


2023



G FISHIN FORECAST AND TIPS



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Welcome to the 2023 Fishing Forecast for Kentucky's major fisheries.

The forecast is based on 2022 fish population surveys, creel surveys, fish stockings, and historical knowledge of the fisheries. The Forecast is designed to assist anglers in planning their fishing trips and to improve their fishing successes. Additional fishing information is available from the Department's website at fw.ky.gov or by obtaining copies of the 2023 Kentucky Fishing and Boating Guide available at most sporting goods stores. The Kentucky Trout Waters brochure is contained in the 2023 Fishing and Boating Guide.

To locate fishing access sites in Kentucky, visit our website, click on "Fishing," and then scroll down to the "Find a Place to Fish" section. You will be able to search for your favorite water bodies and get directions to all major boat launches and access sites.

Opening day of the 2023 fishing season starts March 1 with the new year's license, so take a trip to your local sporting goods store or get online at fw.ky.gov to purchase your 2023 fishing license. Licenses and permits are not currently available by phone. Please visit fw.ky.gov for updates.

The Fishing Forecast is partially financed through funds provided by your purchase of fishing equipment and motorboat fuels under the Federal Sport Fish Restoration Program.



New Up-and-Comers

Several water bodies have shown improvements in their fisheries in the last year. You might try to get in on the action at the following:

- Blue catfish at Fishtrap Lake (Pike County)
- Channel catfish at Cedar Creek Lake (Lincoln County), Mill Creek Lake (Monroe County), and Paintsville Lake (Morgan and Johnson counties)
- Crappie at Barkley Lake (Trigg, Lyon, and Livingston counties) and Green River Lake (Taylor and Adair counties)
- Hybrid striped bass at Herrington Lake (Mercer, Boyle, and Garrard counties)
- Largemouth bass at Yatesville Lake (Lawrence County)
- Redear sunfish at Carr Creek Lake (Knott County), Fagan Branch Lake (Marion County), and Fishtrap Lake (Pike County)
- Sauger in the Ohio River (multiple counties)
- White bass at Dewey Lake (Floyd County)

Fishing Forecast Cheat Sheet

Make sure you check out the Fishing Forecast and FINs lakes Cheat Sheets located toward the beginning of this publication. For those looking for a quick answer to where the best fishing can be found for each species, the Cheat Sheets are your guide. The Cheat Sheets let you know which lakes are forecasted to provide the best fishing (rated 4 stars or greater) for each of your favorite fish species. Just look up the species you are interested in and look for lakes marked in orange. These are the lakes that will provide the best chance for a memorable fishing trip for that species. The Cheat Sheets are located on several pages, so if you don't see the species or lake you are interested in on the first page, make sure to check the following pages. Also, the online version of the Cheat Sheets provides links to lake information for each lake. Just click on the lake name and you will be taken to the lake information page on our website.

Contributors

- Adam Martin, Nick Simpson, and Justin Graben – Western Fisheries District
- Jeremy Shiflet, Maddy Ruble, and Michael Kinney – Northwestern Fisheries District
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- Jeff Crosby, David Baker, and Danny Duvall – Central Fisheries District
- Tom Timmermann and Chad Nickell – Northeastern Fisheries District
- Marcy Anderson, Bradley Hartman, and Dirk Bradley – Southeastern Fisheries District
- Jason Russell and Mark Harless – Eastern Fisheries District
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Late Winter/Early Spring Fishing Frenzy

As warm winds begin to flow over Kentucky, put your new fishing license to good use by trying a few early spring fishing hot spots. In March, fish activity begins in the smaller bodies of water such as farm ponds and smaller public lakes as water temperatures reach the 50s. These smaller, shallower bodies of water warm quicker than reservoirs in spring. Late winter and early spring may be the best time of the year to catch big fish.

Trophy largemouth bass, especially females, are at their heaviest weight of the entire year during late winter and early spring. Female bass feed heavily during this time to provide fuel for the upcoming spawn. Farm ponds and smaller public lakes are prime spots for early spring largemouth bass fishing before the larger bodies of water warm enough for bass to feed.

A few of the best lakes for catching trophy bass in spring are Lake Barkley, Kentucky Lake, and Lake Malone in western Kentucky along with Cedar Creek, Kincaid, and Guist Creek lakes in central Kentucky. Greenbo Lake in northeast Kentucky and Wood Creek Lake in southeast Kentucky have both produced multiple state-record largemouth bass in the past. Lake Beshear in western Kentucky, Barren River Lake in west-central Kentucky, and Herrington and Green River lakes in central Kentucky also offer excellent early spring bass fishing. Dewey, Fishtrap, Fishpond, and Highsplint lakes give eastern Kentucky anglers a great shot for an early spring trophy largemouth bass. The new Kentucky state-record largemouth bass (14-pound 9.5-ounce) was caught from Highsplint Lake in 2019.

If you are after smallmouth bass, head to Green River Lake, Kentucky Lake, Lake Cumberland, Laurel River Lake, Dale Hollow Lake, and Fishtrap Lake for a good chance at catching the smallmouth bass of a lifetime in late winter and early spring. Streams also provide excellent fishing for smallmouth bass in early spring throughout southwestern, central, and eastern Kentucky. Adult fish migrate from their winter habitat in deep, slow-moving holes in the lower sections of streams to spawning areas in smaller tributary streams. Elkhorn Creek, the South Fork of the Licking River, and several upper Kentucky River, Green River, and Barren River tributaries offer the best spring fishing opportunities for smallmouth bass. The upper Levisa Fork is also a great smallmouth fishery.

Slab crappie are ready to be caught, beginning in late winter, at many reservoirs in central and western Kentucky. Catches of crappie over 12 inches are not uncommon at Barkley and Kentucky lakes during this time. Black crappie move into shallow water well before the spawning season in early March, so start early for these fish. Other good bets for crappie include Herrington, Taylorsville, Cumberland, Dewey, Carr Creek, Rough, Nolin, Barren, and Buckhorn lakes as well as Ohio River embayments.

Excellent white bass fishing can be found during the early spring in the upper sections of reservoirs such as Barkley, Cave Run, Nolin River, Taylorsville, Herrington, and Fishtrap lakes. The Kentucky, Green, and Ohio rivers offer excellent spring white bass fishing.

During late winter, sauger and walleye fishing peaks in tailwaters below dams on the Ohio, lower Kentucky, Cumberland, and Tennessee rivers. Lake Cumberland, Dale Hollow, Laurel River, and Carr Creek lakes possess excellent walleye fisheries.

If you are interested in muskellunge, they move in spring to shallow shoreline structure and headwater areas in search of warmer water at Cave Run, Green, Buckhorn, and Dewey lakes. Along with Buckhorn Lake, Cave Run, Green, and Dewey lakes will all have a 40-inch minimum size limit and one-fish daily creel limit starting in the 2023 license year.

Do not forget to take advantage of trout waters such as seasonal catch-and-release trout streams, lakes stocked with trout in winter months, Fishing in Neighborhood (FINs) lakes stocked with trout, and the Cumberland River tailwater and Hatchery Creek below Lake Cumberland in late winter and early spring. Trout bite willingly in cold water.



