

COLD SNAP CHILLS FISHING SCENE...WARMER WEATHER ON THE WAY

By Steve McCadams

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Frost on the pumpkin, below average temperatures, and brisk northwest winds put a chill to the fishing scene at midweek. Another October cool snap invaded the Kentucky Lake fishing scene and while the weekend ahead will be nippy, warm days are in the forecast for early next week as temps are expected to return to 70 on Monday.

Some nice stringers of crappie were coming in last weekend and earlier this week and bass fishing was pretty good too. Even some hefty catfish have been taken. While the overall fishing scene has been good the cold front and chilly winds brought mile high skies and slowed the bite some for anglers braving the high pressure that lingered the last few days.

It's not unusual for fish to take on a sluggish mood once a cold front passes through. The clear, sunny days are nice to be out but changes in barometric pressure often have an adverse effect and that seemed to be the case the last few days.

Despite the cold front crappie anglers have managed to find and catch fish although the bites from finicky fish have been light. The crappie have been reluctant to move much out of their comfort zone to strike a bait so it has been a game of finesse.

Fish were holding tight to structure the last few days and you really had to watch that rod tip and line to detect the light bites. Tipping jigs with Berkley Power Bait in chartreuse and white colors has enhanced the presentation.

A lot of crappie have been holding in 7 to 12 foot depths this week. Some fish even moved up to 4 to 7 foot zones in the early morning and late afternoon period when lowlight conditions seemed to help.

Good numbers of fish have been caught lately but the cool snap brought a temporary hiatus to the bite. Action will likely resume by early next week when winds return to the southwest.

Meanwhile, a few fish have been taken by anglers working the main lake drop-offs as the deeper depths always seem to produce a few fish. However, the numbers of fish in the deeper structure in depths of 16 to 20 feet have diminished lately.

Surface temperatures responded to the cold front and have dropped back into the 63 to 65 degree range. That's down several degrees from last week at this time and could fall even more by late this weekend due to cold nights. Water color remains clear across the reservoir.

Lake levels have fluctuated slightly this week after falling to the low ebb range of winter pool on Monday. Projected elevation going into the weekend will be 354.7 at both Kentucky Dam and New Johnsonville Steam Plant. The stability comes after the reservoir fell several inches late last

week but rebounded slightly at midweek.

Bass fishermen scored some decent stringers last weekend but like the crappie fishermen they experienced more challenging conditions at midweek. The fish seemed to back off once the cold front passed and took on a sluggish behavioral pattern.

Tossing crankbaits toward gravel points and banks has been paying off as have some rip-rap shorelines and shallow roadbeds. A few fish continued to school over shallow flats where they were running shad prior to the cool snap. Watch for that pattern to resume early next week as well.

Some boats are still working the drop-offs out on the main lake with Texas rigged worms, jig and pig combos, and some Carolina rigged craws. And, throwing a big crankbait is always in the arsenal.

Grassbeds continue to produce good numbers of bass that have been relating to the outsides of grass patches near deeper water. Spinnerbaits and Texas rigged worms have been producing but so have chrome and black colored Rattle Trap style lures and some shallow running crankbaits over submerged grass.

Catfish are still prowling along the edge of the river channel in depths of 30 to 40 feet. Anglers have been working the edge while baiting with chicken livers, cut shad, and night crawlers. Fall catfishing is overlooked by a lot of anglers.

After a few days of cold weather it appears some nice fall conditions will return soon. The colors are changing rapidly along the shorelines and hillsides of Kentucky Lake. It's a great time to be out there!