

# Full-moon fever

BY PHILLIP GENTRY  
FOR THE JOURNAL

This month's full moon occurred Thursday, but the effects will be felt through this weekend.

Whoever names full moons has named this one the "Full Flower Moon." It also goes by the "Full Corn Planting Moon" and the "Full Milk Moon." What it should have been called is the "Bream Fishing Moon."

When he's not traveling on national crappie tournament circuits, Matthew Outlaw, a renowned panfish angler from St. Matthews near Columbia, relaxes by fishing for bream. He's fished all over the country and has a knack for finding bream beds in even unfamiliar waters.

"I start looking for bream on the beds the week before the full moon," Outlaw said. "Bream will go to fanning their beds, and when they do, they stink. You can smell them from 100 yards away. That fanning will also cause bubbles in the water.

"When I'm in an area I think bream would bed in, I'll approach with the wind in my face so I can smell them, and I'll look for bubbles or fish popping on the surface."

In discussing moon phases, Outlaw said he finds bream on the beds during the full moon and then again on the new moon. He said that for a few days between the cycles, bream show a tendency to pull off the beds and hold in a little deeper water, but they're back a couple of days prior to the new moon and will repeat that cycle up to three times over the course of the summer.

Outlaw said the top factor for bream to bed is a hard bottom. Second is cover. He said he doesn't have much success

around live cypress trees, finding instead that dead trees, stumps and fallen limbs have better appeal to spawning gills.

"I'll paddle into a fishy looking area, and if there's a stand of dead trees or a blown-down tree that's dead in the water, I'll ease over and probe the bottom with my rod," Outlaw said. "If I feel a hard sand, gravel or clay bottom, it's a pretty good bet there'll be some beds around it."

While the lion's share of bream across the state fall prey to natural baits, there are certainly artificial baits that are capable of filling a livewell just as quickly as live bait, without the mess and hassle. One of the best artificial baits is Accardo's Ligon Bream Killer.

Some years ago, the Accardo Tackle Company acquired the rights to the Ligon Bream Killer and has been producing the slow-sinking wet fly ever since. Don Davis is a major distributor of Accardo products and operates Chesterfield, Mo.-based [breambugs.com](http://breambugs.com) — an online shop for all manner of bream-catching artificial baits.

"The Bream Killer is our bestselling fly and is No. 2 in sales of all of our baits behind the Accardo Miss Prissy," Davis said.

The Bream Killer is hand-tied on a No. 8 hook with soft chenille topped with squirrel hair trim and white rubber legs. The slow sinking action of the fly is more than big bream can resist. The bream killer is best fished with fly tackle, but easily converts to spinning tackle with the use of a small popping cork or strike indicator to give the fly some weight.

**PHILLIP GENTRY** is the host of a forthcoming podcast radio program — The Outdoors Show with Phillip Gentry & Boat Girl. More info on the show is available on the podcast's Facebook page.



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This weekend's full moon is likely to bring out the bream fisherman in many anglers.