Fishing Forecast Cheat Sheet

Summary of lakes with 4-star or greater ratings for each species listed

Water body (Click Name for Forecast)	Largemouth Bass	Smallmouth Bass	Spotted Bass	Bluegill	Redear Sunfish	Crappie	Rainbow Trout	Brown Trout	Muskellunge
AJ Jolly Lake									
Barren River									
Barren River Lake									
Beaver Lake									
Benjy Kinman Lake									
Bert Combs Lake									
Beulah Lake									
Boltz Lake									
Briggs Lake									
Buckhorn Lake/tailwater									
Bullock Pen Lake									
Cannon Creek Lake									
Carpenter Lake									
Carr Creek Lake									
Cave Run Lake									
Cedar Creek Lake									
Clear Creek Lake									
Corinth Lake									
Dale Hollow Lake									
Dewey Lake									
Dix River									
Elkhorn Creek									
Elmer Davis Lake									
Fagan Branch Lake									
Fishtrap Lake/tailwater									
Grayson Lake									
Green River									
Green River Lake									
Greenbo Lake									
Guist Creek Lake									
Herrington Lake									
Kentucky Lake/tailwater									
Kentucky River									
Kincaid Lake									
Kingfisher lakes (new and old)									
Lake Barkley/tailwater									
Lake Beshear									
Lake Carnico									
Lake Cumberland									
Lake Cumberland Tailwater									
Lake Malone									
Lake Reba									
Lake Wilgreen									
Laurel River Lake									
Marion County Lake									
Martins Fork Lake									
Mauzy Lake									
McNeely Lake									
Metcalfe County Lake									
Mill Creek Lake (Monroe Co.)									
Mill Creek Lake (Powell/Wolfe Co.)									
Nolin River Lake									
Ohio River									
Paintsville Lake/tailwater									
Pennyrile Lake									
Rough River Lake/tailwater									
Shanty Hollow Lake									
Smoky Valley Lake									
Spurlington Lake									
Taylorsville Lake									
Washburn Lake									
West Fork Drakes Reservoir									
Wood Creek Lake									
Yatesville Lake									



Additional species can be found on following page.

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Fishing Forecast Cheat Sheet

Summary of lakes with 4-star or greater ratings for each species listed

Water body (Click Name for Forecast)	Striped Bass	Hybrid Striped Bass	White Bass	Walleye	Sauger	Saugeye	Channel Catfish	Blue Catfish	Flathead Catfish
AJ Jolly Lake									
Barren River									
Barren River Lake									
Beaver Lake									
Benjy Kinman Lake									
Bert Combs Lake									
Beulah Lake									
Boltz Lake									
Briggs Lake									
Buckhorn Lake/tailwater									
Bullock Pen Lake									
Cannon Creek Lake									
Carpenter Lake									
Carr Creek Lake									
Cave Run Lake									
Cedar Creek Lake									
Clear Creek Lake									
Corinth Lake									
Dale Hollow Lake									
Dewey Lake									
Dix River									
Elkhorn Creek									
Elmer Davis Lake									
Fagan Branch Lake									
Fishtrap Lake/tailwater									
Grayson Lake									
Green River									
Green River Lake									
Greenbo Lake									
Guist Creek Lake									
Herrington Lake									
Kentucky Lake/tailwater									
Kentucky River									
Kincaid Lake									
Kingfisher lakes (new and old)									
Lake Barkley/tailwater									
Lake Beshear									
Lake Carnico									
Lake Cumberland									
Lake Cumberland Tailwater									
Lake Malone									
Lake Reba									
Lake Wilgreen									
Laurel River Lake									
Marion County Lake									
Martins Fork Lake									
Mauzy Lake									
McNeely Lake									
Metcalfe County Lake									
Mill Creek Lake (Monroe Co.)									
Mill Creek Lake (Powell/Wolfe Co.)									
Nolin River Lake									
Ohio River									
Paintsville Lake/tailwater									
Pennyrile Lake									
Rough River Lake/tailwater									
Shanty Hollow Lake									
Smoky Valley Lake									
Spurlington Lake									
Taylorsville Lake									
Washburn Lake									
West Fork Drakes Reservoir									
Wood Creek Lake									
Yatesville Lake									



FINs Lake Cheat Sheet

Summary of FINs lakes forecasting good or excellent fishing for each species listed

FINs Lake	County	Catfish	Rainbow Trout	Largemouth Bass	Bluegill	Redear Sunfish	Comments
Anderson County Community Park Lake	Anderson						Good numbers of bluegill over 6 inches. Redear sunfish present up to 10+ inches. High numbers of bass, with most fish less than 15 inches.
Camp Ernst Lake	Boone						Good numbers of bluegill 6–8 inches, with redear sunfish up to 10 inches. High bass numbers with most fish less than 13 inches. Some larger bass present.
Millennium Park Pond	Boyle						2021 survey was exceptional! Lots of bass over 15 inches, plentiful bluegill in the 6- to 9-inch range, and high numbers of redear sunfish in the 8- to 10-inch range.
Alexandria Community Park Lake	Campbell						Abundant bluegill and redear sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Most largemouth bass 12 inches or less, with some large bass present over 20 inches.
Robert J. Barth Park Lake	Campbell						Most bluegill less than 6 inches and largemouth bass less than 12 inches. New FINs lake should improve over time with active management.
Southgate Lake	Campbell						Fair numbers of bluegill and redear sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Majority of largemouth bass are less than 15 inches.
Panther Creek Park Lake	Daviess						High numbers of redear sunfish over 6 inches with fish up to 12 inches sampled. Several nice crappie over 10 inches sampled recently. Potential for big bass.
Waymond Morris Park Lake	Daviess						Most bass and sunfish on smaller side. Stocked trout and catfish are the best bet.
Yellow Creek Park Lake	Daviess						Good numbers of bluegill 6–8 inches, with redear sunfish up to 10 inches. High bass numbers with most fish less than 12 inches. Some larger bass present.
Jacobson Park Lake	Fayette						Lots of small bluegill. Bass numbers are lower than other lakes, but high proportion of bass are over 15 inches. Also some nice crappie present in the lake.
Kentucky Horse Park Rolex Lake	Fayette						Abundant bluegill and redear sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Largemouth bass population improving, with some fish over 15 inches present.
Flemingsburg Old Reservoir	Fleming						Good numbers of bluegill over 6 inches. Redear sunfish present up to 10+ inches. High numbers of bass, with most fish less than 15 inches.
Lower Sportsman's Lake	Franklin						Fair numbers of bluegill and redear sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Majority of largemouth bass are less than 15 inches.
Upper Sportsman's Lake	Franklin						Fair numbers of bluegill and redear sunfish in the 6- to 8- inch range. Most bass less than 13 inches; however, some larger bass present over 18 inches.
Lake Pollywog	Grant						Exceptional numbers of redear sunfish in the 7- to 9-inch range. Good numbers of bluegill in the same size range. Most bass less than 15 inches.
Leary Lake	Grant						Exceptional numbers of bluegill 6–8 inches, with redear sunfish up to 10 inches. Good bass numbers, with some larger bass present over 18 inches.
Kess Creek Park Lake	Graves						Good numbers of large bass over 15 inches. Sunfish numbers relatively low, with majority of sunfish small in size.



FINs Lake Cheat Sheet

Summary of FINs lakes forecasting good or excellent fishing for each species listed

