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NORRIS FISHING REPORT

9 May 2012

WATER CONDITIONS

The water elevation at midnight, May 9th was 1,016.7-feet, which is 6-inches higher than it was last Wednesday. The water level is predicted to rise 6-inches by midnight, Friday, May 11th. The water surface temperature has risen to the low to mid-70's. Creek hollows and shallower coves are a few degrees warmer. The very back of Lost Creek was 80 degrees late on a sunny day, with some color.

Except for a little color on the Powell arm, the main channels have clear water, especially on the Clinch side where the visibility exceeds 6-feet in many areas. The predicted inflow rate is low. Cedar Creek, Big Creek, Lost Creek, and Davis Creek are stained in their upper reaches from rainfall inflow.

To view all access areas on the reservoir, go to

http://www.tnfish.org/ReservoirLakeMapsTennessee_TWRA/TennesseeReservoirBoatRampsMarinasLakeMaps_TWRA.htm.

SUMMARY

Full moon fishing brought many anglers out at night. Those after walleye found smallmouth and striped bass moving into the shallows after midnight to feed on shoreline baitfish. Few walleye were caught.

Most smallmouth and walleye have spawned. Largemouth have either spawned, or are in the midst of spawning at this time, depending upon where they are located on the reservoir.

BLUEGILL and REDEAR (SHELLCRACKER): Moderate. Look for larger bluegill to move into shallower flats in advance of the spawn and the June 6th full moon.

Large bluegill and shellcracker are being caught at about 10-feet on the lower half of the lake in coves and near wood structure. Many shellcracker are in shoreline brush, floating wood, and submerged timber, less than 10-feet deep, and are hitting redworms, nightcrawlers, and minnows fished under a float set at about 6-feet.

CRAPPIE: Moderate. 3 to 5-feet deep in coves and in the rear of stained creek embayments in early morning hours. Many of the crappie appear to have already

spawned, or are about to do so. On sunny days, productive depths have been as deep as 15-feet. Upper ends of Davis, Lost, Cove, and Big creeks, in the brush.

LARGEMOUTH BASS: Good. Most of those being caught are post-spawn fish which are still in the shallows or moving to deeper, rocky shorelines. Surface to 10 feet, on crankbaits, spinner baits, soft plastic jerkbaits, topwater plugs, and swimbaits, early in the day or at dusk. The rear of the coves, in floating brush and timber, are holding many largemouth. In clear water sections, they're being caught as deep as 20-feet during daylight.

SMALLMOUTH BASS: Good. 15 to 20-feet. Fish near rocky points and along rocky, main channel shorelines, close to the bottom. Post spawn smallmouth are on moderately sloped banks with large, chunk rocks, at the 10 to 15-foot depth. Red, dark orange, or shad colors are working best. The most productive lure at 15 to 20-feet has been a 3/8 oz hair jig tipped with a minnow, fished along the bottom. Night fishing with shad, alewife, 1/2-oz rubber skirted jigs or jerkbaits fished very close to the shoreline has produced some good smallmouth. Willow leaf spinners slow-rolled on points and off large, chunk rocky banks is catching some.

REGULATION REMINDER FOR SMALLMOUTH BASS: June 1–October 15: 1 per day, 20 inch minimum length limit. October 16–May 31: 5 per day, 18 inch minimum length limit.

SPOTTED BASS: Good. Very close to wood structure on rock and gravel shorelines on the Powell side and to Cove Creek. Small topwater plugs and popping bugs, small jerk baits and swim baits (Flukes, Senkos, mainly) or small hair jigs. Medium running red, orange, or shad colored Bandit crankbaits are working close to the rocky shorelines and where the water is stained in the creek hollows.

STRIPED BASS: Good. 20 to 35-feet deep in the channels, over located baitfish schools. Target points and submerged humps near the main channels. Most have returned from the spring run upriver. Best lure: Umbrella rigs with chartreuse or white plastic swimbaits. Gizzard shad and alewife are the best live bait. Troll or tightline to depth where baitfish are found near humps and points. The channel between Hickory Star and Highway 33 Bridge, Straight Creek to Black Fox Creek, Cove Creek near Point 3, Point 11 to Point 12.

REGULATION REMINDER FOR STRIPED BASS: April 1–October 31: 2 per day, 15 inch minimum length limit November 1–March 31: 1 per day, 36 inch minimum length limit.

WALLEYE: Slow. The lake spawn walleye on the lower end have spawned early and have dropped into deeper water. But nighttime fishing on the points and in submerged brush in the coves has produced some walleye on shad or alewife, or on plugs cast to the bank. If you can hear baitfish on the surface at night, cast topwater plugs (Spooks) or ShadRaps, Husky Jerks, and similar plugs to those areas. Moonlit nights made it hard to attract enough baitfish for shoreline jigging.

