



A Complete Guide on the Effectively Fish with the **CRIPPLED HERRING**[®] JIG • CAST • TROLL



Some people are born fishermen. Pete Rosko is one of them. More than a fisherman, he is a perpetual student of nature. His curiosity of creatures beneath the waters spawned the invention of the Crippled Herring[®] lure. Originally created for salmon and halibut jigging, this bait-shaped metal jig has attracted the attention of all types of fish worldwide. It is the most versatile lure you'll ever use. Natural in appearance and action, a Crippled Herring can be used worldwide, every day of the year, for all baitfish-eating predator fish, in fresh and saltwater.

A Crippled Herring[®] is a sight-sound lure programmed to take advantage of the strong, natural predator instinct common to all gamefish. Every movement of any type of distressed baitfish (stunned, struggling or dying) has been engineered into it. It can be cast, jigged through ice or in open water, or trolled. Many times a Crippled Herring will arouse fish and provoke strikes when conventional lures or natural bait will not.

A prime example is a dead calm, bright sunny day when fish seek bottom in deeper water. Predator fish will frequently swim past healthy baitfish to attack one in distress. An injured baitfish is an easy meal closely imitated by a Crippled Herring on its downward fall. Under most conditions, between 3 and 300 feet of water, an angler proficient with a Crippled Herring will consistently catch more fish. Almost all strikes will occur during or at the end of the downward fall. The lift or forward movement of the lure attracts fish, but it is the backward or downward fall created by SLACK LINE that triggers strikes! Immediately reel in all slack line then set the hook, if the lure is "bumped," the line goes slack during the fall, or if any resistance is felt. On SLACK LINE the Crippled Herring flutters, darts, wobbles and flashes like a stunned baitfish, creating fish-attracting sonic vibrations.

Every Crippled Herring comes from the factory shaped for optimum action and sound. The 1/2- through 5-oz. series is designed for lively action and is highly effective throughout the entire water column. Every strike-triggering action possible is programmed into each lure, making adjustments unnecessary. However, a "C" bend will cause the lure to fall slower on a more vertical path. An "S" bend will cause the lure to fall slower on a more horizontal path. Caution: Bending may result in fracture.

TIME PROVEN TIPS

- 1. DON'T FISH BLINDLY:** Before fishing, use a quality electronic fishfinder to locate concentrations of baitfish or gamefish.
- 2. LOCATE ACTIVE GAMEFISH:** Look for diving birds and "disturbed" water caused by swirling, boiling or leaping fish.
- 3. LOCATE FISH-ATTRACTING STRUCTURES & OPPORTUNITIES** such as underwater reefs, springs, wrecks, rock piles, submerged islands, pinnacles and ledges. Also, saltwater kelp edges, weed edges, floating debris, floating weed lines, river mouths, river channel edges, tide or current breaks, clean water next to dirty water, flood-lit areas, bridge abutments next to deep water channels, docks next to deep water, drop-offs near points of land, standing timber, warm water discharges and thermoclines. **Tip:** You will hook many more fish, such as bass and snook, by vertical jigging off the dock or bridge vs. casting to these structures. Reason: Most of these fish position themselves underneath the protective structure and will not come out of its shadow to chase a lure that falls through the strike zone. In comparison, only vertical jigging constantly maintains the lure in this critical strike zone which often provokes instinctive strikes.
- 4. MATCH LURE FINISHES** to light and water conditions (for both fresh & salt water):
 - a) Clean water on bright days: Chrome or Gold.
 - b) Clean water on dark days: Pearl White or Pearl White combinations.
 - c) Dirty or tea-stained water: Gold or Pearl White combinations.
 - d) Deep or dark clean water: Everglo with a Fluorescent Chartreuse "Back".
 - e) Under artificial light in clean water: Gold, Chrome or Pearl White.
 - f) Green algae-tinted water: Gold, Fire Tiger or Pearl White or Chrome with Green "Back".
 - g) At ice-out: Pearl White.
 - h) Water with perch forage: Gold or Fire Tiger.
 - i) Water with trout forage: Gold or Rainbow Trout.
 - j) All other baitfish forage (the following basic finishes should be included in the tacklebox of every serious angler): Gold, Chrome and Pearl White combinations.

