

(Updated August 7th, 2014)

DOG DAYS OF SUMMER GNAW AT ANGLERS...

By Steve McCadams

Most fishermen knew those unusual cool mornings last month wouldn't last forever. Now the dog days of summer are here and this August weather, with its hot and humid conditions, is a reminder of what season is really in charge.

Kentucky Lake's fishing scene is still holding up for anglers who rise and shine early and beat the heat with those early morning or late afternoon outings.

Surface temperatures are staying in the 82 to 83 degree range. Water color is clear across the reservoir as very little rain has fallen or entered the watershed in the last few weeks. You know it's dry out there when even the fishermen want a rain!

Lake levels continue to fall slowly and are about on schedule for TVA's winter drawdown curve. Each year TVA begins a slow drawdown on July 1 after the reservoir rests at summer pool for the two months of May and June.

Elevation projected for the weekend will be 357.5 at Kentucky Dam, which is a few inches lower than last week at this time. Upstream at New Johnsonville the lake will be 357.4.

Catfishing has been hit and miss lately along the Tennessee River as current, or lack thereof, is always a factor. A lack of rain may have contributed some but there hasn't been much current the last few weeks but that is changing as a slow drawdown this week should work in favor of catfishermen working the edge of the main river channel.

Depths of 25 to 40 feet have been holding a few fish. Once the current picks up some decent numbers have been caught by anglers using chicken and turkey livers, nightcrawlers, cut shad, leeches, and big minnows.

Summer crappie are still biting too but the fish have been a bit more scattered this week. Still, the fish are hitting in lowlight conditions of early morning and late afternoon or when cloudy days help filter the sunlight coupled with a light breeze.

I found some decent fish residing in 17 to 22 foot depths earlier this week. With a bottom bumping rig baited with live minnows I worked the deep sides of main lake ledges and found fish holding tight to deep structure.

Bass fishermen continue to bring in some hefty stringers and the approach is changing as lower lake levels enter the picture. Several shallow flats and backwater bays are now offering matts of vegetation that are exposed.

Tossing weedless lures is paying off as are spinnerbaits, buzzbaits, floating fluke style baits and Texas rigged worms ware working well around shallow grass. There's a lot of baitfish in places so it's a trial and error as to what location has the forage.

Deep ledges are still on the menu too as some tournament stringers last week weighing in the 20-pound plus range were still coming from drop-offs. Anglers were tossing green pumpkin-pepper jig and craw combos, big deep diving crankbaits, Carolina rigged worms and Storm's Brush Hog, and Texas rigged worms in the 9 to 10-inch length.

Night fishing is also another approach for both bass and crappie fishermen during these hot summer weeks as well.

A few scattered mayfly hatches continue to show up across the reservoir. Not much in the way of white bass reports as hardly anyone sees them in the jumps anymore.

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