



Corps Lakes offering hot fishing action

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Anglers planning fishing trips to any of Illinois' three big Corps of Engineer reservoirs are likely to find some superb fishing action.

Reports from these lakes indicate fishing action at each location is red hot for a variety of species.

Despite the rains of the recent weeks, many dedicated anglers have been enjoying excellent fishing success. Good catches of white bass, largemouth bass, bluegill and catfish have been reported from each lake.

At Carlyle Lake, good catches of white bass have been common. Most of the successful anglers are concentrating on the underwater humps throughout the lake.

Carlyle Lake anglers are using a variety of small crankbaits lures to catch the white bass. Some of the best fishing is currently being found in the lower reaches of the lake.

However, some success is now reported near Boulder, Keyesport and at the railroad trestle and silos.

Similarly good white bass action is being found in the Carlyle tailwaters. Anglers are using inline spinners, tube jigs or minnows during the day. There has not been much action reported as of yet by the night fishermen.

Catfish, too, continue to provide excellent fishing action. Reports of good catches continue to pour in from Carlyle Lake.

Catfish anglers are fishing with simple hook, sinker and bobber along the rip rap shorelines. Using any of a variety of popular live baits, these fish are being caught about one and one-half foot deep along the rocks.

Even better reports are coming from Lake Shelbyville. Thus far this year, Lake Shelbyville has produced some of the state's finest fishing for many species.

Like Carlyle, water temperatures here are running in the high 60-degree range. And, white bass and sauger action has been superb.

Reports indicate the white bass are currently holding on the steep dropoffs running from ten to 20 feet deep. Earlier in the day, the fish can be found just under the surface. As the sun rises, however, these fish are dropping down to as much as 15 feet.

As the water levels begin to stabilize, the whits will begin feeding on the large schools of shad in this lake. Once that happens, surfacing white bass can be found most any time during the day.

Interestingly, the shad are quite small and the hungry white bass simply continue feeding on them. Many of the white bass are quite large. It's merely a matter of locating a feeding school and catching plenty.

Some fishermen are also trolling for them, but they are scattered. Try casting any type of minnow imitating lure and let it fall right through the schools of whites. The bigger fish seem to be a bit deeper.

The walleye bite has also been exceptional. The walleye are currently scattered along the flats. Typical walleye baits like bottom bouncers and spinner rigs tipped with nightcrawlers are working exceptionally well.

Crappie fishing action has fallen off significantly since the spawn. But, Lake Shelbyville's largemouth bass and catfish are also producing superb action right now.

Catfish are currently the top catch at Rend Lake in southern Illinois. Here, anglers are catching good numbers of these fish using a variety of baits and methods.

Boaters are drift fishing throughout the lake using shrimp, cut shad or leaches and finding superb success. Shoreline anglers are using similar baits, along with commercial catfish baits, and enjoying good action. Recently, the Waltonville Dam,

Bonnie Dam and Ina boat ramp have been hotspots for shoreline catfish action. Largemouth bass continue to provide good action for Rend Lake anglers. Quality bass are consistently taking chartreuse and shad colored crankbaits in six to eight feet of water along the rocks.

The Jackie Branch has produced some of the better bass fishing in recent weeks, as well as areas around the big island.

The crappie bite is rated good with much of the better success coming for anglers using minnows and fishing the flooded buck brush. However, good action is coming from stakebeds and brushpiles in six to ten feet of water.