

## *Summer Crappie and Bass Bite Still On, Lake Levels Stable*

### *By Steve McCadams*

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Kentucky Lake's summer fishing scene continued to hold up well for bass, crappie and catfish anglers this week. And, mayfly hatches were underway at several areas along the Tennessee River ranging from the Kentucky/Tennessee stateline down toward New Johnsonville.

Lake levels are similar to last week at this time and staying around the normal summer pool elevation. Projections for the weekend will be 359.2 at Kentucky Dam. Upstream at New Johnsonville the reservoir is slightly lower with readings in the 358.8 range.

Surface temperatures are in the 82 to 85 degree range. Water color is clear throughout Big Sandy with only a slight stain in the main Tennessee River channel.

Crappie are still holding up pretty good with decent numbers taken from midrange stakebeds again this week. I found good numbers in depths of 12 to 16 feet and the fish showed a preference for jigs tipped with minnows.

You can catch a few fish just on plain jigs but it seems once warmer weather arrives the crappie prefer the live minnow or just plain jig heads tipped with minnows. Taking the tube skirt off seems to work better as sometimes the fish just don't want a big, bulky bait.

A few fish were taken this week by anglers trolling crankbaits over main lake ledges. The technique works in the early spring and also during the summer months. Kim Wilson landed several nice crappie at midweek while trolling off her pontoon in the Paris Landing area.

Watch for more crappie to move toward the deeper sides of main lake drop-offs in the days ahead as warmer surface temperatures push the fish to deeper venues and lower light conditions.

Hefty stringers of bass are coming in with most of the winning tournament weights still coming from deep ledges, humps, and the edges of the main river channel. A lot of the FLW tournament guys have focused their fishing on very deep venues this week.

Popular lure choices have been big green pumpkin-pepper jigs and crawfish trailers with some black and blue. Also popular have been big Texas rigged worms in the 10-inch length with such colors as red shad, black and blue, June bug, and Tequila sunrise being a few of the more popular choices.

Those huge deep diving cranksbaits are still at the top of the list as are Carolina rigged worms, craws and lizards. Alabama rigs are working too as are some big spoons and giant swim baits.

Some shallow weedbeds and blow-downs where pin minnows are schooling are giving up lots of fish too on both topwater and spinnerbait presentations but the bigger fish are coming from main lake ledges.

Catfish action slowed some this week due to lack of current in the main river. Still several showing up in midrange depths as crappie anglers are tying into a lot of them.

Watch for catfish action to resume on the edge of the main river channel and around the Paris Landing bridge area once current returns.

Mayfly hatches were seen earlier this week in Standing Rock and south toward the Leatherwood and Lick Creek sectors. Hatches will continue for several weeks but it's hard to predict where and when. Only Mother Nature knows for sure.