

PUMPKIN MONTH FADES AWAY ON STORMY NOTE....LOW LAKE LEVELS AWAIT ANGLERS

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Kentucky Lake fishermen tipped their hat to October as it faded away on a very stormy note Thursday but it appears normal fall weather will return in the days ahead. Somewhat cooler conditions will enter the fishing scene for a few days in the aftermath of Halloween wind and rain that drenched the area.

Lake levels this past week were down to the low ebb of winter pool as TVA really pulled the plug in a likely move anticipating Thursday's heavy rainfall. Elevation at Kentucky Dam going into the weekend was projected to be in the 354.4 range. Upstream at New Johnsonville readings were even lower with the elevation down around 354.2.

That's some of the lowest readings of the fall and it merits another reminder for boaters to use caution and pay close attention to the channel markers. Taking shortcuts over those main lake sandbars is not smart this time of year yet a lot of folks are unfamiliar with the depth. Just because you're a long way from shore doesn't mean deep water on Kentucky Lake!

Surface temperatures were hovering around the 59 to 62 degree range the last few days. Water color has been quite clear but will likely have some stain enter the areas in the upper ends of bays after Thursday's rain and runoff.

Crappie action has been fair this week and anglers had 3 or 4 beautiful days where warm temperatures and light winds blended for nice fishing conditions. A few foggy mornings faded away to placid waters and anglers could fish anywhere they wanted on the big water.

Depths of 8 to 13 feet were giving up scattered fish this week as stakebeds and brushpiles in that depth range were holding some fish but fewer than last week at this time. After last week's cold front it seemed a lot of crappie backed off to deeper areas and occupied structure in 15 to 20 foot depths at time and even deeper in some areas.

Fishermen stalking the deep drop-offs with bottom bumping rigs armed with live minnows or jigs tipped with minnows or Berkley Power Bait were finding success. And, a few bigger slabs were taken in the deep confines as well.

Popular jig colors have ranged from white/chartreuse to shades of green with some black and red mixed in. Some white/orange and blue/chartreuse paid dividends at times too but fish have been somewhat finicky as to their choices and mood swings. Strikes have been quite light as the bites were not aggressive.

Bass activity seemed to back off somewhat since last week but there are still some success

stories coming in from anglers tossing spinnerbaits over shallow vegetation. Popular choices have been white or blue/chartreuse skirts with gold willow leaf blades.

Lower lake levels are exposing a lot of structure in the form of crappie beds and various manmade cover. Grassbeds are now exposed in a lot of areas too and fish are chasing shad there. Working Senko style worms and various topwater jerk baits have worked too.

Some schooling activity was still taking place over shallow points and flats where fish were pushing the schools of baitfish up over shallow spots and hitting the surface. Casting shallow running crankbaits has worked well in these situations and a few white bass are there too in the feeding frenzies.

A few boats are still working main lake ledges using Texas and Carolina rigged worms. Also in the arsenal have been some big crankbaits and jig and craw combos. And, this time of year the shad colored crankbaits on gravel banks and sloping points or roadbeds are always a good choice.

A few boats continue to work the main river channel for catfish where depths of 30 to 40 feet are holding some good ones. Light current this week in the main channel has been good for catfishermen who are using chicken livers, nightcrawlers, and big minnows for bait.