not feel the unnatural weight as it samples you line. A key concept you need to consider is the hook set. You need to give the fish time to take the bait deeply into its mouth. After it grabs the fish a Catfish will need to reposition it in its mouth so it can swallow it head first. Finally there is an adjustment I like to make to live fish when I use them for Catfish bait. I like to cut a small portion of the tail off. This accomplishes two objectives. First it gives the fish an erratic swimming motion that signals to your quarry an injured fish is in the area. Looking for an easy meal Catfish are more prone to strike injured fish. Secondly it causes a small amount of blood to enter the water. Catfish have an excellent sense of smell and can detect changes in the water as small as three parts per million.

About the Author

Dan Eggertsen is a fishing researcher and enthusiast who is committed to providing the best catfish fishing information possible. Get more information on [catfish fishing tips](http://www.askcatfishfishing.com/) here: <http://www.askcatfishfishing.com/>

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