FINs Lake	County	Catfish	Rainbow Trout	Largemouth Bass	Bluegill	Redear Sunfish	Comments
James D. Beville Park Lake	Grayson						Excellent numbers of bluegill over 6 inches, with good numbers of redear as well. Most largemouth bass 12 inches or less, with some large bass over 20 inches.
Kingdom Come State Park Lake	Harlan						Low numbers of fish overall with some bluegill and redbreast sunfish over 6 inches. Trophy potential for bass. Stocked trout and catfish are the best bet.
Rotary Park Lake	Hickman						Good numbers of redear sunfish over 6 inches, with some nice-size bluegill as well. Majority of bass less than 15 inches.
Madisonville City Park Lake South	Hopkins						Good numbers of bluegill 6–8 inches, with redear sunfish up to 10 inches. High bass numbers with most fish less than 12 inches.
Cherokee Park Lake	Jefferson						Good numbers of bass over 12 inches, with trophy potential. High numbers of bluegill, with moderate numbers of fish over 6 inches.
Fisherman's Park Lake #3	Jefferson						Moderate numbers of bass, with most fish less than 12 inches. Some larger bass over 18 inches present. Majority of bluegill and redear sunfish 3–6 inches.
Fisherman's Park Lake #4	Jefferson						Moderate numbers of bass, with most fish less than 12 inches. Some larger bass over 18 inches present. Majority of bluegill and redear sunfish 3–6 inches.
Tom Wallace Park Lake	Jefferson						Moderate numbers of bluegill and redear sunfish, with bluegill over 9 inches and redear sunfish over 10 inches present. Numerous bass over 20 inches.
Waverly Park Lake	Jefferson						Good numbers of bass over 15 inches. Most bluegill less than 6 inches, with some larger redear sunfish over 8 inches present.
William F. Miles Angler Lake	Jefferson						Good numbers of bass over 18 inches. Most bluegill less than 6 inches, with moderate numbers of redear sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range present.
William F. Miles Green Heron Lake	Jefferson						Good numbers of bluegill over 6 inches. High numbers of bass, with most fish less than 12 inches. Some larger bass present.
Lake Mingo	Jessamine						High numbers of bluegill and redear sunfish with most fish less than 6 inches. Moderate bass numbers, with decent numbers over 12 inches.
Southland Church Lake	Jessamine						High numbers of bluegill and redear sunfish, with most fish less than 6 inches. Low bass numbers, with some larger bass present.
Middleton Mills Long Pond	Kenton						Good numbers of bluegill and redear sunfish over 6 inches. Moderate numbers of bass, with most fish less than 12 inches. Some larger bass present.
Middleton Mills Shelterhouse Pond	Kenton						Lots of small bluegill and redear sunfish less than 6 inches. Bass numbers are lower than other lakes, but high proportion of bass are over 15 inches.
Prisoners Lake	Kenton						Low numbers of bass and sunfish overall. Trophy potential for bass with some fish over 18 inches present. Stocked trout and catfish are the best bet.
Brickyard Pond	Knox						Moderate numbers of bluegill, with most fish less than 6 inches. Redear sunfish over 8 inches present. Bass numbers low, with high proportion over 15 inches.



FINs Lake Cheat Sheet

Summary of FINs lakes forecasting good or excellent fishing for each species listed

FINs Lake	County	Catfish	Rainbow Trout	Largemouth Bass	Bluegill	Reardear Sunfish	Comments
Logan Hubble Park Lake	Lincoln						2021 survey was exceptional! Lots of bass over 15 inches. Plentiful bluegill in the 6- to 9-inch range and high numbers of redear sunfish in the 8- to 10-inch range.
Whitehall Park Lake	Madison						Lots of redear sunfish 6–10 inches. Low bluegill numbers. High bass numbers with most fish less than 12 inches. Some large bass over 20 inches present.
Mike Miller Park Lake	Marshall						Good numbers of bluegill and redear sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Moderate numbers of bass, with most fish less than 12 inches. Some larger bass present.
Maysville-Mason County Rec. Park Lake	Mason						High numbers of bluegill with most fish less than 6 inches. Moderate bass numbers, with a good proportion over 15 inches.
Lake Montgomery	McCracken						Moderate numbers of bluegill, with most fish less than 6 inches. Moderate bass numbers, with a good proportion over 15 inches.
Carlson Lake (Ft. Knox)	Meade						Exceptional numbers of redear sunfish in the 6- to 10-inch range. Fair numbers for bluegill 6–7 inches. Most bass less than 15 inches. Trout not stocked here.
Easy Walker Park Pond	Montgomery						Exceptional numbers of redear sunfish in the 7- to 10-inch range. Fair numbers for bluegill 6–7 inches. High bass numbers with most fish less than 12 inches.
Bloomfield Park Lake	Nelson						Good numbers of bluegill and redear sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Most largemouth bass 12 inches or less, with some large bass present over 15 inches.
Lusby Lake	Scott						Moderate bass numbers, with a good proportion over 15 inches. Majority of bluegill and redear sunfish less than 7 inches.
Scott County Park Lake	Scott						Good numbers of redear sunfish in the 7- to 9-inch range. Moderate numbers of bass, with most fish 12 inches or less. Some large bass present over 15 inches.
Three Springs Lake	Warren						Exceptional numbers of redear sunfish in the 6- to 10-inch range. Moderate bass numbers, with a good proportion over 15 inches. Definite trophy potential.

2023 Fishing Forecast

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

The fishing forecast is based on 2022 fish population surveys, planned fish stockings, and projections for 2023. For more information on any lake, click on the lake name to be taken to the lake information page at fw.ky.gov.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
AJ Jolly Lake	175 acres	(Campbell County)	Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★☆☆☆☆	Abundant, most fish are less than 6 inches.	
Catfish	★★★★★	Good number of channel catfish over 12 inches present. Low number of blue catfish; 25-inch-plus blue catfish possible. Flatheads present in lake.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Abundant, most between 6 to 8 inches.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Fair number of bass, including good number of quality-size fish present.	
Saugeye	★★★★★	Stocked annually since 2013. Quality saugeye present; fish up to 25 inches are possible.	
Barren River		(from Barren River Lake dam to Green River confluence)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Catfish	★★★★★	Exceptional numbers of blues and channels during and following lake discharge periods. Flatheads not uncommon and of good size.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Good numbers after lake release.	
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Barren River Lake tailwater area is best, especially during or following periods of heavy lake discharges. Good fishing also below instream dam at Bowling Green.	
Muskellunge	★★★★★	Target mouth of feeder creeks, springs, and around wood structure or other current breaks from dam to Green River confluence. Stocked annually when available.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Numbers down in all size ranges, but still has trophy fish (20-inch-plus) available. Fishing best 1–2 miles below dam to the mouth of Drakes Creek. Target areas above and below riffle/shoal areas and rocky outcroppings.	
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Found throughout Barren River. Fish slower-moving pools with rocky banks and logs. Fish spinnerbaits and crankbaits in the spring and early summer. Use buzzbaits and soft plastics during summer.	
Walleye/Sauger	★★★★★	Fishing best below instream dams (Barren River Lake and Bowling Green good at times) especially December–March. Good-size walleye (15–30 inch) and sauger(15–20 inch) available. Native walleye also present/stocked in Drakes Creek system.	
Bass	★★★★★	Largemouth, spotted, and smallmouth all found here in fair numbers and good sizes. Largemouth best below 100 bridge. Smallmouth best above Coruth or Dunn's Ford/Celsor Road.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Best action during early onset of rising water conditions any time of year, but especially during summer months.	
White bass, hybrids, and yellow bass	★★★★★	Spawning runs still present in late March to mid-April. Small crankbaits and in-line spinners for white and yellow bass. Bigger swimbaits and spinners for hybrids.	
Walleye	★★★★★	Males hanging near riffle areas starting mid-February until early April. Fish deepest section of pools rest of the year with bottom-bumping spinners, blade baits, or curly-tailed grubs.	
Barren River Lake	10,000 acres	(Allen and Barren counties)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Bluegill (sunfish)	★★★★★	Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish. Fish stump beds and back of coves during the spring and fall. Fish deeper in the summer near cove mouths and along bluff walls near laydowns or standing timber.	
Catfish	★★★★★	Good populations of blue (25-inch-plus), channel, and flathead catfish present with good numbers of larger individuals. Fishing best near creek channels and at night. Fish for blues with live or cut bait in open water areas near the channel with jugs or rod and reel.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Excellent numbers overall (black and white) but may struggle to get into a lot of keepers during summer. Numbers of keeper white crappie (10-inch-plus) good, but few larger black crappie (10-inch-plus) available. Crappie mix slightly skewed toward white crappie (white crappie to black crappie). Target shallower water to find black crappie in spring and early summer. Summer and winter fishing is best around deeper structure in creek/river channel and fish attractor/brush sites.	



