

July Fishing Scene Good For Bass/Crappie Anglers

Updated July 10, 2014

Anglers enjoyed a great Fourth of July around the Kentucky Lake region thanks to excellent weather. Since the weekend some high winds and midweek thunderstorms rolled through the area but the summer fishing scene is holding up well for bass and crappie anglers.

Surface temperatures this week stayed in the 82 to 84 degree range and water color is clear across most of the reservoir.

Lake levels began falling slowly earlier this week as TVA starts its curve toward annual winter drawdown in early July each year. The lake is a few inches lower than last week at this time with readings forecast for 358.9 at Kentucky Dam and 358.7 upstream at New Johnsonville going into the weekend.

These summer crappie have been biting good and continue to be overlooked by most anglers. I've logged some nice catches lately and have actually caught more fish in late June and early July from some popular areas than I did back in late March and early April.

Good numbers of fish are holding around structure in the 13 to 15 foot depth range. They've been residing in these midrange depths for the last six weeks or more and don't seem to be in any hurry to leave.

Tipping jigs with live minnows has worked well. Seems the crappie have a preference for live bait once surface temperatures warm and that has sure been the case this year.

Catfish action has been fair but there's still a lot of fish hanging out in midrange depths as crappie fishermen are tying into them on a regular basis while fishing deeper stakebeds and brushpiles. Look for more catfish to move toward the main river channel soon as it's high time they transitioned toward those summer hideouts of deeper water where current washes baitfish their way.

Bass fishing has been good and not all the fish are deep. Some decent ones have been taken by anglers fishing spinnerbaits, Texas rigged worms, shallow running crankbaits and some topwater. A few fish are relating to shallow grass and treelaps, along with boatdocks where schools of pin minnows are holding in shady areas.

Mayflies have drawn bluegill and various baitfish to shallow banks too and some bass are feeding on the abundant food source there.

Main lake ledges are still holding good numbers with some schooling fish running along sandbars and submerged shellbeds in depths of 10 to 15 feet. Big deep diving crankbaits, Texas and Carolina rigged worms and craws, big spoons, swimbaits, and jig and craw combos are all part of the arsenal when summer fishing patterns arrive for ledge fishermen.

Scattered mayfly hatches are showing up along the Tennessee River islands from the stateline down past Bass Bay lately.

It has been another good week for summer fishing here on Kentucky Lake despite a few days of unruly wind. Rise and shine early and you'll beat the heat.