

Doug Wynn's Fishing Report

For April 6, 2018

Report for Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley

Hello from the Excel bay Pro 203 "Fishful Thinking"

My menu choice this week has been humble pie. The crappie have had my number and have been in revenge mode.

The week started out with low numbers but great quality crappie. As the week progressed, the numbers went up slightly but quality went down. I'm seeing great catches from those who are spider rigging with minnows and jigs but the quality fish are not there.

The 9 7/8 inch fish of the last couple of years are just above 10 inches now but some reports are it's taking putting well over 3-4 fish over the side to tally a keeper. Most folks are keeping that measuring device very close.

My chosen method has been longlining jigs and roadrunners since it is much easier to teach to clients who may have little to no experience in a 4-6 hour trip. The downfall has been the fish are much more cooperative to the spiderriggers right now. As the water warms, the trollers will see much better action.

The water surface temperatures are still in the low 50s most every morning with some temps approaching 57 in shallow areas in late afternoons. We need some sunny days, warm nights and calm winds not the winter conditions coming this weekend.

Crappie anglers should take a look at where the concentration of boats are at any given time and use that as an indication where folks are catching crappie. Mid morning Thursday found an armada of every conceivable type of fishing boat clustered at the mouth of a major bay. While that is a good indication of where the crappie are, it's coming several weeks later this year than last year.

Spider rigging minnows seem to be a much better choice for most than jigs. The jigs are still working for some when worked in water 15-25 feet deep and near the bottom most days. The jigs should always be tipped with a crappie nibble type attractant or with a spray attractant like Slab Sauce. Crappie are being caught from very deep to shallow but the fish are moving constantly and hard to keep up with.

Bass anglers seem to be catching big fish or no fish. While we are catching several small largemouth bass trolling, traditional bass methods are coming up short for many on small bass.

I don't have exact numbers but a major tournament last week had well over 200 boats with only 10 of those weighing limit catches. Creature baits, lipless baits like rattle-traps, and spinnerbaits seem to be the weapon of choice.

I am hearing the voices of concern over the condition the crappie and bass that are being caught are in. Most are very thin with zero minnows or other food in their stomachs. I have been approached every day at the cleaning tables with the same concerns from folks both local and visitors to the area. I'm also seeing little to no baitfish schools or what we call "baitballs" on my electronics where scanning ALL areas we have been fishing. Lets hope this is just a seasonal scenario and not a sign of bad things to come.

I know folks want to hear sunshine, puppies, daffodils and all things positive but we have to be concerned about the future of our wonderful fishery. Personally, I lay most of what I'm seeing daily at the feet of the idiots who allowed Asian carp to come into our country then into our waterways.

Be careful out there. Wear those PFDs when running the big motor. Watch out for those who won't watch out for you.

Welcome to our slice of Heaven.

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