SPECIES DETAILS

BLUEGILL/REDEAR

Moderate, but improving.

Surface (on popping bugs) to 10-foot deep for bluegill and shellcracker. Popping bugs, crickets, nightcrawlers, small Rapalas or Rebels. Shellcracker fishing is improving at the 10-foot depth. Shellcracker are in the shallows, near flooded brush. Fish for bluegill on, or near the bottom with nightcrawlers, redworms, or crickets, along sand and gravel shorelines on sunny afternoons, 10 to 15-foot deep. Shellcracker can be caught on nightcrawlers or meal worms under a float, 5-foot deep near brush and floating or submerged timber, in the coves. For spawning bluegill, look for protected flats in coves and creek hollows, near creek channels, stumps, and submerged brush. In those areas, fish the bottom with crickets, using no float.

CRAPPIE

Moderate.

3 to 5-foot deep in stained water brush in the hollows and on the flats. The best action remains in brush found in the coves. Popeye hair jigs, tuffy minnows fished by themselves or with small hair flies or on leadheads. Large creek hollows and coves off the main channels on the upper half of the reservoir have been best. Best on cloudy days and in stained areas. Mid-day action slowed considerably.

Good lures: small doll flies, mini tube jigs (red/white, blue/white) and 1/32 ounce hair or feather jigs tipped with minnows. Try the upper reaches of Davis Creek, Big Creek, Cove Creek, Lost Creek, and Sycamore Creek.

LARGEMOUTH & SPOTTED BASS

Good.

Surface to 15-feet. The rear of the coves, where there is brush, are holding good numbers of largemouth bass and spotted bass. Post-spawn largemouth and spotted bass are moving to the rocky shorelines, not far from the spawning areas, and are less than 15-feet deep.

Soft plastic jerkbaits and swimbaits. Crankbaits, topwater, and willow leaf spinners action is picking up. Medium running orange, chartreuse or dark red Bandit-type crankbaits worked close to the rocks and wood structure on the main channel and in creek hollows. ½ ounce hair or rubber skirted jigs are working for deeper fish in the boulders on steeper banks.

On some days, largemouth bass have hit a wide variety of lures, from Carolina-rigs to topwater plugs.

SMALLMOUTH BASS

Good.

5 to 25-feet, best on the points. 15 feet after 5 p.m. along gravel/broken rock bottoms.

Post spawn fish are on the large, chunk rock on the main channels and points, 15-foot deep during daylight hours, and in the shallows along main channel shorelines after dark. Fish transition zones from rock to gravel and deep water adjacent to long sloping, gravel points. Flukes, Senkos, leadhead jigs with smoke or motor oil grubs, rubber skirted football-head or shaky-head jigs with rubber skirts. Shallow and medium running crankbaits and jerkbaits are taking more in the stained sections. Brown, black, orange, dark red, and chartreuse colors are working best. The most productive lure has been 3/8 oz hair jigs tipped with minnows, fished on the bottom at 15-feet. Use as light weight, low-visibility line as your nerves will allow.

STRIPED BASS

Good.

Generally 20 to 35-feet in the channels and shallower across long points and over deep humps in the main channels of the river arms or large creek embayments. As deep as 30 to 40-feet on some days, depending on baitfish depth. But some good catches are also showing up on drift lines and planer boards, at less than 15-feet. Look for baitfish schools and troll or tightline in those locations.

Troll umbrella rigs (6-inch pearl or chartreuse swimbaits as the lure components), ½ to 1 oz bucktail jigs, or live bait (gizzard shad or alewife) tightlined to the depth of the forage fish schools in mid-channel and trolled with planer boards or balloons especially across the points and humps. Crooked Creek action picked up a little. Lost Creek slowed except for early morning. Mid to upper Cove Creek, and the

Straight Creek to Black Fox section have produced good striped bass catches. Before using umbrella rigs, read the Fishing Regulations and the hook size/number restrictions which are in effect. The 1-fish, 36-inch minimum size limit continues through March 31st.

WALLEYE

Slow.

Surface to 20-feet on the lower end on average, but shallow in some coves where there is heavy brush cover, and along the shoreline at night.

On the lower end of the lake: Nighttime fishing with topwater plugs or crankbaits which imitate shad or alewife. Spooks and ShadRaps are dependable lures to cast to the shoreline at night, especially where baitfish are congregated. Alewife or shad cast to those areas also work. Rocky, steep banks where there is old timber which extends to about 15 to 20-feet in depth. Some good walleye have been taken on crankbaits or willow leafed spinners fished near wood structure which is on steeper, rocky shorelines. Some are in the rear of the coves, in shallow water, where there is downed timber.

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