

Wacky Jig Bass

Castaic Soft Bait
Baby Jerky J



Last summer, success stories began to circulate about wacky-rigging thin worms on finesse jigheads, enabling anglers to catch bass when other techniques failed. Toward the end of the season, I obtained the specialized heads and worms, along with many tips on their use, and eagerly tried them out. I was amazed to catch largemouth and smallmouth bass nearly everywhere I tossed this rig, on my first trip.

I caught bass that were chasing baitfish in open water, casting to rises and letting the worm slowly fall; I caught them deadsticking it on bottom; they bit as I shook the lure nervously, as several experienced wacky-jiggers suggest you do; I caught fish on weedlines, and while retrieving worms just above bottom on deep points and ledges. It seemed almost too easy.

Later I found that wacky jigs also work in current, the jig providing weight to pull the worm into the feeding zone behind bridge abutments and boulders. These initial tests were eye-openers about the potential effectiveness of this tactic, though sometimes other presentations worked better. But I feel that this new rigging wrinkle is so versatile, and at times so irresistible to bass, that it deserves attention from every avid bass angler.

Wacky-rigging is an old trick. I first fished worms rigged this way more than 30 years ago. And ever since Falcon Lures offered their Weighted K-Wacky Hook, I've been using weighted versions in windy conditions or to get baits deeper.

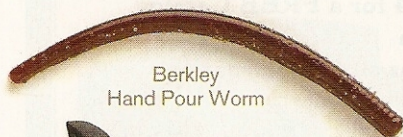
Wacky-rigging makes a bait drift as if helplessly. The two ends of a Senko or other soft stickbait throb as it falls. I've become convinced that nearly any elongated softbait can score when wacky-rigged.

Wacky jigs, however, offer an entirely new look, especially when manipulated by anglers taking the time to study the presentation in detail. A jig provides a pivot point around which a supple worm can be wiggled by shaking the rod tip. Watch its rolling action in a pool or tank to get an idea of the life-like appeal possible. Variations in presentation and tackle are expanding rapidly, as often occurs in fishing today.

Wacky-Jig Origins

In-Fisherman Field Editor Ned Kehde, of Lawrence, Kansas, is a die-hard finesse angler, mastering a variety of tactics to catch bass that refuse standard offerings. Kehde's also known for his detailed observations, which reveal how top professional anglers approach diverse situations. He's become a student of wacky-jigging and guardian of its lore.

WHAT TO WACKY-JIG



Berkley Hand Pour Worm



Berkley Gulp!
Floating Dover Crawler



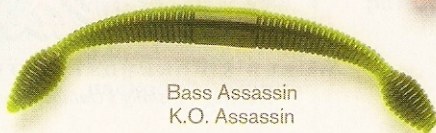
Yamamoto
Fall Shaker Worm with
heat-shrink tubing



Berkley Gulp!
Floating Nightcrawler



Big Bite
Boring Worm



Bass Assassin
K.O. Assassin



Yamamoto
Pro Senko