

Freshwater Clydesdales: Carp!

Part Two—Carp Fishing UK Style

A carp fishing story published in the 2004 Freshwater Fishing issue of the New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Digest generated an unprecedented level of angler interest. Many anglers called or sent e-mail both to express appreciation and to talk shop about carp fishing. They shared information about carp fishing organizations, tackle supply companies and fishing tactics. It soon became clear there is a growing group of anglers who specialize in carp fishing. The secret's out!

Among many of the conversations there was a common thread: Fishing techniques originating in the United Kingdom have dramatically increased catch rates in New Jersey, and anglers are landing carp as large as 30 pounds. So, Fish & Wildlife is pleased to share this information to help carp-fishing newcomers and seasoned anglers boost their chances of catching a true trophy carp.



Bill Friedman caught a 47-pound carp, a state record, in 1995 on the South Branch of the Raritan River.

barley, cheese, crushed birdseed or bran. These ingredients are best added at the shoreline to ensure maximum dispersal of the scent. Anglers break small pieces from the dough ball and toss them into the water.

A cloud ground bait also starts with stale bread, but it is not soaked. Instead, the bread is tossed into a blender, processed into a fine powder, placed in a container and taken to the fishing location. Once there, scoop up some water, add just enough to the bread powder to achieve a dough-like consistency and then add a flavoring. Form the dough into a ball, break off small pieces and scattered them into the fishing area.

Anglers also can purchase ready-made ground baits from many carp-fishing tackle suppliers (see list below).



Another tip: Avid carp anglers use a throwing stick (above) to distribute ground baits farther from the bank. Fashion your own throwing stick or purchase one from any carp-fishing tackle supplier.

Key tactics for catching carp

In the United Kingdom, successful anglers attract carp to an area by broadcasting ground baits (similar to chumming) a few days before and during a fishing excursion. Ground baits come in two forms: sinking and cloud. The types of waters you fish, the speed of the current and the number of carp in the area all determine which kind of ground bait to use. Generally, sinking bait works best in swift current and a cloud bait works better in calm water.

A sinking ground bait has a base of stale bread: white, brown, whole wheat or a combination of all three. Anglers soak the bread overnight in water or in milk diluted with an equal amount of water. After soaking, the bread is drained, squeezed dry by hand and then formed into a ball. Flavoring is added as a lure; consider using sweet corn, pearl

Boilie Recipe

- Equal parts corn meal, semolina and soy flour; mixed
- Enough eggs to turn dry ingredients into dough (start with 2 eggs for every three cups of meal-flour mixture)
- Flavoring (powdered drink mix, either strawberry or cherry)
- Artificial sweetener
- Food coloring (either red, yellow or green)
- 1/4 tablespoon vegetable oil for each egg used

Mix together eggs, flavoring, sweetener, food coloring and vegetable oil in a bowl. Stir in the meal-flour mixture to make a stiff dough. (If dough is too dry, add more egg.) Let the dough sit for 10-15 minutes. Using your hands, roll large pieces of the dough into the shape of sausages about a half-inch thick. With a knife, cut the roll of dough into half-inch lengths. Use your hands to shape the cut pieces into balls. Add the small balls to boiling water and cooked for approximately two minutes. With a slotted spoon, remove the boilies from the hot water and place them on a several layers of paper towels. Let boilies set for four or five hours, and then go fishing. Extra boilies can be frozen in plastic bags for future fishing trips. If you experiment with this recipe, be sure to write down the ingredient ratios. If the carp find your boilies irresistible, you'll want to recreate your special batch.

Boilies are the best

Among carp anglers in the United Kingdom, boilies are the baits of choice. Although similar to American-style dough balls, boilies are more refined. An Internet search yields hundreds of recipes for boilies; however, the following one is easy to make and works well in both lakes and rivers. Many of the ingredients are available at your local health food store.

The Hair Rig

After studying carp behavior with hooks during tank tests, English fishermen Kevin Maddocks and Len Middleton developed the hair rig in the late '70s. Maddocks and Middleton learned that carp could sense the presence of a hook and feel the fishing line passing over their lips and were frightened by it, even if the hook

was buried in bait. Their studies demonstrated that carp would regularly spit out the bait if it contained a hidden hook.

To increase hooking success, Maddocks and Middleton developed the hair rig (pictured below with a boilie). Though the premise of the hair rig hasn't changed during the past 30 years, there now is an emphasis on the hook's ability to rotate to get a good hold as the carp runs with the bait. This set up typically uses an eight- to 10-inch piece of braided line with a swivel attached to the terminal end. A large sewing needle can be used to pass the braided line through the boilie. Once it is through, two or three square knots are tied in the line to prevent the boilie from slipping off during a cast. The rig is best used with a fish-finder weight harness that allows the carp to take the bait without feeling the weight of a sinker.