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(continued)

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
Barren River Lake	10,000 acres	(Allen and Barren counties)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Overall numbers are good with large fish (25-inch-plus) available. Spring fishing best in upper lake portions at first and second riffle areas with spinners, crankbaits, and curly-tailed jigs. Main lake (around islands in mid- to lower lake) or dam area at night to very early morning has produced best in recent years. Stocked annually (200,000); however, higher numbers (300,000–400,000) stocked 4 of the last 10 years (2013, 2015, 2016, and 2018).	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers overall and above-average numbers of 15- to 18-inch fish. Numbers of fish above 18 inches are fair but should improve by midsummer through fall.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Very low-density population overall. Target lower third of lake near dam, fishing rock outcroppings and rocky transition areas.	
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Lower-density population overall; however, better-than-average-quality fish (14 inches plus) available. Bridge pylons and bluff walls with rock slides are good places to target spots.	
White bass	★★★★★	Numbers remain low. Best opportunity is during spawning run in late-March to mid-April with in-line spinners, small jigs, and small crankbaits in Barren River, Peter, Skaggs, and Beaver creeks above the lake.	
Yellow bass	★★★★★	Willing bait takers (live and artificial). Most fish are 7 to 9 inches in length. Bite readily on small jigs, spinners, and minnows. Bridge pylons are excellent areas to target for summertime action.	



NOTE

Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 15–18 feet.

Beaver Lake	158 acres	(Anderson County)	Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good number of 6- to 8-inch fish. ≥8-inch fish present.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Channel catfish (3,700) were stocked in 2020. Fish over 15 inches common.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Fair number of fish. Majority of crappie are 8–10 inches with larger fish possible.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	New Regulation: Largemouth bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit. Majority of the bass are 8–12 inches. Increasing number of bass over 15 inches. Bass over 20 inches are present.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good number of 7- to 8-inch fish available; 10- to 11-inch fish possible. Redear sunfish (31,600 fish) were stocked in fall of 2022.	

Benjy Kinman Lake	88 acres	(Henry County)	Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Fair numbers. Most fish are 6–7 inches.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers over 15 inches. Trophy-size fish present.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish 8–10 inches. Larger fish possible.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Majority of bass are 8–10 inches. Fair potential for quality-size fish and bass over 20 inches.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Low numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish. Key in on areas with aquatic vegetation.	

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
Bert Combs Lake	36 acres	(Clay County)	Southeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Low-to-moderate-density population with most fish under 6 inches, but a few larger fish are present. Shallow water coves hold good numbers of fish.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Decent number of 12- to 15-inch fish. Stocked in even-numbered years.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	High-density population comprised of 8- to 12-inch fish with a few fish over 14 inches present.	
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	Fish are stocked annually in January, April, May, and October.	
Beulah Lake	87 acres	(Jackson County)	Southeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Moderate-density population with most fish less than 6 inches. Some larger fish up to 9 inches present.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Decent numbers of 12- to 15-inch fish with some up to 20 inches. Stocked in even-numbered years.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Low-density population with some fish up to 10 inches. Areas around downed trees hold good numbers of fish.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	High-density bass population present. Most bass are in the 6- to 12-inch range. Fish over 20 inches can also be found.	
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	Stocked annually in January, April, May, and October. Most fish in the 10- to 12-inch range.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Low-density population with most fish under 12 inches. Can find an occasional 18- to 20-inch fish.	
Boltz Lake	92 acres	(Grant County)	Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish between 6–8 inches. ≥8-inch fish present.	
Catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of channel catfish over the 12-inch size limit. Low numbers of blue catfish. 25-inch-plus blue catfish possible. Channel catfish (2,160) were stocked in 2021, and blue catfish (920) were stocked in 2022.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Abundant; majority of fish around 8–10 inches; larger fish possible.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	New Regulation: Largemouth bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit. Good numbers of bass in and above the 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit. Potential for bass ≥20 inches.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Low numbers of 6- to 9-inch fish available around vegetation.	
Saugeye	★★★★★	Harvestable-size saugeye present. 9,200 saugeye were stocked in spring of 2020.	
Briggs Lake	18 acres	(Logan County)	Southeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of 6- to 7-inch fish available.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	All sizes available. Stocked in even-numbered years.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Large fish present. Fish laydown trees, stake beds, and brush piles in late winter and early spring.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Better-than-average numbers of 12-inch-plus fish. Lake is managed as a bluegill/redear lake.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of larger fish (8-inch-plus) available. Larger fish are very shallow in early spring and then move to thermocline depth.	
Warmouth	★★★★★	Fair numbers of fish available. Fish in or near vegetation.	

NOTE

Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 7 feet.

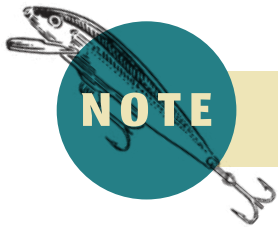
Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
Buckhorn Lake and Tailwater	1,230 acres	(Leslie and Perry counties)	Eastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good-size distribution and very good numbers of 7- to 8-inch fish. Upper lake areas and heads of coves hold best numbers during summer pool. Shallow mudflats in main lake areas can hold large congregations of fish on spawning beds. Redear sunfish were stocked in 2019, 2020, and 2022 and are planned again for stocking in 2023.	
Catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of channel catfish with some recruitment of young fish each year. Some flathead catfish available up to 40 pounds. Lake contains many rocky areas with natural cavities for hand-fishing during spawn. Tailwater provides an additional good fishery.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Good numbers of legal-size fish from 9 to 10 inches. Occasional larger fish to 14 inches. July and August can provide some very good fishing over shallow mud flats adjacent to main lake channel. Try trolling or drifting bait-tipped jigs or small crankbaits over the flats. Also, October–November during drawdown to winter pool can be very good in the upper lake locations above the marina.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	There have been good spawns over the last several years. Numbers of keeper fish have decreased somewhat with most being 15–16 inches. An occasional 20-inch fish can still be caught. Spring fishing success can be very good for larger bass in the shallow water areas of the upper lake. Spring fishing is often affected by high water levels.	
Muskellunge	★★★★★	Overall numbers are down with the majority of fish less than 36 inches. From January to March, fish will congregate in the lower lake and near the dam in shallow water brush and submerged trees. Trace Branch and portions of the headwater area (upper middle fork of Kentucky River) provide good fishing in July and August. During September, look for larger fish along edges of weed beds in backs of coves in shallow water. Bank fishing opportunities are good at the tailwater in March and October. This fishery is maintained by annual stockings. Note: 40-inch minimum size limit.	
Bullock Pen Lake	134 acres	(Grant County)	Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Most fish are 6 inches or less but are abundant.	
Catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of channel catfish over the 12-inch size limit. Potential for larger fish (≥20 inches). Blue catfish are present with 25-inch-plus fish possible. Flathead catfish present. Channel catfish (2,430) were stocked in 2021, and blue catfish (1,460) were stocked in 2022.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Abundant population, mainly 6–8 inches; a few larger fish are present.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of bass at and above size limit (12-inch size limit). Excellent potential for quality-size fish and bass over 20 inches.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Very low numbers.	
Saugeye	★★★★★	Harvestable-size saugeye are present. Saugeye (13,400 fish) were stocked in spring of 2022. Note: This lake is home to the current state-record saugeye.	
White bass	★★★★★	Small population, but some large fish in the 14- to 17-inch range available.	
Cannon Creek Lake	243 acres	(Bell County)	Southeastern Fisheries District
Brown trout	★★★★★	Stocking program started in 2018. Low-density population. Fish stocked annually in March.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked in even-numbered years.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Moderate-density population comprised of fish under 13 inches, with most fish 8–12 inches. Fish over 20 inches are present but rare.	
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	Stocked yearly in February and October.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Low-density population with fish less than 12 inches.	
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Low to moderate numbers of 7- to 12-inch fish.	

