



Department of Environmental Conservation

I NY GUIDE TO WACKY RIGGING FOR BASS



Looking for an easy, effective way to catch largemouth and smallmouth bass?

Give “wacky rigging” a try. Anglers of any experience level can use this simple rig. It is particularly good for young anglers who have tired of catching fish on a bobber and worm.

WHAT IS A WACKY RIG?

A wacky rig is a plastic worm or stick bait with the hook inserted through the middle, not the head of the bait, perpendicular to its length. No one really knows what makes this rig so attractive to bass. It might be the lifeless way it falls through the water. Or it could be simply that it annoys fish who can’t believe that anyone would attempt to catch them with something so ridiculous. One thing is certain, it catches fish when nothing else does.

RIGGING WACKY STYLE

- Tie a 1/0 or 2/0 circle hook onto 8-12 lb. monofilament fishing line. Use heavier line in weeds and other thick cover.
- Select a 5-6” plastic stick bait of your color choice. Purple and watermelon colors are good choices for most NYS waters.
- Slip an O-ring onto the middle of the bait. Most tackle shops sell a special wacky rigging tool that helps prevent tearing the bait when sliding the O-ring on and off.
- Slide the circle hook point under the O-ring.



SELECTING A ROD AND REEL

A medium to medium-heavy-action, spin-casting or spinning rod is best for wacky rigging. Push-button style spin-casting outfits are best suited for beginning anglers.



Spin-casting

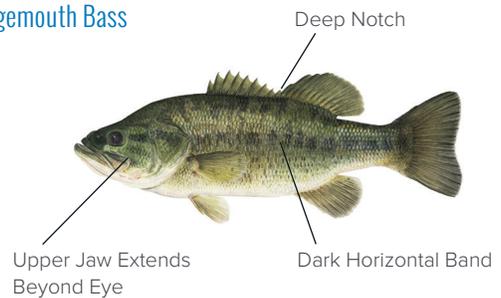


Spinning

FISHING WACKY STYLE

Fishing the wacky rig is as simple as casting your bait towards cover and letting it fall on a slack line. This is what makes it so perfect for beginning anglers. Once your bait sinks to the bottom, retrieve it in a twitch-pause style. If the line begins to move, or you feel resistance, reel steadily until the hook is set in the fish’s mouth. Remember, with a circle hook, there is no need to jerk your rod to set the hook. Just reel steadily and the hook will set itself.

Largemouth Bass



Smallmouth Bass



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact DEC at fwfish@dec.ny.gov
Visit the DEC Fishing webpage at:
www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html