
Spring Carp Bait Flavours And Irresistible Cold Water Fishing Ground Baits

In spring, carp are notorious for being very difficult to catch. Fishing bottom baits or 'pop-up' baits on the lake bed can be a complete waste of time. But also using buoyant baits in the middle or top layers of water. The top layers are where carp will often 'sit'; most comfortably for a great proportion of time without visiting the denser, colder bottom layers. If they do visit the bottom layers to feed, it may often be for a very limited period of time indeed!

In carp fishing it is often the case that without sufficient stimulatory attraction substances dissolved (or 'semi-dissolved') in the water, the fish can seem 'blind' to your hook baits. In order to induce takes; far more efficiently in spring, you need an edge which will activate the senses of carp which hang n the top water layers as if oblivious to a hook bait on its own even when boosted with flavours and glowing with fluorescent colours!

To achieve the levels of stimulation in the water around and directly above you hook bait is distinct advantage at times when water is cold especially. Having an 'active' ground bait that constantly releases rising particles and attractive and stimulatory substances is a great 'edge'.

Oily ground baits can disintegrate and components can rise up to 'activate' the water column surrounding your hovering pop-up or floating buoyant hook bait above it in the middle and top layers where fish are often located. Cold water fish are often unwilling to feed in more dense lower water near the bottom as this is more uncomfortable for them and too cold for their metabolism to be efficient.

The top water layers receive radiated heat from the sun and

bit becomes less dense. Top layers are warmer and suit fish metabolism parameters and they use energy far more efficiently there, but carp can also be caught at great depths too... A great 'plus' about fishing the top water layers is that 'takes' can come at any time and be totally unexpected, whereas winter and spring carp fishing results and feeding times can be far more limited. With bottom baits, bites may be limited to happen during a short half-hour period in the early morning on a fishery. This can mean that the rest of your time fishing on the lake bed is just a waste of time!

Water soluble poly vinyl alcohol ('PVA') bags or 'netting' can be used filled with all kinds of tasty morsels to attract fish. The more they react and remain active and move around in the water the better! Filling these with bread crumb based ground bait and maggots to get movement it can really improve results when fish are unresponsive to more conventional inactive pellets and boilies, meats etc. Maggots and hook baits can be sprayed with flavours to boost attraction. Proven cold water flavours like Rod Hutchinson's 'Megaspice' or 'Scopex' at about 3 milliliters per kilogram of crushed boilies or pellets as part of a ground bait mix in a 'PVA' bag (or net) can work wonders on a cold day.

Hemp oil which is far more water soluble and viscous in low temps than most oils used in fishing baits does not inhibit bait digestion like fish oils.

Adding liquid lecithins has many stimulatory advantages helping any oils already in the crushed boilies or pellets to emulsify and spread more effectively through water to attract fish.

Adding a mixture of essential oils can really make a difference at this time of year. You can use a single one or a mixture. Among the most well known are black pepper oil and geranium terpenes and clove oil. Eucalyptus oil has also been very successful in winter and spring for me as well as the cold decongestant essential oil mixture called 'Olbas Oil' which

has done well for me all year round any temperatures. It comes into its own in spring those variable spring temperatures.

A spring 35LB mirror UK 2000 on high levels of essential oils / single bait

As an attractor and flavour 'Olbas Oil' contains many 'bioactive' antioxidant compounds also regarded as antiseptics. (Clove oil in dentistry for instance!) It has a proven range of essential oils but one constituent is also a very potent, extremely soluble, naturally occurring carboxylic ('organic') acid a derivative of birch trees. This special group of acidic substances are just one among very many which has been used extremely successfully in commercially produced fishing flavours and baits for years.

Adding edible dyes to your ground bait adds visual stimulation. (You can mix 'Ccmooore' red pigment based 'Red Venom' which is extremely effective at this time of year.) It is based on the famed 'Carophyll Red' (The substance connected to so much controversy in connection with another excellent bait additive especially for this time of year namely, 'Robin Red'.) There are a vast range of other stimulants, enhancers, flavours etc to exploit especially for low temperature use and much depends if you are using the 'instant bait' approach, the long-term bait approach, or both!

If you mix up your special ground bait and find it is too light or buoyant you can add sterilised sand to provide weight and when spread on the lake bed will release and send up into the water column tiny globules of oils

attached to them from the ground baits mixture, so adding to the attraction

So you cast out and your 'PVA' bag or netting of ground bait attached to your hook and or lead releases bits of bait and tiny droplets of oils travelling upwards constantly release from the bait in regularly occurring streams of attraction. As your flavours, additives and oils travel and diffuse through the water in varying amounts, any carp in the vicinity will be able to home in on it and identify the exact proximity of your hook bait as the source of all this exciting substances.

As the ground bait is composed of crumbs which are not going to fill the carp up before it has at least sampled your hook bait as it is the only sold food available, the chances of a hooking a fish and getting a take are maximised. I have since learnt that this is the kind of idea used with the compressed ground bait 'stick' method. This method can rely less on ground bait design of ingredients being very 'active' It differs in that the bait is compressed tightly into soluble PVA netting and when this dissolves in the water, the ground bait expands and disperses, so increasing its carp 'pulling power'.

Although this is just the tip of the winter and spring bait 'ice-berg' and there is far more to successful baits and techniques, even using these few simple methods has proven effective for me personally, but are just a 'half-way stage' to even more effective things...

By Tim Richardson.

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