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Carpenter Lake	68 acres	(Davies County)
Northwestern Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★★	Most fish 5–7 inches. Some larger fish caught annually. Target spawning fish in shallow water in bank cuts and coves, especially on edges of lily pads. Through summer, fish deeper edges of lilies and offshore humps with red worms, wax worms, and nightcrawler bites under a float.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked in even-numbered years. Excellent growth rates produce good numbers of 20-inch-plus fish. Use nightcrawlers, chicken liver, and/or strawberry chicken under a bobber or on bottom at night throughout the year. Fish off ADA pier, gravel jetty off Hwy 405, or near the dam by boat.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	A third of the population is 15 inches and greater. Good numbers of 20-inch-plus fish. Target woody structure in 2 to 6 feet of water using plastic worm and creature baits. Larger fish will follow schools of shad in open water. Use shad-imitating swimbaits or crankbaits.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Low numbers. Most fish 7–8 inches; some up to 10 inches. Fish deeper edges of lily pads and offshore humps with live bait under a float.
Saugeye	★★★★★	Saugeye have been stocked for four years. Growth is very good, and harvestable-size (22.5 inch) fish were seen in 2022. Lures imitating small shad, crappie, and bluegill, along with crappie gear and small bass gear will catch fish. Most catches have been accidental to date while the population grows. Try trolling or fishing near the bottom in deeper water toward dam.
Carr Creek Lake	710 acres	(Knott County)
Eastern Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of small bluegill present with some fish up to 7 inches. Shallow water areas in creek arms provide good fishing in spring and early summer. Target larger fish around structured habitat in early summer before hydrilla growth covers it. Rocky banks near the marina and stake beds in Litt Carr arm hold larger fish in the spring.
Catfish	★★★★★	Primary species are channel and flathead catfish, but blue catfish have been stocked since 2020, and some are now over 18 inches long. Numerous channel catfish can be found in the 12- to 18-inch range. These fish feed aggressively with rising water levels in the late spring through early summer prior to spawn. There were a few early reports of white catfish in the lake but no recent angler catches. If you catch one, please let us know! Flathead catfish available in a range of sizes from 36 to 40 inches.
Crappie	★★★★★	Fishery comprised of black (including blacknose) and white crappie. Larger black crappie from 10–13 inches and white crappie from 10–15 inches. Black crappie were stocked in 2021 and 2022. Deadfall trees, stake beds, and submerged brush piles will congregate large numbers of fish during most of the year. Number of keeper-size fish is holding stable. Check out KDFWR web page for GPS coordinates of submerged fish habitat structures. Large stake bed structures in Litt Carr arm of the lake.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish up to 17 inches. Larger bass up to 21 inches are frequently caught in the early spring. Growth rates have remained high in recent years. During late spring through summer, best results are often at night. Recruitment of young fish continues to increase.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Redear sunfish were stocked in 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2022 and are planned to be stocked again in 2023. Fishing opportunity is very good with larger fish up to 10 inches. The best fishing can be found from late April until the end of May when fish are spawning. These fish prefer to spawn in areas with gravel and nearby vegetation. After the spawn, look for fish on woody structure and rocky banks in early summer before hydrilla growth limits shallow water access.
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Low recruitment; a few fish sampled up to 18 inches. Lower half of lake holds best numbers. Fish will suspend along steep rock bank or cliff drop.
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Best numbers are concentrated in lower and mid lake. A few large fish up to 18 inches with fair numbers through 15 inches.
Walleye	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish from 15–22 inches, with a few larger fish. March through May are good months to try during day or night. Target fish in deeper, open water areas with schools of shad that walleye will suspend beneath. Rocky points and bank line trees hold the majority of fish in early spring. Walleye are stocked annually.



Zebra mussels and hydrilla are present at Carr Creek Lake. Boaters are asked to take measures to prevent the spread of these damaging non-native invasive species by properly inspecting and disinfecting boats, trailers, and equipment.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Cave Run Lake	8,270 acres	(Bath, Menifee, Rowan, and Morgan counties) Northeastern Fisheries District
Catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of channel catfish up to 24 inches along with a few larger sizes. Many are found along shallow rocky shoreline areas in early-May to June where they seek cover in rock piles and submerged logs to spawn. Later they tend to be found in deeper water. Although not as plentiful, some trophy-size flathead catfish are found in the lake.
Crappie	★★★★★	Fish produced in the 2020 and 2021 spawns should continue to bring this population back and are currently in the ideal size range for harvesting. Starting in May, fish around department-placed and natural brush piles in the lower end of the lake. Fishing slows down in the fall and winter, but fish can be found up in the riverine sections of the lake during this time.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Beginning March 1, 2023, the slot limit will be adjusted down to 12–15 inches. This should open the high numbers of fish in the 15-inch range to harvest and tournament weigh-ins. There are still high numbers of fish less than 8 inches that dominate the overall population. Harvesting these fish under the slot limit will help this population. Difficult lake to fish; upper reaches have best chances for larger fish. Note: 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit beginning March 1, 2023
Muskellunge	★★★★★	Excellent angling can still be expected in this fishery. Trophy fish can be found primarily in the spawning month of April in the backs of the large coves and Beaver Creek or in the fall months of September and October in association with gentle-sloping gravelly banks or near channel drop-offs. Note: 40-inch minimum size; one-fish creel limit.
Smallmouth bass	★★★☆☆	Uncommon; found primarily off rocky points or shoreline in the lower lake. Note: 18-inch minimum size limit.
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Smaller in size and most numerous within the middle and lower main lake shoreline. Become less common within the upper reaches of the lake. Extremely high numbers of smaller fish. Harvesting these fish will benefit both the spotted bass and largemouth bass populations. Reminder that there isn't a minimum size limit on spotted bass, but they do contribute to the overall six-fish black bass daily creel limit.
Sunfish	★★★★★	Widespread and common, but most are 7 inches long or less. Bluegill can be found in the back of coves or other quickly warming shallow water areas in the spring and on department-placed or natural brush piles later in the year. A growing population of redear sunfish is spreading throughout the lake. Fish deeper than you would for bluegill and around vegetation.
White bass	★★★★★	Great population that is continuing to build and becoming more active in the jumps. Areas around the confluence, Clay Lick, and Alfrey can produce good jumps in the early summer months. Be prepared for white bass while fishing the lake for anything in early summer. Note: No more than 5 white bass in the daily creel limit may be greater than 15 inches long.



Introductions of the highly invasive and detrimental aquatic vegetation, hydrilla, have been made at Cave Run Lake. Anglers are reminded to take extra precautions to keep from moving this aquatic vegetation to other lakes. Thoroughly clean and inspect your entire boat before moving it to other lakes. Even the smallest fragments of this plant can sprout new colonies.

