

ANGLERS SAY GOODBYE TO AUGUST...COOL MONTH TOOK THE BITE OUT OF DOG DAYS

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Updated August 29, 2013

Kentucky Lake anglers will say goodbye to August this weekend, hoping the return of hot and humid weather will fade away as the month draws to a close. Last year at this time fishermen were facing three-digit temps out there!

Actually August has been pretty nice to fishermen this summer as most of the month was cooler than normal. The overall fishing scene has been pretty good throughout a month known for its heat and humidity.

As the Labor Day weekend approaches anglers are in a typical late summer pattern for bass, crappie, bluegill and catfish. Lake levels are pretty much on schedule as to TVA's curve for winter drawdown.

Lake levels at Kentucky Dam were expected to be in the 356.2 range this weekend and slightly higher upstream around New Johnsonville where elevation will be in the 356.4 range. Kentucky Lake has been falling slowly this week and that has put steady current in the main river channel that has benefitted both bass and catfishermen.

Surface temperatures this week have been in the 82 to 85 degree range. Water color remains clear across most of the reservoir.

A slow, steady current in the main Tennessee River channel has stimulated the catfish bite for anglers drifting along the riverbank and bottom bouncing double hook rigs baiting with nightcrawlers, chicken livers, and big shiner minnows or cut shad.

Depths of 30 to 40 feet have been productive as boaters attempt to find little indentions along the river channel or work the down current sides of large submerged feeder creeks that emptied into the main river. Several decent stringers of channel and blues have been caught with an occasional nice flathead testing the tackle now and then.

Summer crappie have been fair this week with a few fish lingering around deeper stakebeds and brushpiles in depths of 13 to 15 feet. However, most of the fish are relating to the deep sides of main lake drop-offs and holding around some structure in the 19 to 24 foot depth range.

Tightlining live minnows on bottom bumping rigs has worked best for the deeper zones while tightlining 1/16 to 1/8-ounce jigs tipped with minnows has been productive in the deeper stakebeds.

Other presentations such as trolling crankbaits along the drop-offs have produced a few crappie as well.

Bass fishermen continue to pound the aquatic vegetation with topwater weedless presentations and Texas rigged worms around the parameters. Tossing spinnerbaits and buzzbaits has worked too as have some shad colored jerk baits and floating fluke style worms.

As lake levels fall there should be more grassbeds exposed in the weeks ahead. However, most of the milfoil and other thick vegetation has been found south of the Paris Landing area near Harmon's Creek and areas further south toward New Johnsonville.

Schools of shad are showing up along gravel banks and tossing shad colored crankbaits and some assorted topwater has paid off in shallow flats, gravel banks, and around roadbeds. Despite the warm weather some nice stringers have been taken in relatively shallow areas when the baitfish were there.

Main lake ledges continue to produce for boaters working big crankbaits, Texas and Carolina rigged worms, and jig and craw combos. Some days the fish have moved up on the edge or top side of sandbars if cloud cover was present only to fall back to deeper water at midday or when sunny days pushed them deeper.

Hopping spoons on main lake ledges has also produced some strikes as have slowly retrieved swim baits.

A few scattered bluegill are lingering around bridge piers where working crickets or worms will produce a variety of sizes and species. And, bluegill are roaming the main lake ledges too and annoying both crappie and catfishermen at times.

It's time to say hello to September fishing on Kentucky Lake as the fall transition will soon begin.