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May 3rd, 2013

Lake Conditions

Lake Levels ... Note: Both Dams will be Spilling Until Further Notice. As of this morning both lakes are approximately 3.5 feet over pool and on a steady drawdown. The reservoir crested Wednesday and TVA will attempt to pull the reservoir back to its normal summer pool elevation of 359 over the next several days. Both lakes have significant current and some floating debris. For additional info, including generation schedule for Kentucky Lake, visit the TVA website:
http://www.tva.gov/lakes/kyh_r.htm

Water Clarity and Temperature ... Kentucky Lake ranges from slightly stained in the back of the bays to the main lake clearing. Barkley is stained in the creeks and bays and the main lake is very murky. Surface water temps are in the 68 degree range with the back of the bays warmer.

Weather Outlook

Friday...Showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 60s. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph. Chance of precipitation 80 percent.

Friday Night...Occasional showers. Lows in the mid 40s. West winds 5 mph. Chance of precipitation 90 percent.

Saturday...Partly sunny with a 30 percent chance of showers. Highs in the mid 50s. Southwest winds 5 mph.

Saturday Night...Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers. Lows in the mid 40s. Southeast winds around 5 mph.

Sunday...Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers. Highs in the lower 60s.

Sunday Night...Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers. Lows in the mid 40s.

Monday...Mostly cloudy with a chance of showers and isolated thunderstorms. Highs in the mid 60s. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Prime Feeding Times – Gilbertsville, KY 42044

Date	Temps	Sun Data	Moon Data	Moon Phase	Major Times	Minor Times	Prediction
Friday 5/3/13	H: 66° L: 55°	Rise: 5:56 AM Set: 7:44 PM	Rise: 2:11 AM Set: 1:46 PM Overhead: 7:56 AM Underfoot: 8:21 PM	36% Waning Crescent	7:56 AM - 9:56 AM 8:21 PM - 10:21 PM	2:11 AM - 3:11 AM 1:46 PM - 2:46 PM	Average+
Saturday 5/4/13	H: 59° L: 47°	Rise: 5:55 AM Set: 7:44 PM	Rise: 2:45 AM Set: 2:49 PM Overhead: 8:45 AM	26% Waning	8:45 AM - 10:45 AM 9:08 PM - 11:08 PM	2:45 AM - 3:45 AM 2:49 PM - 3:49 PM	Average

			Underfoot: 9:08 PM	Crescent			
Sunday 5/5/13	H: 65° L: 47°	Rise: 5:54 AM Set: 7:45 PM	Rise: 3:18 AM Set: 3:50 PM Overhead: 9:31 AM Underfoot: 9:54 PM	18% Waning Crescent	9:31 AM - 11:31 AM 9:54 PM - 11:54 PM	3:18 AM - 4:18 AM 3:50 PM - 4:50 PM	Average

Fishing Report



(Photo L) Jeff and Gary Swearingen from Illinois with some Black & White crappie caught casting KY Green curly tails on secondary points and ledges.

Crappie Fishing – WOW! We’ve had some really great crappie trips this week and our clients caught some really nice fish. The black crappie have been busy completing their spawning ritual and a lot of the big females are heading back out and being caught again around secondary points, brush piles and deeper ledges. White Crappie are in full spawn and some really huge fish are being caught 6-8 feet deep (normally 3-5 feet deep). Most fish have been caught casting KY Green curly tails with Ken’s Blue Pearl and Lime Green Light Wire lead heads. The light wire lead heads enable you to fish submerged cover without the fear of getting hung up. If you do hang up a steady but gentle pull usually dislodges the lure and sometimes when this happens you’ll get bit, this has happened several times. I’d rate the crappie fishing very good and improving as the females are

thinking more about feeding again.

Crappie on the Ledges

Nathan Heitz, Mike Gibson and Daryl Adams with some Kentucky Lake Slabs caught casting curly tails on the Ledges.

Kentucky Lake is synonymous with “Ledge Fishing” and many consider it to be the premier offshore bass fishing lake in the country. Unbeknownst to many, crappie fishing the ledges is a close second. This untapped resource can be a very productive way to fish if you know where to look.

When crappie are shallow anglers have a pretty good idea where and



Kick’n Bass Guide Service Photo

how to catch them. Brush piles, gravel points and flats, stake beds and such, hold crappie and they're pretty easily found. Turn on your HDS and look around long enough and sooner or later you'll stumble upon some fish holding cover. But when the spawn winds down the fish leave the shallows, anglers who previously enjoyed success often find it difficult to find and catch fish.

As a fishing guide I find there is little room for excuses and to have a successful trip sometimes means having a different mindset and approach. After all it's the fish that will dictate how and where we fish. Therefore I start my day by keeping an open mind and being willing to accept change.

