

Wacky Worming

Written by Dan McGarry • February 2011



Over the last three years the most consistent bass fish catcher I have used has been the "Wacky Worm," a.k.a. "Jersey rig". The rig that most people look at and say how can that silly little worm catch anything? Well, once again it does not matter what we as the fisherman think looks good, but rather what Mr. Bass thinks that matters.

The Jersey rig was first used years ago when the first rubber worms were sold; no doubt those first prehistoric or BT (before tournaments) worms were Crème Scoundrels. They were natural colored and rather hard in comparison to those hand-poured super saty worms of today. For the benefit of the younger generation they were sold on a card, two at a time, hooked up to a harness complete with a propeller and beads, or sold separately, five at a time as a refill pack.

They had a large color selection of natural and black. At that time, rubber worms were fished in three ways: 1) the aforementioned propeller harness, 2) a swimming rig with a swivel and 3) the body curled (still very deadly) and wacky style known as twinkling or tweaking, whichever you preferred. The last few years has made me a believer in the power of that little worm; hopefully, I will be able to give everyone a primer in "wacky worming" and help everyone get a limit when nothing seems to be working.

The equipment I use for "wacky worming" is simple. The rod is a Team Daiwa Tony Bean Smallmouth rod (the best spinning rod ever made for under \$80.00, good for grubs, hair jigs, tubes and pointer 78 jerkbaits). I use the Team Daiwa 1300 SS series spinning reel (still the most durable and smoothest spinning reel made for \$129.00), and on the reel I use either 8# or 10# Bagleys Silver Thread or 6# Vanish. The hook is either a #2 Gary Klein grey shadow finnese hook or my new favorite and Brendan sponser #2 Eagle claw Nickle Teflon Circle hook. My favorite worms are Gold Jersey rig worms, Zoom green gourd centipede worms, green pumpkin Senkos and a 2.5" clear smoke Caseys worm. All of these worms are 4" long and range in softness from the harder, more durable Caseys worms, to the ultra-soft, go-through-a-pack-a-limit Gary Yamamoto (means sof

expensive worm in Japanese) Senkos. I do use other colors and on occasion will use a small fiddler crab looking bait that sinks like a coin thrown into a fountain. All of these colors catch fish, but the little gold one and the green gourd rate very high in my book.

The real beauty of this worm is that anybody, even the beginner, will catch bass on it -- just add water and see what happens. The worms and hooks complete with the little paneling nail in the head cost about \$1.50 per lure, so you can throw them anywhere and fish without fear. Skip them under trees, boat houses, bushes, and any number of nasty places and most times they either come out with a bass or through the snags with few interruptions. The rig lends itself to the beginner, as well as to the expert. My ten-year old son caught his first five pound bass on the 4" green gourd Wacky worm in Forge Pond. The bass was caught in open water over a mussel bed.

This demonstrates just how versatile this lure is...throw it in 20' of water over weeds or throw it under a tree and it will catch any bass that is there. The Wacky worm skips better than any lure and once the lure is in place under anything that has not seen a lure in a long time, you leave it there as long as you can stand it then just lift your rod about 2' and shake the worm let it fall (as you pull up you will feel the little worm vibrate) suddenly you will either feel a slight tap, bump, or pressure. When this happens way back in the landscaping do not set the hook, just tighten up and slowly reel until the Bass clears the cover then pull and reel. The little ultra thin hook will penetrate and Mr. Bass will head for open water where he will be all yours.

The best way to rig a Wacky worm is to tie on the hook (thin wire and super sharp) with a palomar knot; take the worm and push a tiny black panel nail into the head. Take the hook and push the hook through the middle of the worm and turn the hook point back toward the nail and push the hook point back into the worm. This should place the line tie of the hook on the opposite side of the worm with the nail stuck in it. This rig is best thrown and let settle raise the rod 2' to 4' and shake, wait, wait, wait and wait!!! Bass will eat it and just swim away with it. To set the hook just pull and reel. In closing, if your not fishing with the Wacky worm you are not catching all the bass you could be catching!!

See you on the water ...Dan McGarry