NOTE: a) Since fish change their color preferences throughout the day, experiment

with different finishes. For contrast, stripe the back of a Chrome finish with a "Magic Marker" color of your choice. b) Metallic finishes, such as Chrome, Gold or Nickel, are most effective when sunshine reflects off their surfaces. Pearl White and fluorescent combinations, work great on both bright and dark days. c) The Everglo finish is very effective in the early morning, on very dark days, in deep water and through the ice.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1. HOOK FILES:** "Sticky-sharp" hooks dramatically increase your hookups! A good test is to slide the hook point over your thumbnail. If it sticks, it's sharp. Dull hooks slide off. Luhr Jensen's fine-tooth Original Hook file is excellent for sharpening hooks (and fillet knives) in seconds.
- 2. HOOKS:** A single hook is stronger than a treble. It is also used to reduce fish mortality and to minimize snags and fouling when fishing rocks and weeds. However, a fine wire treble hook is recommended when jigging for light-biting species such as yellow perch and crappie. Also, for ice jigging, you can replace the single hook with fine wire treble hooks on both the nose and tail eyelets.
- 3. SCENT:** Under most conditions, fish strike the Crippled Herring in reaction to its appearance and sonic vibrations. Adding bait is not recommended, especially for the smallest size lures, since this would impair their delicate balance and action. Exceptions: a) Tip lure with minnows when ice-jigging. b) When fishing is slow, tip with a piece of nightcrawler for walleyes, and squid or cutbait for saltwater species such as grouper and snapper.
- 4. LURE SIZE:** Generally use the smallest lure to effectively reach the fish. Small lures catch big fish, especially when the fish are not active.
- 5. SNAPS & SWIVELS:** Attaching a snap swivel directly to the Crippled Herring is not recommended unless when trolling or using the "swimming the spoon" technique. The Crippled Herring is the favorite lure for many bass pros and "Hall of Famers". Jigs it with a lift-shake-drop rod action over break lines. The best combination is to attach a wide bend snap or tie a loop knot to the lure end of the leader with a swivel on the opposite end if line twist is a problem. This also prevents killing the lure's action caused by tying directly to a smaller lure overloaded with heavy shock leader. Tying directly to the lure is fine as long as you match light line to light lures. **Note:** When casting or vertical jigging with Sufix[®] braided lines it is not necessary to use a swivel since there is no problem with line twist.
- 6. ATTRACTORS:** Attaching a willow leaf blade to the back of the hook can increase strikes, especially on the retrieve and when trolling. This presentation will out-fish most other speed-trolling techniques in saltwater! Best size is a 1- or 1 1/2-oz. Crippled Herring. Use a snap (not a snap swivel) to attach the blade to the split ring. The blade should not extend beyond the bend of the hook. Everglo/Flo. Green Back works best on dark days and bright Nickel on sunny days.
- 7. LEADER:** Fluorocarbon or clear monofilament is best when cutoffs by sharp teeth are not a problem. Otherwise, use single or multi-strand dark wire and swivels. Use longer and thinner diameter leader in clearer water.
- 8. MAIN LINE:** No-stretch, braided "superline" (e.g. Sufix[®] 832[®] Advanced Superline or Sufix[®] Performance Braid) is best for longer casts, better hook-sets, minimizing line drag and for telegraphing strikes, especially in deeper water. When jigging, no-stretch main line is far superior to monofilament and does not readily twist.
- 9. RODS:** The general rule is, "the larger the jig, the greater the rod strength required to effectively fish the jig". For improved hook sets when jigging, use shorter rods with strong backbone and a fast action tip. Quality graphite rods are best for light weight, sensitivity and strength. Spinning equipment is primarily used in shallower water, when casting to surface-feeding fish or when trolling. Suggestion: For 1/2- to 1-oz. lures, use a 5 1/2- to 6-ft. med-heavy to heavy spinning rod with 10- to 14-lb. braided line. When trolling for large Florida Gulf species, a 1 1/2-oz. Chrome Crippled Herring is fished on a 7-ft. med-heavy spinning rod with 20-lb. braided line. Surfcasting requires longer spinning rods for greater distance. A baitcasting outfit is used for jigging in deeper water. Ideal for handling 3/4- to 3-oz. Crippled Herring is a 6 1/2-ft. heavy rod with 20-lb. braided line. Heavier, but not longer rods are used for heavier lures.

10. Lures cast on tight or heavier lines sink more slowly than on slack line (better results for suspended fish.)

11. **“MATCH THE HATCH”:** At times it is critical to match lure colors with the colors of the baitfish in addition to matching the size of the baitfish being eaten (examine stomach contents if necessary).

12. **DON'T FISH OUT OF CONTROL:** Poor conditions include muddy water, strong tides and extremely high or low barometric pressure (fish deeper on higher readings). Avoid any weather situation that compromises line control and, most importantly, your safety. To remedy a bow in your line, cast directly up or down wind.

