

# Arlington Anglers

## Time for a Little Crappie Magic



**Bob Diebold**  
**Arlington Anglers Fishing Club**

It looks like we are done with the snow, but that water is still pretty cold. The cohos and walleyes are active, but this is the perfect time to get after those tasty crappies. I've heard about his guy they call "The Crappie Professor" and at the April Arlington Anglers Meeting, Jim Kopjo lived up to his billing and shared his amazing crappie knowledge that can be used starting right now!

**GENERAL:**

Crappies usually school up and are very competitive. If they are hitting your presentation move on to the next spot. Use sensitive rods, 4-6 pound line, light jigs, small plastics/tube jigs (minnows if you prefer later), one or two split shot, and small floats to put the bait right above those crappies shown on your fish finder. The prime temperature is 62-68 degrees, but the crappies are active already.

**WHERE:**

Find the cleanest, warmest water in spring. Remember that rain will reduce the water temp. Slow down your presentations. Retention ponds are hot right now. Look where the warm water enters, isolated bays, etc. Lakes like Shabbona and Evergreen are picking up too. Crappies love structure, so look for those submerged trees, cribs, and weeds.

**PRE-FISHING WORK:**

Use all available maps, GPS, and the best depth-finder you can afford.

Side scanning is amazing. Take detailed notes on your maps for the next trip or season. Crappies are predictable. Talk to the local bait shops. If they won't share info, look at which color jig/plastic is running short on the shelves.



Jim Kopjo shares his crappie knowledge and techniques at the Anglers April Meeting. "The Crappie Professor" must have a PHD in Crappie Engineering! **PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS**

**TECHNIQUES:**

Your chosen technique usually depends on the wind and how the crappies are staged. When the crappies are sitting on top of the habitat, try casting jigs. When the crappies are packed tight, try vertical jigging. You must have boat control, drop anchor, or have a dead calm. Slip bobbers are effective when crappies are in shallow water or when you need precise depth control. Lastly when the crappies are spread out, try drifting or even trolling with small crank baits at the first drop-off.

Jim Kopjo honed his crappie skills on the Tournament Trails and now is an excellent crappie guide who runs trips on Lake Shabbona and Lake Evergreen. He can be reached at 708-485-2518 or [echo29@sbcglobal.net](mailto:echo29@sbcglobal.net)

**Dates to remember:**

**May 14-17 – Outing**  
*Clinton Lake, Camp Quest*

**May 17 – Event**  
**Take A Vet Fishing at Fox Chain**

**May 19 – Meeting**  
*Captain Bob Battalion*  
*Lake Michigan Fishing*

**May 29-31 – Outing**  
*Lake Shabbona*  
*Multi species fishing & camping*

**May 31 – Event**  
*Crabtree Kids Fishing Derby*  
*(volunteers needed)*

**June 14 – Event**  
*Take A Vet Fishing*  
*Lake Waubesa (Madison WI)*

**June 16 – Meeting**  
*Jim Crowley*  
*IL Multi-Species Fishing & Hunting*

**June 20 – Outing**  
*Illinois River at Starved Rock*

**June 24 – Outing**  
*Lake Delavan*

**June 28 – Outing**  
*Lauderdale Lakes*

Come to one of our meetings to find out more about our club, activities, and outings.

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month from 6:30 to 9:00 PM.

We meet at Cabela's which is located at 5225 Prairie Stone Pkwy, Hoffman Estates, IL just off I-90 at Illinois Rt 59. Door prizes, speaker, raffles, fishing reports:

For further information call our President Tom Curtin at 312-560-9876 or

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Howard Gopman, shows off his 2.5 pound large mouth bass caught on a night crawler at the Skokie Lagoons on 4/19/15.  
**PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS**



Arlington Anglers enjoy a weekend of fishing and camaraderie on the scenic Wisconsin Dells Outing in April.  
**PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS**



Arlington Angler, Greg Michela, displays his chunky small mouth bass caught on the Wisconsin Dells Outing. Rumor has it that he used Cuban cigars as bait. **PHOTO BY: ARLINGTON ANGLERS**