

May 10, 2012

Kentucky Lake: Water Level at Kentucky Dam - 356.11 Surface Temperature - 74

Lake Barkley: Water Level at Barkley Dam - 356.15 Surface Temperature - 75

Both lakes are three feet below summer pool with little change expected in the near future. Lack of any significant rainfall continues to keep the lakes well below the normal summer pool levels we should have this time of the season. The immediate weather forecast shows no signs of this situation being alleviated anytime in the near future. Kentucky Dam has been generating an average of 7,000 cfs flow and then stepping up the flow to around 41,000 cfs for a few hours during the afternoon and early evening hours. Barkley Dam has been generating an average of 6600 cfs for three hours and then zero flow for three hours over the past few days. I have to say that I cannot remember ever seeing a zero flow on either lake. The latest lake levels, current flows and forecasts for all the TVA lakes can be found at www.tva.com/river/lakeinfo/index.htm.

The weather patterns have not really changed much over the past week. We have had a few hot and humid prefrontal days with some fast moving scattered thunderstorms followed by a few cooler post frontal blue sky days with some north quadrant winds. The forecast for tomorrow and Saturday is for high's in the low 80's as another weak front approaches with light Southeast winds. The forecast for Mother's Day is for a high of 72 with a 40% chance of scattered thunderstorms associated with the frontal passage. Monday's forecast is calling for a high of 78 with a 30% chance of isolated thunderstorms. Next week's forecast is showing a warm up period back to the 80's with only a very slight chance of rain each day (10-20%) through next weekend. Of course weather forecasts can change so make sure you check the latest wind and weather forecasts prior to going on the water.

Last week we were concentrating most of efforts on the Largemouth as they were feeding on schools of spawning shad in the creeks and bays with some added fishing on the ledges as more shad were moving to deeper summer haunts each day. This week we have focused most of our time on the summer ledge patterns as the rapidly rising water temperatures have moved numbers of shad and bass to the deeper summer haunts. Our most productive ledge patterns have been on deep diving crankbaits, dragging football head jigs and Carolina rigged creature baits. We have had a few fish on Texas rigged large worms and swim baits. Overall, dragging football head jigs have been the most productive this past week. There is still some early morning bite on the flats in the creeks and bays where schools of Largemouth are feeding on schools of small shad. The most productive lure on these fish has been a swim bait.

Largemouth Bass: Largemouth are being taken on the ledges on the main lake and around the mouths of the deeper creeks and bays. These fish are being taken on deep diving crankbaits, football head jigs and Carolina rigged creature baits as well as Texas rigged large ribbon tail worms and swim baits. Some Largemouth are also being taken on primary points on the main lake and one secondary points and channel banks in the creeks and bays. These fish are in transition to the ledges and can be taken here and there on medium running crankbaits, Texas and Carolina rigged creature baits and jigs. There is an early morning bite in the back of some of the creeks and bays on schooling Largemouth feeding on schools of small shad. These fish are being taken on spinnerbaits, lipless crankbaits, chatterbaits and swim baits.

Smallmouth Bass: Smallmouth Bass are being taken on primary points on the main lake and on main lake ledges. These fish are being taken on deep diving crankbaits, Carolina rigged creature baits and tube jigs. No numbers of fish are being reported but a few nice fish have been reported.

Some of the productive lures reported this week are: Bomber fat free shad crankbaits in citrus shad, Strike King Series 6 and XD6 crankbaits in sexy shad and sexy chartreuse shad, Rapala DT16 in parrot, Bandit 300 series crankbaits in red craw, Bag 5 custom painted medium running crankbaits in green gizzard shad, Strike King red eye shad in sexy shad and chrome sexy shad, Big Hammer 5" swim baits in sexy smelt, Slong's spinnerbaits in blue glimmer, Charmer 10.5" ribbon tail worms in plum, Charmer timber pups in watermelon/red and green pumpkin, D&L football head jigs in "oops" and watermelon/red patterns with Net Baits kick n b trailers in summer craw and green pumpkin.