Cedar Creek Lake	784 acres	(Lincoln County) Southeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Moderate-density population with most fish less than 5 inches. However, fish up to 8 inches can be found. Several designated bank fishing opportunities are available around the lake.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Decent numbers of 12- to 15-inch fish with fish over 20 inches also available. Stocked in even-numbered years.
Crappie	★★★★★	Stable population with good numbers of fish in the 8- to 10-inch range. Bigger fish up to 14 inches are also available to anglers. Try fishing jigs and minnows around structure up in the creeks in the fall.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish over 15 inches due to several strong-year classes that moved through the population. Good spawns the last few years should help keep population numbers strong. It remains one of the best options in southeast Kentucky for catching fish over 15 inches. Target edges of weed beds in the summer. A 20-inch minimum size limit, one-fish daily creel limit is in effect on this lake.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Moderate-density population with most fish in the 5- to 8-inch range. Good numbers of fish over 8 inches with fish over 10 inches available. Using mealworms around vegetation in the flats is a good option to target them.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
Clear Creek Lake	40 acres	(Bath County)	Northeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of 6- to 7-inch bluegill present with occasional 8-inch fish caught. Fish shallow shoreline areas in the spring especially behind standing timber.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Catfish spawning boxes have been installed in this lake to help with natural reproduction. To assess the success of spawning boxes, stocking has been suspended since 2019. Anglers should see minimal impact from this change.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Fair population with a few fish over 20 inches in the samples. Anglers should focus around the dam and the standing timber at the back of the lake.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good population of 7- to 8-inch fish. Fish shallow shoreline areas in the spring, especially around standing timber.	
Corinth Lake	96 acres	(Grant County)	Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish. ≥8-inch fish present.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Channel catfish (1,945) were stocked in 2021. Good numbers of channel catfish over the 12-inch size limit. Fish over 15 inches common.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Fair numbers. Most fish between 8 and 9 inches.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	New Regulation: Largemouth bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit. Majority of the bass are 8–12 inches. Good potential for bass 15–20 inches.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish up to 8 inches. Few trophy-size fish present.	
Dale Hollow Lake	6,614 acres in Kentucky	(Clinton and Cumberland counties)	Southeastern Fisheries District
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish in the population. Fish over 15 inches continue to make up the bulk of the population. Target largemouth in cuts and coves in creeks and around sunken structures in the spring and fall and grassy areas during the summer months.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Stable population with good numbers of fish across all sizes. Fish over 3 pounds available. Jigs and soft plastics are good options during the year, as well as the float-n-fly technique in the winter months. Target main lake points and rock walls.	
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Low-density population with most fish under 13 inches.	
Walleye	★★★★★	Walleye numbers remain strong, with many fish over 20 inches. Trolling nightcrawler rigs and crankbaits over flats in 20–25 feet of water in the summer months is a good option.	
Dewey Lake	1,100 acres	(Floyd County)	Eastern Fisheries District
Blue catfish	★★★★★	Popular fishery with jug fishing in main lake areas from early spring through early fall. Shad are an excellent bait choice. Moderate-density population with good numbers of 20- to 28-inch fish. Larger fish are over 36 inches. Fish over 40 inches have been caught in the tailwater. Blues are stocked annually.	
Bluegill	★★★★★	Stable population with good numbers. Larger fish are approximately 7–8 inches. Good spawning beds can usually be found located at the back of midlake coves.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers found in the lower lake year-round. The upper lake is best in the summer months. Lots of good bank fishing access along roadside and parking areas.	
Crappie	★★★★★	A moderate-density population of both black and white crappie. The majority of large fish are white crappie up to 15 inches. Most keeper-size fish are 9–13 inches for white crappie and 9–11 inches for black crappie. Popular with bank anglers due to many bank access areas and bank-line brush piles.	
Flathead catfish	★★★★★	Good-size distribution. A few large fish from 20–35 pounds caught each year. Popular with ticklers/noodlers in June. Try fishing live bait by rod and reel or jug lines from spring through early fall.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Population remains stable with good numbers of fish in the 15- to 20-inch range. March is a good time to go after bigger fish in shallow, murky water with artificial plastics. Target upper lake locations in early spring when the water is clear. Try fishing crankbaits close to submerged brush and trees.	



(continued)

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Dewey Lake	1,100 acres	(Floyd County)
Muskellunge	★★★★★	A moderate-density population that continues to improve. Muskellunge are stocked annually. Anglers continue to report catching more fish over 36 inches each year. Fish feed aggressively on shad at the back of larger lake coves and shallow banks along the roadside. A new regulation (40-inch minimum) goes into effect for 2023.
Redear sunfish	★★★☆☆	Fish are present up to 9 inches but infrequent in catches. Rocky areas with surrounding vegetation consistently hold more fish. Try fishing bait near the bottom (4–6 feet) around weedy areas or brush. If catching bluegill, go deeper or further off shoreline to get into redear sunfish.
White bass	★★★★★	Numbers remain stable. John's Creek will congregate fish March–April for spawning (look for redbud trees in bloom). Later in September–October, look for good numbers of fish in shallow-water areas in the back of coves such as Big Branch and Dick's Creek.



NOTE Zebra mussels and hydrilla are present at Dewey Lake. Boaters are asked to take measures to prevent the spread of these damaging nonnative invasive species by properly inspecting and disinfecting boats, trailers, and equipment.

Dix River		(below Herrington Lake, Garrard and Mercer counties)	Central Fisheries District
Brown trout	★★★☆☆	Very low numbers of holdover fish are expected due to poor water conditions. Brown trout (300) are stocked annually.	
Rainbow trout	★★★☆☆	Low numbers of holdover fish are expected due to poor water conditions. Rainbow trout (4,500) are stocked annually. Five stockings occur during the year.	

Elkhorn Creek		(main stem and North Fork, Franklin and Scott counties)	Central Fisheries District
Catfish	★★★★★	Large channel catfish possible in bigger pools. Good numbers of channel catfish in the lower section of the main stem. Flathead catfish are present.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Quality fishing found in slow-moving pools in the North Fork.	
Rock bass	★★★★★	Many fish 7–9 inches in main stem and in the lower North Fork section.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Very good numbers of smallmouth bass, especially on the main stem. Also, good numbers of fish greater than 15 inches.	



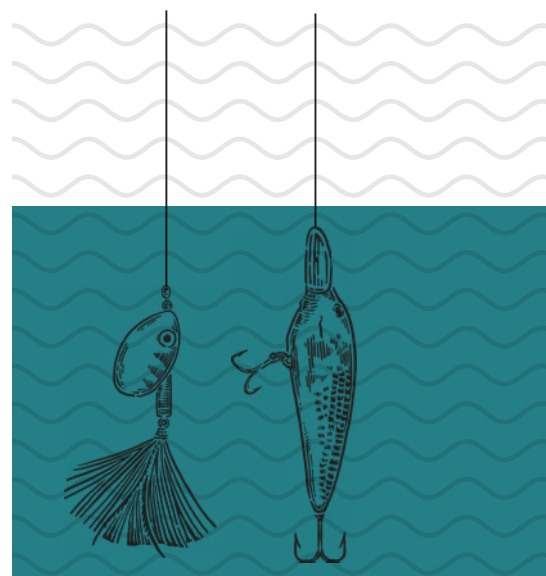
NOTE **New Regulation:** Largemouth and smallmouth bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit on main stem of Elkhorn Creek.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Elmer Davis Lake	149 acres	(Owen County)
Central Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish 6–8 inches. Additionally, good numbers of fish ≥8 inches.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish present, with fish over 15 inches common.
Crappie	★★★★★	Most around 8 to 10 inches; larger fish present. Good spawn in 2020.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Excellent numbers of bass in the 12- to 15-inch slot. Good numbers of bass greater than 15 inches. Trophy-size bass present.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish 6–8 inches near weed beds and creek arms. “Shellcrackers” greater than 10 inches are present. Redear sunfish (2,800 fish) were stocked in fall of 2022.
Warmouth	★★★★★	Nice-size fish present, usually around weed beds. Locally known as “redeye” or “rockbass.”

Fagan Branch Lake	140 acres	(Marion County)
Southwestern Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★★	Fair numbers of 6-inch-plus fish available.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of 11- to 14-inch fish, but opportunities for larger fish also present. Stocked in even-numbered years.
Crappie	★★★★★	Best fishing early and late and at night under floating lights using minnows. Fair numbers of fish, with some creeping up to the 11-inch range.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Stable population but slow growing. Big fish (20-inch-plus) present. Try trout-colored jerkbaits and swimbaits during winter months.
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	Best fishing will be at night under floating lights from May to mid-October due to clear water. Fish will be in 20- to 30-foot ranges during the summer. Fish available throughout the lake during the winter. Stocked in March and November. 15-inch-plus fish available.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of larger fish (8-inch-plus) present. Fish edges of deep weed beds (15–20 feet) during summer.



Summertime (mid-June through September) temperature and oxygen levels for trout in the 20- to 30-foot range. This zone decreases as the summer progresses. Lake is extremely clear year-round.



Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
Fishtrap Lake and Tailwater	1,131 acres	(Pike County)	Eastern Fisheries District
Blue catfish	★★★★★	Primarily feed on gizzard shad during spring and summer. Larger fish can reach 36 inches or larger. This fishery provides good jug fishing opportunity in early spring through summer. Shad are an excellent bait for use. Blues are stocked annually.	
Bluegill	★★★★★	Excellent numbers of 8- to 10-inch fish with some large bluegill available up to 11 inches. Target spawning beds in May and June at the back of all major lake coves.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Good-size distribution and abundant numbers found throughout the lake and into Levisa Fork. Numerous 2- to 5-pound fish. Provide good opportunity for tickling/noodling during nesting. Excellent rod and reel opportunity in the upper lake around Miller's Creek in the fall. Also good above Lick Creek boat ramp access in the spring.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish from 9–10 inches. 11- to 12-inch fish present but in lower numbers. Some larger fish to 15 inches. A popular fishery throughout the year at this lake. If water is clear, fish often hold on sharp break lines from shallow to deeper water. Larger fish are found in the midlake section during winter pool, often on flats adjacent to brush piles and channel breaks.	
Flathead catfish	★★★★★	Some large fish found in the lake and good numbers of midsize fish spread around the lake and into Levisa Fork. Numerous rocky ledges and banks around the lake provide excellent tickling/noodling opportunities when fish are spawning. Live bait makes an excellent choice on rod and reel as well as jug lines.	
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Very good numbers of hybrids in the lower lake in late summer and at winter pool. Fair spawning run in headwaters in April. Night fishing has become popular. Look for fish in the jumps May–July. Good distribution of fish up to 27 inches and approximately 10 pounds.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Numbers of 15- to 20-inch fish are increasing with strong numbers of 19- to 21-inch fish. This lake provides an excellent opportunity to catch large bass in the fall, particularly in the lower lake sections like Hurricane and Jonican. The lake is prone to rapid changes in spring water levels, affecting fish activity for periods. Larger fish often found in piles of floating driftwood that accumulate in lower lake pockets and on shorelines.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	This fishery was initiated with stockings from 2010–2013. Larger fish are approximately 10–12 inches. Target weed beds in shallow water at the backs of larger lake coves. Good spawning areas exist in the backs of coves in the lower and mid sections of the lake.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Numbers of bigger fish are down slightly but still fair numbers present up to 22 inches. Similar to largemouth, larger fish can be found in driftwood piles that accumulate on the lower end of the lake in the fall. Also, the Levisa Fork up and downstream of the lake provides a good opportunity for trophy fish.	
White bass	★★★★★	Numerous fish from 12–14 inches. During fall and at winter pool, try from Hurricane Branch to dam. During spring, fish will move upstream into Levisa Fork around Lick Creek boat ramp access.	



NOTE

Zebra mussels are present at Fishtrap Lake. Boaters are asked to take measures to prevent the spread of this damaging non-native invasive species by properly inspecting and disinfecting boats, trailers, and equipment.

Grayson Lake	1,512 acres	(Carter and Elliott counties)	Northeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Numerous – up to 7 inches long. Widespread throughout the lake as well as other kinds of panfish. Try fishing 5- to 6-feet deep in May and June.	
Catfish	★★★★★	Widespread throughout the lake. Great numbers of channel and fair numbers of flathead catfish. Jug fishing opportunities are great in the summer on the lower portion of the lake near the Bongos. Try fishing the middle and upper sections in early fall.	
Crappie	★★★★★	High numbers of fish in the 7- to 9-inch range, and fair numbers of fish over 9 inches. Anglers need to search out cover and utilize department-placed brush piles.	
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Stocked population should maintain numbers for the anglers. Fish jumps are infrequent. Best option is to fish in summer when the fish are pinched down and into the lower portion of the lake.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Best population exists in the upper reaches of the lake. Good numbers of smaller (under the size limit) fish can produce fun days of catching many fish. High water helps congregate these fish within the shoreline vegetation in the spring. Note: 15-inch minimum size limit.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Rarely seen while sampling. The best bet is the lower portion of the lake, specifically around the Deer Creek area near the dam. Note: 15-inch minimum size limit.	
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Stable population. Most fish are found in lower two-thirds of the lake.	

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
Green River		(dam at Rochester down to mouth at Spottsville)	Northwestern Fisheries District
Catfish	★★★★★	Good populations of channel and blue catfish, with some flathead catfish. Trophy-size blue and flathead catfish available. Target tailwaters below locks and dams, deeper holes, and around logs, brush, or rocks.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Fish tributary mouths, below locks and dams, and brush along bank in spring and fall with live minnows and small plastics.	
Striped and hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Stripers and hybrids congregate below dams late spring through early fall. Cast topwater plugs or lead-head jigs with plastic bodies into boils below dams. Shad-imitation swimbaits, bucktail jigs, and nightcrawlers, shrimp, or chicken liver cast onto hard bottoms or end of boat ramps can catch fish as well.	
White bass	★★★★★	Fish tributary mouths in spring and below dams midspring through fall. Use topwater baits or lead-head jigs below dams and lead-head jigs, jigging spoons, or live bait at mouth of tributary streams during spring. Fish bank access areas and boat ramp at mouth of Pond River late-March through April with nightcrawlers, shrimp, or chicken liver.	
Green River		(dam at Rochester up to Green River Lake dam)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of channels and flatheads above old lock 5 area to Green River Lake dam. All catfish species (channels, flatheads, and blues) good from old lock 5 area down to Rochester.	
Muskellunge	★★★★★	Fishing best below riffle area in deeper pools, spring and feeder creek mouths, and around woody debris or other current breaks. Stocked annually throughout river above Rochester.	
Rock bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish present from dam to Munfordville.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers overall with larger fish (15-inch-plus) available. Fishing best from Green River Lake dam to Munfordville.	
Walleye/sauger	★★★★★	Fishing best below Green River Lake dam area and instream dams from early winter through spring. Walleye most common below Green River Lake dam, and sauger more common in midlower reaches of river below Mammoth Cave.	
Green River Lake		(Taylor and Adair counties)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Large population with occasional 7- to 8-inch fish. Fish stump beds and back ends of coves during spring and deep-water brush, standing timber, and structure during summer for larger fish.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	All sizes available. Hook-and-line fishing best at night or when water levels are on the rise and muddy. Jug fishing good midsummer to fall.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Exceptional numbers of quality-size fish (15-inch-plus) and good numbers of 18-inch-plus fish.	
Muskellunge	★★★★★	Legal-size fish (40-inch) and trophy fish (45-inch-plus) numbers fair. Fall, late winter, and spring excellent time to catch trophy fish. Trolling main lake flats is good option summer through fall. Population maintained by annual stocking.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Low density overall; however, still a slight uptick in numbers from good spawns of 2015 and 2019. Fish in mid- to lower sections of Robinson Creek and Green River arms for best numbers and chance for 20-inch-plus fish.	
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Average numbers of 12-inch-plus fish. 15-inch-plus spots available.	
Walleye	★★★★★	Overall numbers are fair as are numbers of larger fish (20-inch-plus). Fish dam area and headwater areas of Robinson Creek and Green River arms in late February through mid- to late-March. Target standing timber coves, main-lake stump beds, humps, long points, and channel drop-offs during summer and fall. Population maintained by annual stocking.	
White bass	★★★★★	Fish headwater areas in spring (mid-March to early-April). Troll flats and fish under floating lights during summer and into fall.	
White crappie	★★★★★	Good numbers of harvestable-size fish (9-inch-plus) with better than normal numbers of 11- to 13-inch fish available. Lots of sub-legal fish present.	



Summertime (mid-June through mid-October) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 18–20 feet.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Greenbo Lake	181 acres	(Greenup County – Greenbo State Park) Northeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Shoreline vegetation growth is making fishing difficult. Seek out habitat that extends past the weed line, such as beaver dams and logs. Note: Bluegill and other sunfish – 15-fish daily creel limit.
Brown trout	★★★★★	Brown trout were stocked for the first time in 2019 and will continue to be stocked. Care should be taken to properly identify the trout species you harvest. Note: One-fish daily creel limit and 16-inch size limit.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked in even years; many 2- to 3-pound fish observed during sampling. Several flathead catfish are also seen in sampling. Reports of larger flatheads up to 40 pounds have been received. Note: Limb lines (set lines), jug lines, and trot lines are illegal at this lake.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish over 15 inches long and chances for trophy-size fish over 20 inches. Anglers find success fishing deep stickups due to water clarity. With the increase in vegetation, voids or open pockets in the hydrilla also offer good ambush spots. Fish larger trout-imitating baits for a chance at the trophies that exist in this lake. Be patient and stealthy when trying for trophy-size fish.
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	Trout are stocked annually. The dam offers the best fishing opportunity with less vegetation growth to get snagged on. Also, the pier allows anglers to get past some of the shoreline vegetation. Vegetation is less dense than it has been for several years.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Numbers low; however, there are fish upwards of 11 inches. Fish deeper water than you would for bluegill. Note: See bluegill regulation.



