

Even with intense heat, dedicated anglers enjoying fishing success at Illinois lakes

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

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

Despite the intense heat 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, catches of 50 or more white bass have been common. These fish are being caught almost anywhere you find rip rap along the shoreline.

Carlyle Lake anglers are using a variety of minnow-imitating lures to catch the white bass. Some of the best fishing is currently being found near the hunps at Boulder, Keyesport and near the railroad trestle and silos.

Similarly good white bass action is being found in the Carlyle tailwaters. Anglers are using spinner-type lures or jigs during the day. Night fishermen are using minnows and fishing under a floating light.

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 80-degree range. And, white bass action has been some of the best in years.

Reports indicate the white bass are voraciously feeding on the large schools of shad in this lake. Surfacing white bass can be found almost all-day long.

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 being found almost everywhere. Try casting any type of minnow imitating lure and let it fall right through the surfacing whites. The bigger fish seem to be a bit deeper.

Once they quit feeding on the surface, they can still be caught on the bottom with the same lures.

Crappie fishing action has fallen off significantly since the spawn. But, Lake Shelbyville's largemouth bass, walleye 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 Ina boat ramp has been a hotspot 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 turning back on with much of the better success coming for anglers using minnows as bait. The best action is coming from six to ten feet of water.