

FALL-LIKE WEATHER THRILLS ANGLERS

By Steve McCadams

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Let's hear it for the weatherman! This fall-like weather in mid-July has been quite a surprise for most anglers but no one is complaining.

Low humidity and below average temperatures this week suited most fishermen just fine. Early morning activity required a long-sleeve shirt most days as night temps dropped to the mid to upper 50's across the Kentucky Lake region.

Light northwest winds influenced surface temperatures slightly as the lake was in the 81 to 83 degree this week. Water remains clear across most of the reservoir.

Lake levels are down a few inches from last week at this time and forecast to be 358.6 at Kentucky Dam this weekend and a bit lower upstream at New Johnsonville where elevation will be in the 358.2 range.

Catfishermen had some improvement earlier this week when increased current entered the picture along the main Tennessee River channel. Some decent numbers were taken in depths of 25 to 35 feet around the Paris Landing Bridge area and elsewhere along channel cuts. Nightcrawlers have been the popular bait lately.

Summer crappie scattered a little this week but are still biting. The best days have been those with light winds and cloud cover. Those conditions seem to stimulate the bite as stagnant conditions and bright sun cause the fish to take on a sluggish attitude.

Depths of 13 to 16 feet have been productive at times but a few fish have dropped back to the 18 to 20 foot range on the deep sides of drop-offs. Live minnows are still working well or jigs tipped with minnows.

Bass fishing dropped off a bit this week as it seems the fish had a mood swing at times. Several fish had been relating to main lake ledges and humps in depths of 12 to 15 feet but seems the fish adopted a sluggish attitude when the cooler weather arrived.

Still in the arsenal for summer bass fishing have been big Texas rigged worms in the green pumpkin-pepper and red-shad colors, chartreuse/white and blue/white shad variations on big deep diving crankbaits, Carolina rigs, jig and craw combos, shad colored swim baits and some big spoons.

Some fish are still running pin minnows in shallow areas such as visible grassbeds and around piers and docks. Tossing spinnerbaits and Texas rigged worms was still working as were assorted topwater plugs such as buzzbaits, floating flukes, and other jerk baits.

Mayfly hatches were inconsistent this week but a few were seen on the main river area around Cypress Creek and south toward Leatherwood and Danville islands.

When cool fronts and high skies descend it's not unusual for fish to back off a bit. That barometer plays a big role in fish feeding patterns. Watch for action to improve by the weekend as cloudy days and light rains enter the picture.