High Definition Sonar is the key to finding crappie hot spots. We began investigating the ledges in early April and we were pleasantly surprised at what we found ... lots of fish that were basically



unmolested. This was when the water temp was around 60 degrees and a fair number of big crappie were on the secondary channel ledges. We used our *Lowrance High Definition System* in the Map / Structure Scan mode to locate the ledges and find stumps, rock piles and drops that held fish (See Photo). It was during this time that we had some of our best guide trips. Some of the early spawners were off the bed, aggressive and willing to bite. As the water temps warmed even more fish transitioned to the deeper ledges or main creek and river channel drops. We figured out that this wasn't

a onetime occurrence but more of a migratory transition that takes place every year. Again, these fish were unmolested and willing biters. We experienced several trips with good numbers and size. Most of what we caught were Black Crappie. However, we did catch some real nice pre-spawn whites that were using the ledges too (Photo Below).

Crappie catching methods vary depending on current or lack thereof. We used two methods to catch our fish. Casting and trolling. Matching the mood of the fish is critical so knowing when to cast or troll is equally important as the presentation itself. During periods of no wind or generation (*lack of current*) crappie were suspended along the ledges and long line trolling tube jigs and curly tails proved to be a good way to find and catch them. Long line trolling was done from the *Kick'n Bass Fishing Pontoon*. The Fishing Pontoon is rigged with High Definition Electronics, a Minn Kota iPilot trolling motor and a series of rods varying from 16 to 8 feet in length. High Definition Electronics and mapping shows the ledge and submerged cover plus it identifies the depth and location of the fish. The GPS feature on the iPilot guides the boat along the ledge. The troll speed varies with the wind but a good rule of thumb is to start at .8 of MPH. The rod system we use provides a multi-lure presentation at varying depths and a combination of lure weight and troll speed dictates the depth of the presentation. Having the right set up is really enhances this type of fishing. During slack times a very slow presentation was required to illicit a strike but once you did it wasn't uncommon to have more than one fish on at a time. Another method we used was to find stumps on our Lowrance HDS that held fish and mark them with a marker buoy and cast curly tails to them. Some of our biggest and best catches were made fishing this way. When the bite was slow we'd tip the curly tails with a crappie nibble, minnow or cricket ... that's right a CRICKET. Crappie love crickets!

Here today and Gone tomorrow. Something that became painfully obvious was crappie that were around deep cover on the ledges were there one day and sometimes gone the next. So you can't rely on a "spot" to hold fish every day. Now that being said, since Ledge crappie are nomadic, while you can count on certain spots to replenish it's a good idea to do your homework and have several places in mind as you'll probably need them. Crappie will hold for a short time on ledges without cover but much prefer a ledge with cover present, especially if it's wood. Here on Kentucky Lake wood is a crappie magnet and since most natural cover has rotted away over time, a ledge with stumps or manmade brush piles or stake beds can really hold an insane amount of fish. However, the best cover is natural cover and if you can find a stump field on a ledge it is golden!

Make it easy on yourself by using the right equipment. For casting the ledges having a rod & reel set up that can detect light strikes is real important that's why we use system matched Shimano Combos. A real good set up for this type of fishing is combining a 6' Shimano Clarus medium / light action rod with a fast tip and a Shimano Sedona 1000 reel. This combo is light weight yet strong enough to handle even the biggest crappie. Add Power Pro 8 lb. Yellow braid and a matching fluorocarbon leader and you've got the ultimate in castibility, durability and sensitivity. This set up can't be beat. For a finishing touch add a 3/32 or 1/8 oz. Ken's fine wire lead head and a Kentucky Green curly tail and you're in business. The trolling rods we use are made by Crappie Classic



Champion Tony Edgar of Ozark Rod Co. which are super sensitive and detect the lightest bite yet powerful to handle a brute crappie. The reels are Shimano Sienna 1000 series with 6lb mono. Having the right landing net will help keep lines from getting tangled and put more fish in the boat that's why we use a Cummings Aluminum Crab landing net. The handle expands from 5 1/2 to about 10 feet in length, is made of light weight but sturdy aluminum and despite its length when fully expanded; the net is very easy to use. The Cummings is our net of choice for the *Kick'n Bass Pontoon*. All things considered crappie fishing is a relatively inexpensive sport compared to bass fishing so getting set up for this type of fishing won't break the bank.

Fishing the Ledges for Crappie is an untapped resource and it does take some time to master the techniques to catch them. So, remember the next time you can't find crappie shallow check out the ledges.



Catch Fish & Have Fun on the Kick'n Bass Pontoon!

(Photo) Frank and Eric Foister had a real good father & son trip crappie fishing on the Kick'n Bass Pontoon.

Decent numbers of crappie continue to be caught on from the *Kick'n Bass Pontoon* while fishing the flats and ledges in the bays using 1/16 oz jigs and double minnow rigs. Both White & Black Crappie are being caught and spider rigging or long line trolling are the best methods. Currently with the crappie in transition to and from the spawning

flats, the chances are good that you'll catch some nice fish. Everyone is having a blast on the pontoon. What's nice about this type of fishing is you can go as a group and have a good time at a leisurely pace. The pontoon can fish up to 6 anglers.

Book Your Pontoon Fishing Trips NOW!

Don't be disappointed Book NOW and get the dates you want!

Check out the Pontoon video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIjRXQe4FfI>

Bass Fishing ...



Several patterns are working and I guess you just have to commit to a plan and make it work.