Carp are well distributed in New Jersey and are a virtually untouched recreational fishery. An angler who moved to New Jersey from Great Britain regularly catches 20- to 25-pound carp using fishing tactics he learned abroad. Try these techniques and tips, and you might be amazed. Don't miss out!

—Hugh Carberry, Supervising Biologist

CARP FISHING ORGANIZATIONS

Many of these sites feature "how to" articles on carp fishing.

- **Carp Fishing UK** www.carpfishinguk.net
The most complete collection of carp fishing information on the Internet.
- **Carp Anglers Group (CAG)** www.carpanglersgroup.com
CAG is an organization of avid carp anglers from the United States, Canada, Great Britain and beyond. Founded in 1993 as a specialty section within the American Fishing Association, it has since evolved into an independent educational and social group devoted to carp fishing.

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- **Carp Fishing Magazine** www.carp.com
The magazine's Web page
- **Carp Fishing-North America** www.carpfishing.com
Dedicated to disseminating information to carpers throughout North America and the world.

CARP FISHING TACKLE SUPPLIERS

Visit these Web sites for tips, ground baits, boilies, and carp rigs.

- **Leslies-Luton** www.leslies-luton.co.uk
- **CC Moore** www.ccmoore.com
- **Castaway-Tackle** www.castaway-tackle.com
- **Flacktackle** www.flacktackle.com
- **Royal Carp Inc.** www.royalcarp.com

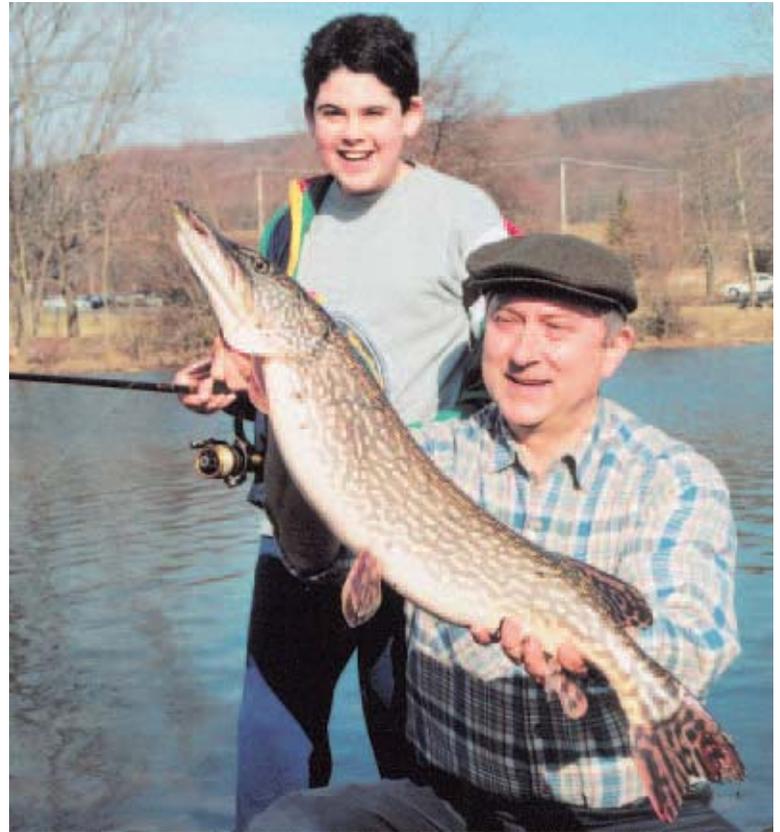
Hey, how's the fishing?

Whether you've been catching fish like crazy or you haven't had a bite, New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife wants to hear from you.

A new **Freshwater Fishing Survey** asks about the kinds of fish you're catching (or not catching!) and the places you've been fishing, among other questions.

Information gathered through the survey will help Fish and Wildlife to make the best possible use of your fishing license dollars in its fisheries management programs, which include stocking public waters.

Fish and Wildlife would like to know if you've been successful or you've been skunked; whether you keep your catch or turn them back alive; and other important information. Please complete the fishing survey available at www.njfishandwildlife.com; it only takes minutes to complete.



Hard-fighting northern pike, like this handsome fish caught at Spruce Run Reservoir, make for an exciting fishing experience.

Photo courtesy of Tom Pagliaroli

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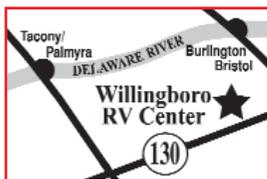
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