

# 10 Bites = 9 Fish

By Denny Sands

How many times have you said to yourself or to your fishing buddy, “I think I just had a bite?” Or how many times have you picked up your rod to reel it in and felt a fish pulling back, but when you set the hook the fish is gone?

Why is it some fishermen have a lot more “luck” than other fishermen? What are they doing that you are not? Believe it or not, it is almost as embarrassing to your “lucky” fishing partner, as it is to you, when the catch ratio goes way out of hand.

I’ve been known to have my share of “luck”. There have been times that I purposely quit fishing as hard, so that I do not embarrass myself or my fishing partner any further.

But why do some fishermen seem to get more bites than other fishermen? **Or Do They?**

Often when two people are fishing together and one starts catching fish on a certain presentation, both fishermen will switch to that presentation. Yet one always seems to have better “luck”.

Fish bites are non discriminatory. The fish does not know who is the person on the other end, nor does it care.

I am a firm believer that **ALL** fishermen gets more bites than they realize. Lets look at 10 situations. Please honestly answer, to yourself, if you would “set the hook” on each and every situation. If you did, you too would probably catch nine fish for every ten bites.

The examples we are going to use are for crappie fishing, but the theory can equally be applied to every fish.

**Bite # 1.** The situation is you are fishing with a crappie stick bobber standing upright with terminal tackle consisting of two BB split shots and a thin wire hook with a minnow hooked through the eyes. Good set up. The two split shots caused the bobber to stand upright. The bobber goes under! **SET THE HOOK!!!** (You got the idea. Most everyone gets this fish.)

**Bite # 2.** You are only using one BB split shot with a crappie stick bobber, thin wire hook and a crappie minnow. The crappie bobber will lay on its side, because one split shot is not heavy enough to stand the bobber upright. This is a technique you will use in shallow water (less than 3

feet). The bobber suddenly stands up, but does not go under. SET THE HOOK! (A few of you missed this one because you are waiting for the bobber to go under.)

**Bite # 3.** This situation can apply to either a standing bobber or a laying bobber. Your bobber “oh so slowly” starts to move on its own, sideways or in any direction. Bobbers can not swim. They are an inanimate object. SET THE HOOK ! Do not wait for that bobber to do anything else on its own. If you wait for it to go under, there is a distinct probability that the Crappie will spit it out, if it is biting that lightly. (Did you get this crappie?)

**Bite # 4.** You are using a crappie bobber with two split shot causing the bobber to stand upright. The bobber suddenly lays over on its side. SET THE HOOK ! Bobbers are not lazy. They do not lay down on their own. You may think that the bobber is laying on its side because your hook is caught on a fish crib and the bobber is not going under, nor is it moving in any direction. I think it is a bite and catch another one. (This is where “luck” seems to creep in, or is it luck?)

**Bite # 5.** Now we are going to fish without a bobber. It is called “lightlining”. We are going to vertically fish down inside a fish crib. We have caught all of the active ones near the top of the crib with our bobber fishing. We take off the bobber and use only the two or three split shot, the thin wire hook and the crappie minnow hooked through the eyes. As we slowly lower the minnow down we feel a solid “thump”. SET THE HOOK ! (Most everyone caught this one.)

**Bite # 6.** As we lower our bobber-less crappie rig into the fish crib, we notice the line “all on its own” moving sideways. SET THE HOOK ! Line, like bobbers, can not swim, move or make any movements on their own. If you wait until you “feel” the bite, you will lose the fish due to an entanglement or the Crappie spitting out the hook. (One more for my stringer ! How about yours?)

**Bite # 7.** Now we are going to get into a little finesse fishing. When we lower the bobber-less crappie rig inside the fish crib, we notice a “distinct” bow in the line. We did not feel a bite, nor is the line moving sideways. SET THE HOOK ! Many fishermen miss this one because they assume the minnow has rested on a part of the fish crib. This bite is very typical when Crappie are in a negative feeding mood. (Getting the idea! Assume everything is a bite!)

**Bite # 8.** You think you have a bite, but the bobber stops. It does not do anything, except it is partially submerged. It does not look like it did a second ago. It is riding in the water a little lower than it was. SET THE HOOK ! Remember bobbers are inanimate object, they can not change their buoyancy on their own. Crappie after sucking in the minnow often do not move. They merely remain stationary waiting for the next morsel of food. (I got him, did you?)

**Bite # 9.** You notice the bobber is rising a little higher in the water, than it has been. It does not

lay over, move sideways or go under. But it is definitely sitting higher in the water. Could it be an hallucination? Am I imagining things? **SET THE HOOK !** (That is fish number 9 for me, how are you doing?)

**Bite # 10** The bobber is doing something it was not doing 2-3 seconds ago. Could it be a snag? Could the minnow be pulling it around? Could there be an earthquake happening off in the distance causing my bobber to do something un-natural. Yes it could ! But do you know what I am going to do ? **SET THE HOOK !** We did not get a fish on this bite, but we were ready. **9 out of 10 is not so bad !!!**