

## How To Locate Crappie In Almost Any Body Of Water

One thing that needs to be understood to successfully pursue crappie is that they are a migratory fish. They are constantly in transit from one mode, to another. And, just like birds, each school follows its own regular path to and from the same destinations every year. Where you find them this year at this time, you will find them in the same time and place next year. In January and February in the south, and April and June up north, crappies begin to prepare for the ordeal of spawning. All winter, they have been holding in mid to deep water, usually at least 25 feet deep, where they suspend at different depths according to the temperature. They hold over structure and off of creek beds, channels and coves. When the water temperature approaches 60 degrees F., crappie will begin to move towards suitable spawning grounds in shallow water. Bear in mind that surface temperature is usually several degrees warmer. You want to know what the temperature is at around 10 feet deep. Males will begin to come in first, traveling along lines of structure, along creek beds, channels, submerged timber, and any other available cover. Brush piles in 8-15 feet of water are good places to start looking. Females follow soon after. Pre-spawn crappie often hold off of points that slope towards channels and drop-offs. This is a perfect place to use small sinking crank-baits. Use light line and work them from shallow to deep water. In rivers, look for pre-spawn crappie in tributaries, and siltier water, as it warms up first. Crappie will leave the main river channel and move towards areas with less current. Look for them anywhere there is a current break, and heavy cover. Crappie move upstream looking for spawning places. When they come to tailraces behind dams, they will congregate in large numbers in the slower water along the edges, especially near undercuts and current breaks. Spring weather can be unpredictable in some parts of the country. If a cold front moves in after crappie have started their migrations, they will return to deeper water, and start all over. They will follow the same path in and out, so if you found them once, you can find them again. When the water temperature approaches 60 degrees, females will come into shallow water, 4-6 feet deep, on flats near cover, and lay their eggs. Then, the females move off to deeper water and the males remain to guard the nest, striking viciously at anything that comes near it. Any time of day or night is productive now. This is the time of year that crappie aficionados wait for all-year. All you have to do is find them, and they will hit virtually anything thrown at them! They will migrate along natural cover such as submerged timber, creek channels, and especially feeder creek beds, and then nest in nearby shallow flats, and especially coves with stick-up type structure such as pilings, docks, trees, rocks, etc. They build bowl-shaped nests in gravel, sand or substrate. After the eggs hatch, usually within 48-53 hours, they move off to mid-depths, relating to structure, and suspending usually near the thermocline. They will remain in this state until the water begins to cool in the fall.

### About the Author

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

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