

Doug Wynn's Fishing Report

For September 13, 2017

Report for Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley

A big shout out from the white Excel Bay Pro 203.

You'll notice a lack of pictures in my report this week. My last two trips have both been four person trips and I ended up the day having been so busy, I failed to get the pics I wanted for the report and my web site.

I did have the pleasure Monday to fish with a family group, most of whom were from Oklahoma. The senior member of this group was a 95-year-old gentleman who was a US Navy pilot in WW2, flying off the USS Hornet. He was an absolute gem and an honor to have on my boat. His wit and fishing skills have not diminished over time.

We've seen almost daily changes in water levels and rates of current over the last week. The lake has come back up from a low of 354.8 to 355.6. With the rise in level also comes the lack of current. Most of the fish we pursue are very current-oriented and with the lack of current comes fish being scattered all over the place.

Just when it looked like the fall pattern of crappie and bass moving back into the creeks following schools of baitfish was in full swing, they move back out to areas they had been most of the summer---main lake flats. KY Lake is very clear but Barkley is stained to muddy from the rains in the Cumberland Valley.

Crappie

Good numbers of keeper crappie have been taken on PICO crankbaits on main lake flats in 18-25 feet of water. The fish don't seem to be seeking out cover as much as earlier. When we have found baitballs, we have found crappie. It has been a matter of covering lots of water with lots of baits in the water. Our best PICO patterns have been Mudbug, Zombie, and Blue Boogie. I haven't had the chance to fish a new PICO pattern called Fish Hawk but it is sure to be a killer here.

Anglers using minnows and vertical jigging plastics are finding decent numbers around wood cover in depths of 15-20 feet on the main lake and mouths of creeks or bays.

Bass

Scattered catches are coming from the same areas as crappie, 18-25 feet on flats. Last Wednesday we fished all day scouting areas for client trips the next few days. We didn't catch a single bass all day. The next morning three out of our first four fish caught trolling cranks were keeper sized largemouths with one being four pounds or so. The

bass are moving with the baitfish schools and I'm starting to see some schooling action on main lake flat points where deep water is present.

Top water baits such as spooks, buzzbaits, and chugger-type baits will draw strikes around the schooling bass. Don't be surprised to also find sauger, white bass and even crappie in the schooling action. Flutter spoons, large creature baits, Alabama rigs and big crankbaits are taking some deeper water bass on drops when current is present.

Yellows and Whites

I call both of these fish "razorblades" for good reason. They possess razor sharp gill plates along with spiny dorsal fins that are just waiting to penetrate ones hand or fingers. Be careful handling them. If you don't want to catch either, don't drop a crankbait or any bait that has some action or flash over the sides of your boat. The yellows are present in numbers that even the most seasoned angler has never seen. We are catching some really nice white bass, some up to 2 1/2 pounds, when trolling cranks on main lake flats and drops for crappie.

Catfish

The catfish bite is only worth trying when current is being pulled thru the dam. Cut baits, worms, and leeches are drawing strikes in deep areas around cover on the main lake channels. While the sizes of the blue and channel cats have been on the small side, lots of folks are managing to put several bags of fillets in their freezers.

Boat traffic is noticeably less after the Labor Day holiday. With the fluctuating water levels also comes the chance of finding your boat in ankle-deep water 1/2 mile from shore or hitting one of the many stumps, house foundations, or other gremlins that are lurking at, or just below, the surface.

I'm constantly amazed at reports on social media of boats hitting objects or being stranded in shallow areas where the operators had zero idea of the dangers. I've never understood why someone would pay tens of thousands of dollars for a boat but neglect to pay a few hundred dollars for a GPS chartplotter for safe navigation. The buoys are there for safe travel but many have no idea what they stand for.

Be careful out there, wear your PFDs when the big motor is running above trolling speeds, and be considerate of others. As the water temperatures continue to drop, it is a good idea to keep a change of clothes or some type of covering you can use if you, or your passengers, should fall overboard. Hypothermia is a real threat even in mild temperatures.

Welcome to our slice of heaven.

Capt. Doug Wynn
Crappie Gills n' More

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