Despite the bushes getting a real workout, some really good catches are being made flipping and pitching. The good news is ... if the water recedes the fish will move from behind the bushes and trees and be a little more accessible. As of Wednesday the reservoir crested and is now falling. TVA will attempt to pull the reservoir back to its normal summer pool elevation of 359 but that will take a few days. We'll just have to wait and see what happens with the water levels.

Our game plan this week was to switch gears and get away from the bushes and it proved to be a real good move. We caught a lot of good fish casting Steel Shad blade baits in the flats along the creek channels. Pre, Spawn and Post Spawn females are running the creek channels on their way to and from the ledges. Best colors on the Steel Shad are Silver on sunny days and Gold on cloudy days. The Steel Shad has just the right profile and action to mimic a baitfish which is what the bass are feeding on. Right now is Steel Shad Time for sure!!!

As good as the back-bay pattern has been to us, the best thing we've had working this week was something we picked upon late last week and that was to fish the long sloping main lake points dragging either a jig or a shakey head. With the gates open at both Dams the lake current is very strong. The fish that are congregating at the mouths of the bays and along the main lake points are holding a little longer than usual. My guess is that the larger females, in their weakened state from the spawning ritual, just don't want to fight the current and would rather "hole-up" and feed. We found smaller schools of fish (10 or less) that were staying put and once we located several locations like this we made a milk run and had a lot of fun. We did this on several trips. Those of you that read my reports know I'm not big into reporting numbers but anytime you can catch 25 to 30 three to four pound fish in a 4 hour period it makes for a real great day of fishing. *(Photo) Bill Hurle from Louisville with a typical post spawn "schoolie" caught on a PJ's Bass extractor jig and ZMan Finesse worm fished shakey head style.*

SONAR TIP OF THE WEEK ...



With the gates open at both Dams the lake current is very strong. The fish that are making it to the main lake points are holding a little longer than usual. The larger females, in their weakened state from the spawning ritual, would rather "hole-up" and feed then fight the current. Once we located the small schools like the ones in the photo, we drug a Shakey Head along the point and caught several really nice fish. We did this on several trips. Without our Lowrance HDS system no way would we have ever found a location like this. Your system can get images like this too! Be the best angler you can be by learning to use your electronics to their full potential. For your personalized "On the water Sonar Class" contact Lowrance Pro Staffer Randy Kuhens at rk@kicknbass.net

Here's what some of our clients are saying about Kick'n Bass' "On the Water" Sonar Class ...

Randy, I just wanted to let you know how much Jimmy & I enjoyed your class. It has opened up a new way of fishing for us and will eliminate a lot of time. The screens look great and very clear. What you showed us was really unbelievable. We spent three hours after we dropped you off just driving around and looking at things.

Jim Pennington – Indiana

Randy, thanks for the sonar and electronics lesson. It was a Kick'n class. I will be kick'n fish now that I'm able to use my electronics properly!

Alan Petefish - Missouri

Remember ... *The first step in our "On the Water Sonar Class" is to perform an inspection of your system to make sure the installation has been done to factory specs and all components are installed in the proper location. If adjustments are needed we can have them made prior to beginning your class. Doing so assures you that your system will perform at a high level and you'll get the most out of your time on the water.*

The "On the Water Sonar Class" is a one on one, hands on, in your boat using your electronics instruction that will take your understanding and know-how to another level. We get it and you will too!

Kick'n Bass' 7 Essential Steps to Simplify Using Your HDS System.

Kick'n Bass will perform the following ...

- 1. Complete a detailed inspection on your system to certify the installation has been done to factory specs. (If adjustments are required technicians are available to fine tune your system prior to beginning your class. Doing so assures you that your system will perform at an optimum level and you'll get the most out of your time on the water).***
- 2. Check all network settings for compatibility and make adjustments if needed.***
- 3. Program the individual screens and install the overlay data that is best suits the type fishing you do. Example: Depth, Water Temp, Time, etc. Eliminate unwanted, non-practical on screen clutter that hampers using your unit to its maximum potential.***
- 4. Arrange the screens so that going from page to page is orderly and non-confusing. You'll become familiar with the screens and commands and what they'll do for you.***
- 5. Dial in Sonar and Structure Scan Graphics and choose appropriate Palette for the lakes you fish.***
- 6. Demonstrate the art of waypoint management. No more cluttered maps with useless or unproductive waypoints. You'll learn to identify which locations are waypoint worthy and how to go back to those locations without ever assigning a waypoint. You'll assign a waypoint once you are satisfied the location is worth saving.***
- 7. Demo the unit so you'll be able to take advantage of its fish finding capabilities. You'll learn to identify shell beds, submerged stumps, brush piles, ledges, game fish species and more.***

As a bonus Kick'n Bass will help you learn to read an electronic topo map and find "places of interest" that could be potential fishing hot spots.

The Best Bow Mount Sonar Bracket Ever Works on Virtually all boats ...



Phoenix 920 XP Bow Mount Bracket



Phoenix 921 XP Bow Mount Bracket

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Check out the product review on Wired2fish.com
<http://wired2fish.com/kickn-bass-sonar-bracket-review-p17741>