JIGGING

Always use a vertical, and not sideways, rod lift when vertical or horizontal jigging. The vertical rod lift causes the lure to wobble upward and positions it for the critical downward fluttering action as the rod is dropped back toward the lure. The upward wobble attracts fish but it is the downward flutter, imitating an injured baitfish, that triggers strikes. Almost all strikes will occur during and at the end of the downward fall. Vary the length and speed of your rod lifts between 7 and 11 o'clock, until a successful pattern is developed. Abrupt rod lifts (jerking) will attract fish. However, this may cause the lure to foul and will create excessive slack line. Excessive slack line makes strike detection and hook sets almost impossible. (An exception is “weed line ripping” to initially attract fish, then settling in with a more deliberate jigging motion with controlled slack line.) Many strikes will be disguised as taps, slack line or a steady pull. If in doubt, rapidly reel in all slack line, then strike quickly.

VERTICAL JIGGING: This is the most thorough and precise of all techniques for suspended and bottom-positioned fish from a stationary position or during a slow drift. It is superior to all other techniques since the lure constantly remains in the strike zone. Only vertical jigging effectively permits reaching fish in inaccessible locations such as timber, weed or kelp pockets, floating debris, docks, piers and bridge pilings. For maximum control, bait casting rods with levelwind reels are critical to effectively vertical jig to suspended or bottom-positioned fish in water deeper than 60 feet. Before jigging to suspended fish, determine the amount of line released from your reel after the levelwind guide moves from one side to the other. You will now be able to accurately drop your lure to where the fish are located by using the revolutions of the levelwind reel as your depth guide. Constantly monitor your electronic fish locator to remain over the fish. This is a deadly technique, especially for suspended fish such as salmon, kokanee, cold water largemouth bass and striped bass. When jigging for bottom-positioned fish, maintain a bouncing action against the bottom structure. This not only keeps your lure in the strike zone it also triggers strikes as a result of the lure's sound against bottom and the puffs of debris it kicks up. Once your line angles off, speed-retrieve your lure. At times this will trigger strikes as the lure passes through a zone of suspended fish.

ICE JIGGING: Use the lightest lure and line to reach your target. The Crippled Herring can be used as the primary lure or as an attractor using the same presentations. Adding fine wire treble hooks to the nose and tail eyelets increases effectiveness with the primary lure. Tip both hooks with small minnows, thin belly strips or fish eyes. When fish are near bottom, occasionally bounce your lure against the bottom to kick up silt to attract fish. Then barely work your lure a few inches above bottom. Strikes will occur while it is pausing after very short lifts or twitches. Hold the rod stationary 2 to 10 seconds after a lift or twitch, then repeat. Constantly monitor your fish locator for the precise position of the fish. For an attractor lure, remove all hooks from the lure and add a 2 1/4-inch, 4-lb. fluorocarbon dropper line to the tail eyelet tipped with the lure/bait of your choice.

HORIZONTAL JIGGING (Jig casting): This technique has a wide variety of applications involving both baitcasting and spinning equipment from a stationary position or while drifting. It will effectively cover water depths of 3 to 250 feet. Spinning tackle is best when targeting surface-feeding fish and down to depths of 60 ft. Baitcasting tackle is best but spinning tackle still can be used. Surface-feeding fish... for explosive strikes, cast a 3/4- or 1-oz. lure and speed-retrieve after a 3 to 5 count. When casting (or spinning) to suspended fish, engage the reel once the lure hits the water and use a slow pumping rod motion as the lure falls on tight line. This results in a slower fall rate with increased sideways action and sonic vibrations. This is deadly in a school of suspended fish such as king mackerel, salmon, striped bass or yellowfin tuna. Once the lure has almost settled, speed-retrieve it back through the suspended fish. At times this will result in a savage strike.

CASTING TO FISH NEAR THE BOTTOM (e.g. halibut, lingcod, grouper or snapper) over a snag-free bottom can be very effective at anchor or while drifting. At anchor, on a running tide, cast into the tide and bottom-bounce the lure back to you. In calmer water, cast in any direction. On a slow drift, in shallow water, casting directly into or against the drift can be equally effective. On a faster drift in shallower water, or any drift in deep water, always cast directly into the drift. This increases the amount of time the lure can be jigged against bottom. Remember to fish with controlled slack line.

Notes: a) In shallower, snag-filled waters cast ahead (not sideways) into the direction of your boat's drift. Retrieve by bottom-bouncing the lure through the structure (rock piles and reefs are great). Since your lure reaches the target before the boat, fish are not easily spooked. Also, any snagged lure is easily retrieved as the boat drifts over the snag. This is especially deadly when fishing for walleyes! Remember to use the SMALLEST lure that still permits you to make an effective cast. b) Fishing out of a rod holder can be very effective, in a chop of 1 to 2 feet, for vertically-bouncing your lure along a smooth bottom for species such as halibut, grouper and walleyes... equally effective at anchor or slow drift.

