

I've been trying to help people learn to effectively use Corkies for years now. I've talked to people while fishing, created written descriptions of the techniques I use, captured and published video clips showing me using the plugs and also showing how the plugs move through the water as a result of my efforts.

Using a camera to capture images is simple, but describing a complex set of related movement patterns involving the twitching of the fishing rod and the turning of the reel handle is somewhat challenging. Two fundamentals come up repeatedly when I attempt to give people some things to work on while they try to master the use of slow-sinking twitch baits: rhythmic movements with the rod tip, and a slow, steady turn on the reel handle.

Of these fundamentals, the control and execution of the turning of the reel handle is perhaps harder for most people to master. Many people find it difficult to continue turning the reel handle while they are twitching the rod tip. Those who attempt to twitch without reeling at all usually wind up lifting the rod toward the twelve o'clock position, then they reel slack out of the line while dropping the rod again to start the process over.

This method doesn't allow for the kind of rhythmic twitching of the rod tip that I prefer, and it doesn't allow the twitching to achieve the results I desire either. When I twitch the rod tip up and down "in place" out in front of me, without lifting, the head of the plug jumps from side to side erratically. It's this "dog walking" action that I find most effective in drawing the attention of predatory fish. Because I'm not lifting while I'm twitching, slack is created by each stroke of the rod tip, and the lure is free to fully turn to the side.

So, the fundamentals I preach about learning to use a Corky "my way" are these--make rhythmic twitches with the rod tip without lifting it through space, and keep the reel handle turning while twitching, fast enough to maintain control over the head of the lure.

While fishing with Brandon Brehm last Saturday, March 24th, I was talking about these specific details, trying to help him develop confidence with a Corky. He made significant progress through the day, and eventually made a comment which caused me to think about the process in a new and interesting way.

"Is your first movement an upward or downward stroke when you start twitching?" he asked.

I thought about it and had to admit, "I'm not sure." I reeled my lure in, cast back out again, and tried to start a new presentation without really thinking about it. It turns out the first stroke I make when starting to twitch the rod is a **DOWNWARD** stroke.

This came as something of a surprise to me, but the truth is what it is. I drop the rod tip first, then lift it up sharply. After that, the rod basically shakes up and down over a fairly short range while I turn the reel handle in "partial" turns, normally using about three movements of the reel handle to complete one revolution.

I'd like to thank Brandon for coming up with what might, for some people, be a useful clarification of how to imitate my Corky technique. Though I can't really explain why an initial downward stroke helps me generate and sustain a rhythmic twitching pattern, I know it does work. Might be a good starting concept for others out there too.