

WHITE CRAPPIE

Scientific Name:

Pomoxis annularis

Other Names:

speckled perch, silver bass, papermouth



Illustration by Duane Raver

Identification:

The White Crappie has a compressed, deep-silvery body, with shades of green or brown on its back. It has five to 10 dark vertical bars on each side and a whitish belly. It is “hump-backed” with five or six spines in the dorsal fin. The dorsal fin, anal fin and tail contain a combination of dark spots and bands.

Habitats and Habits:

Although widely stocked across the state, White Crappie are not native to North Carolina and were most likely introduced in the late 1800s. Some of the best White Crappie populations are found in Piedmont reservoirs, rivers and large ponds. White Crappie are apparently intolerant of acidic waters and are virtually absent from the Coastal region. White Crappie seem to thrive in warmer and more turbid waters than Black Crappie. They are closely associated with structure, often found near fallen trees, stumps, docks and thick stands of aquatic vegetation.

Small White Crappie feed mainly on insects, freshwater shrimp and nymphs, while larger crappie prefer small fish and larger insects. They are especially active at sunrise, sunset and at night during the summer months.

Fishing Techniques:

White Crappie bite best on live minnows, small jigs and spinners. The best time to fish for White Crappie is during the spring spawning season when fish move into shallow shoreline areas. Anglers should concentrate on areas with brush, stumps and docks. To concentrate crappie, anglers will often make “crappie attractors” by sinking Christmas trees and other woody debris. During summer and early fall, reservoir crappie move into deeper water along creek channels, roadbeds and submerged points. The fall can be another hot fishing time for crappie as they move inshore again for a short time.

Good Places to Fish:

Lake Brandt, High Rock Lake, Tuckertown Reservoir

Other Information:

NCARP Minimum Requirements: 2 pounds or 16 inches

State Record: 3 pounds, 15 ounces, private lake in Wake County, April 1, 2013