



A new angle: Carp are just a misunderstood kind of fish

Copley News Service

Just say the word "carp" around the average fisherman and you'll get a look that could, well, kill a carp.

Carp are a fish that contemporary anglers love to hate. Scaly, bony, inedible, reputedly unkillable, the denizen of waters unfit for real sport fishing, carp are seen as the sign of an aquatic ecosystem out of balance and of game fish in peril.

There's just one problem: Most of that image is untrue. More than 100 years ago, carp was one of the nation's most sought-after sport fish. People literally petitioned their congressman to authorize stocking local lakes with the fish.

In Europe, carp have been a choice sport fish for centuries.

Raised in ponds by monks, a fat carp was (and still is) considered a toothsome morsel.

Today, carp are found throughout the United States and Canada, and inhabit almost every low-elevation stream and lake in the nation.

So, if you are going to spend hundred of dollars seeking 5-pound fish, why not go after 40- or 50-pound fish that pack such a piscine wallop that they have been known to turn fishing tackle into splinters? Just because they're unpopular, don't think they're stupid.

Carp can be one of the most canny fish you'll seek. They will often mouth bait gently, spitting anything out that has a hint of a hook. Carp are wonderful, strong fighters and can be a challenge to

land on any tackle.

They can be caught from early spring to late fall, making it a popular species in the hot summer months. The two most common baits for carp are canned corn and dough bait. Tests by the Nebraska State Department of Natural Resources revealed that canned corn is probably the best bait for carp fishing.

Single hooks in sizes 6 and 8 work well on carp, and treble hooks are effective if the bottom is not too full of snags. Fishing methods are rather simple for carp. You can cast, or use a long cane pole with enough line, to place the bait. The only rule of thumb is to keep the bait on the bottom. There doesn't seem to be a particular time when carp bite

better.

Carp spawn in the spring and early summer in weedy, grassy, shallow areas of lakes and streams. Spawning occurs when the water temperature ranges from 63 degrees to 78 degrees. They are actually both bottom and surface feeders, consuming everything from dough balls to freshwater whelks and mussels.

So, what if you catch one? Despite the scales and bones, carp are no different than any other fish. Clean with a razor-sharp knife and wear fillet gloves as a precaution. To skin, start with a gutted carp. Grasp the fish by the head and cut through the scales and skin along the entire length of the top of the back. Cut around the fins on each side.

Then, remove the fin by pulling it forward from the rear with pliers. Then cut through the skin down each side of the body just behind the head. Peel the skin off with pliers. Score the flesh deeply before cooking. Most people believe carp has a nasty taste.



Come out & see us... and we will pay for your gas

111 Boulevard Dr.
Leland, MI 49654
Ph: 231-256-9231
Fax: 231-256-7136



Break'n Waves
WAX-COOL & BOAT SERVICE

SHRINK WRAPPING

"Protect Your Investment"

Competitive Rates With Quality Service
From Jet Skis to Big Boats & anything in between.

(231) 929-3303 (231) 883-9110

Eric Harding 1126 E. Eighth Street
Traverse City, MI 49686

2/9.687610.BO

Briggs & Stratton
BOAT MOTORS
Your boat deserves the best!

See us at the Boat Show!

now available at:

Lark Lawn & Garden

Corner of M-37 and Norton Rd. • Traverse City 943-4900

2/9.687613

Established in 1963

ONEKAMA MARINE

U.S. 31 to M-22 Portage Lake (50 mi. south of T.C.)

See Us At The Grand Traverse Resort for Special "Boat Show" Pricing
Excellent Boat Show Financing!



- The finest products
- Excellent pre-delivery preparation
- 40 years of sales & service

- Master service technicians
- Serious service after the sale
- Many Models In Stock !!






ONEKAMA MARINE

231-889-5000

Ask for Steve or Jim

FOUR "ON WATER" FACILITIES

"YOUR POWER BOAT PROFESSIONALS"




2/9.687414.BO