“DEAD STICKING”

This is a very simple, exciting and unbelievably effective technique to catch large fish on light spinning tackle. Basically, the reel is engaged as soon as the cast lure hits the water. The lure is permitted to free-fall while maintaining a stationary (dead stick) rod position of about 8 to 10 o'clock. In effect, the built-in action of the Crippled Herring does all the work. It closely resembles the natural action of a crippled or stunned baitfish.

Use the smallest lure possible since it's important for it to fall slowly. (During saltwater tests, many chinook salmon over 20-lbs. were caught on 1/2-oz. Crippled Herring in 15 to 40 feet of water using 8-lb. no-stretch FireLine. Strikes varied from light ticks to savage hits.) The important combination for success is heavy concentrations of baitfish and active fish. This is also a technique in which slack line will not result in many missed strikes; the minimal resistance of the smallest lures do not alert the fish that it just ambushed an artificial baitfish. As a result, the fish will often hook itself as it makes its run. “Dead sticking” is especially effective next to shoreline structures such as kelp and weed bed points and pockets, islands, rip rap and walls. Wind and current drive baitfish concentrations against these structures, which in turn attract predator fish. Once the lure reaches bottom in shallower water, try jigging it back to you. Otherwise, speed-retrieve and repeat your cast.

DEPTH CHART

Under calm conditions, the maximum effective depths for vertical jigging with monofilament line are:

1/2-oz. to 45 ft.	3/4-oz. to 55 ft.	1-oz. to 70 ft.	1 1/2-oz. to 90 ft.
2-oz. to 120 ft.	3-oz. to 140 ft.	4-oz. to 160 ft.	5-oz. to 170 ft.

TROLLING

The Crippled Herring can be used with all trolling techniques including flat lining, planer boards, planers and downriggers. Use it whenever you would use spoons. Unlike spoons, which troll in a fairly tight pattern, the Crippled Herring has a more frantic action with a pronounced sideways kick to either side. This erratic change in action triggers strikes. Use high quality ball bearing swivels to prevent line twist. Whether slow or speed trolling, do not run in a straight line or at a constant speed. Strikes dramatically increase by changing the action of your lure through erratic troll patterns or rod pumping. Examples include trolling in a circle around vertical structure holding fish, slow rod pumping on a slow troll, or speed-trolling on a zigzag course. All of these patterns cause the lure to intermittently fall and flutter as if you were jigging. The most productive universal size is the 1- or 1 1/2-oz. Crippled Herring.

NEAR-SURFACE FLATLINING: Especially with hand-held rods, this is the most exciting form of trolling. As with all trolled Crippled Herring, adding a willow leaf blade attractor to the tail increases strikes. Upgrading to a larger hook will not impair its action when trolling. The lure should not skip on the surface but should run within 10 feet of it. For maximum productivity, constantly pump your hand-held rod sidewise (all other non-trolling techniques require vertical rod lifts) to maximize the strike-triggering backward flutter. For most species, speed will vary between 1 1/2 and 5 mph (e.g. about 2 1/2 mph for coho salmon and up to 7 and 10 mph for wahoo). Don't troll blindly! Troll under diving birds, through baitfish “ball-ups” and on the fringe of “boiling” fish. Under these conditions the action can be nonstop.

ROTATING FLASHERS: Attaching a 1-oz. Crippled Herring, 18 to 24 inches behind the flasher is highly effective off a flatline or downrigger (a longer leader results in a slower action). This combination will outfish flies, plastic squid and natural bait.

DODGERS: Rig the same as for flashers. Troll faster for coho salmon and slower, and deeper, for chinook salmon.

DOWNRIGGERS: Water clarity and target species determine trolling speed, leader length and lure size. Use the 1- or 1 1/2-oz. for most species and the 5-oz. for an oversize presentation.

We hope these basic tips will provide a springboard to expanding your fishing knowledge and techniques for fishing the Crippled Herring. Your success with this lure is directly proportional to your understanding of its mechanics, water conditions and fish behavior. Practice with your Crippled Herring in calm, clear water to become familiar with its variety of built-in actions. Once proficient, you literally will be able to productively “fish the world.”

ADDITIONAL TIPS

One of the easiest things you can do to improve fishing results is to sharpen dull hooks with the Luhr-Jensen's Original Hook File. If the hook is too damaged replace them with premium quality VMC Hooks.



You should always use a premium quality braided or monofilament line that has superior knot strength, small diameter in relation to pound test and is abrasion resistant.

Purchase a quality depth finder which will help in locating fish as well as prime underwater fish-holding structure which can't otherwise be detected.



Visit our website for more Tech Reports and information

luhrjensen.com