Crappie: Crappie are being taken over post spawn brush piles in 10-15 ft depths on old creek channels near the mouths of the creeks and bays. These fish are being taken by spider rigging small jigs, minnows and minnow/jig combinations. A few scattered Black Crappie are being reported holding around brush piles and over stumps in the creeks and bays in 5-8 ft depths. These fish are being taken by fishing with minnows and small jigs under bobbers.

Bluegill/Red Ear: Bluegills are being taken near wood cover in 4-6 ft of water on the flats in the backs of the creeks and bays and in the coves. These fish are very active and are being taken on crickets and worms fished under bobbers and on split shot rigs on bottom baited with small bug jigs tipped with worms. Red Ears are active and are being taken in 5-6 ft of water off gravel bars in the creeks and bays. These fish are being taken on worms under bobbers and on split shot rigs on bottom baited with small bug jigs tipped with worms. Good catches of both species are being reported this week with fish on beds.

Catfish: Channel Catfish are being taken on rocky flats in the creeks and bays and also on the main lake. These fish are being taken on nightcrawlers fished under bobbers and on bottom rigs.

If you are coming to the lakes area to enjoy our great fishing, let me recommend you stop and spend some time in one or both of the area's top bait and tackle shops:

The Cabin Bait and Tackle is located in Kuttawa on U.S. 62 about one mile west of the I-24/U.S. 62 interchange. The Cabin Bait and Tackle has a great selection of the latest in rods, reels, lures for you bass anglers and also a great selection of tackle for the panfish anglers to include live bait. The Cabin also has a great delicatessen where you can get that early morning breakfast sandwich or enjoy a delicious lunch. **Phone: 270-388-6440**

Fisherman's Headquarters is located in Draffenville at the U.S. 68/U.S. 641 triangle. Fisherman's Headquarters also boasts a great selection of the latest in rods, reels and lures for the bass anglers and now has a really good selection of Crappie fishing tackle featuring Wally Marshall "Mr Crappie" rods, reels, lures and line as well as live baits. You can also find the custom painted Bag 5 crankbaits you have seen mentioned in my report this spring. **Phone: 270-527-5938.**

Jet-A-Marina: If you have a problem with your boat while you are visiting our great fisheries, let me recommend you have the folks in the service department at Jet-a-Marina check it out. These folks have a well known reputation for trying to keep our visitors on the water while they are here if they can possibly do so, especially you tournament anglers. Hopefully you will not need this kind of assistance but if you do, you can find Jet-a-Marina located on U.S. 62 in Calvert City, just a couple of miles north of Kentucky Dam. Jet-a-Marina also has a great showroom for all your boating accessories and check out the new Ranger and Stratos bass boats too as well as bulk oil at rock bottom prices for your engine. **Phone: 270-395-4030**

LEDGE FISHING:

Now is the time to make your reservations to learn how to fish the ledges. I offer a focused teaching trip on how to fish the ledges. This trip consists of a class on how to eliminate the water on your topo map before you leave home so that you can concentrate your time on only the highest percentage ledges while on the water as well as some time on the water to learn how to use your electronics on the ledges, set up on the ledges and learn the techniques used to fish the ledges. This teaching trip has been very popular over the past few years since I started offering it as it will teach you how to go out and find and fish those ledges on your own. To book one of these trips, all you have to do is give me a call or drop me an email to book one of my open dates.

GUIDE SERVICE: For those of you that may not be familiar with my service: I am a full time catch and release bass fishing guide. I only guide for bass. If you want a panfish guide, I would be happy to recommend one but if you want bass, that is what I do. If you book with my service, you will have me as your guide and you will be guided in the comfort of a late model Z522 Ranger Comanche. I provide just for fun bass fishing trips, tournament preparation trips, focused teaching trips and technique instruction. If you are in need of a bass fishing guide, give me a call or drop me an email.

I have the following dates still available in May, June and July for guided trips:

May: 23

June: 29

July: Plenty of dates available. Give me a call or drop me an email to book your trip. July is a great time to learn how to fish the ledges.

Of course I am taking booking for the rest of the season also through the end of November.

Captain Dave Stewart
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"Fish With a Professional"