Keep Fisheries Clean

Hydrilla and elodea continue to thrive in the lake. Grass carp were stocked (2016–2019) to combat this problem. It is illegal to harvest grass carp on this lake. If one is hooked, please return the fish immediately, unharmed to the water. Hydrilla is a highly invasive and detrimental aquatic vegetation. Anglers are reminded to take extra precautions to keep from moving this aquatic vegetation to other lakes. Thoroughly clean and inspect your entire boat before moving it to other lakes. Even the smallest fragments of this plant can sprout new colonies. These fragments remain viable for up to five days out of the water.

Guist Creek Lake	317 acres	(Shelby County) Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Abundant – most less than 6 inches. Easy to catch. Good place to take a child fishing with live bait (redworms or crickets).
Catfish	★★★★★	Very good numbers of catfish with potential for trophies. Flatheads present in lake, and population seems to be expanding. Note: This lake is home to current white catfish state record.
Common carp	★★★★★	Fish in coves or headwaters of the lake. Fish with grain-based bait. 3- to 4-pound fish common.
Crappie	★★★★★	Most in the 7- to 10-inch range. Larger fish are present.
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Limited population. Most fish in the 16- to 22-inch range. Potential for trophy-size fish. Stocked annually.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Very good numbers of fish over the 12-inch size limit. Excellent potential for quality-size fish and bass over 20 inches.
Saugeye	★★★★★	Stocked annually since 2013. Limited population. Quality-size saugeye present. Fish up to 25 inches are possible.

Herrington Lake	2,500 acres	(Mercer, Boyle, and Garrard counties) Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Stable number of fish up to 8 inches. Can be found around cover in embayments and inlets of rock walls.
Common carp	★★★★★	Fish in coves or headwaters with grain-based baits on bottom.
Crappie	★★★★★	Difficult to locate, but many quality-size fish (10 inches or larger) available. Best around brush or fallen trees in upper half of lake. Potential for large black crappie around debris in inlets in main lake.
Flathead catfish	★★★★★	All sizes present. Usually feed at night on sunfish and shad.
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Numbers are slightly increasing, and 2- to 5-pound fish are present. Possible trophy-size fish. Stocked annually.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish over 12 inches and many over 15 inches. Potential for trophy-size fish. Good night-fishing lake during the summer.
White bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish in the 13- to 15-inch range. Trophy-size fish present.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Kentucky Lake and Tailwater	57,101 acres	(Marshall, Calloway, Lyon, Livingston, and Trigg counties)
		Western Fisheries District
Blue catfish	★★★★★	In the lake, best fishing is along the main river channel. Fish congregate along the ledges of the channel when there is current and scatter along the adjacent flats during periods of low flow. Drift using live shiners or cut shad/skipjack in areas where creek channels meet the main river channel and along the main river channel near bends. Use a depth finder to determine if the fish are near the bottom or suspended and then fish appropriately. Other baits to try include chicken hearts, nightcrawlers, grass hoppers, or catappa worms.
	★★★★★	In the tailwaters, there are year-round fishing opportunities. The ideal times are in April May, October, and November. The best bait option is using fresh bait (shad and skipjack herring) caught in the tailwaters. An alternative bait option is pieces of silver carp. One might jump in your boat, or you can ask a bow fisherman or snagger for one. Though most anglers fish from a boat, two fishing piers offer great bank fishing opportunities for those without a boat.
Bluegill	★★★★★	There are high numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish. The best fishing is in mid-May, but bluegill can be caught year-round. Crickets and worms fished under a cork during the spawn are great baits. Later in summer, try the stake beds or deep (6- to 10-foot water) brush piles. Catch bluegill in a feeding frenzy during the summer months where mayflies are hatching along the shoreline. Also try deeper rocky points during the summer with pieces of nightcrawlers.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	In the lake, the best fishing occurs during the late spring along chunky rock shoreline of the lake and riprap shoreline around the dam and marinas. Good fishing is available along river channels during summer and on flats along the secondary channels. Jug fishing in the embayments is often a good way to catch a mess of channel catfish.
	★★★★★	In the tailwaters there are year-round fishing opportunities. However, blue catfish outnumber the channel catfish in the tailwater area. Two piers offer good bank-fishing access points, while fishing from a boat might be best downstream around woody debris, stumps, and creek mouths.
Crappie	★★★★★	Both white and black crappie can be caught in good numbers, although these days the black crappie make up the largest percentage of the actual population. White crappie are generally caught deeper by vertically jigging or spider rigging around brush piles. Anglers fishing shallow along rocky shoreline are catching fair numbers of black crappie. Try casting toward the shoreline with a curly-tail jig. Crappie are vulnerable during late winter or early spring as they move toward shallow water areas for spawning. Fish are shallow in early- to mid-April around buttonball bushes, brush piles, and stake beds. Crappie move to secondary channels, drops, and flats near creek channels during the fall and winter and are most frequently found near structure. Strong classes in 2019 have created a lot of keepers of both black and white crappie. Fall of 2023 should also see more of the 2020-year class reaching 10 inches.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	A fantastic class in 2016 has led to many 15- to 17-inch bass in the system right now. A great class in 2020 and a strong class in 2021 also bodes well for the future and provides some more action. During late winter and early spring, suspended fish can often be caught with jerkbaits and other shad imitations such as the Alabama rig. As spring progresses, fish move to wood structure along the shoreline. During the summer, big fish are found along the main lake drops and secondary channels. Fishing the weed beds is good with some topwater baits on cloudy, rainy days during the summer. Smaller fish can be found in the backs of embayments around brush and chasing shad minnows during late summer. During the fall, fishing around boat docks and rocky shorelines is good.
	★★★★★	There is some fine bass fishing in the tailwaters below Kentucky Dam. Try fishing white spinner baits along the riprap shoreline on the eastern bank.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Best fishing is in late April and early May. Redear like areas with gravel substrate. If you see yellow mustard flowers inundated by water in the backs of embayments during this time, you have found a good place to find redear. Submerged pondweed clumps also hold redear sunfish. These fish primarily feed on the bottom, searching for bugs, snails, and small mussels, so you need to fish near or on the bottom. Redear generally spawn a little deeper than bluegill and in smaller colonies, so don't expect to catch your limit in one spot.
Rough fish	★★★★★	Bowfishing is excellent in the lake or in the tailwaters and is usually best in the spring. Snagging below Kentucky Dam is a tradition that is extremely unique. Most of your catch will be silver carp these days, but they make great table fare, and it's not uncommon to catch one on every cast when conditions are right. From January 1 through May 31, bowfishing is allowed 24 hours a day. For the remainder of the year, it is only allowed from sunset to sunrise. For additional regulations, please see our Fishing and Boating Guide at fw.ky.gov or pick one up at your local sporting goods store.
Sauger	★★★★★	In the lake, there is a moderate population of harvestable-size (≥14 inch) fish, with fishing improving greatly over the last 2 years. Best fishing is in fall and winter along secondary channels. Try trolling crankbaits.
	★★★★★	In the tailwaters, there is a higher abundance of harvestable-size sauger. This is a good winter fishery. Boat fishing is ideal, though two new fishing piers offer good bank fishing opportunities.

(continued)

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Kentucky Lake and Tailwater	57,101 acres	(Marshall, Calloway, Lyon, Livingston, and Trigg counties)
Western Fisheries District		
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Smallmouth fishing in Kentucky Lake is the best it has been in 20 years at least. It is more and more common these days to see more smallmouth at a weigh-in than largemouth. Best fishing is along rocky shorelines and bluffs, creek channels at mouths of embayments, the canal main-lake points, and main-lake stumps. Night fishing during the summer months along gravel bars at the mouths of LBL embayments and rocky shoreline is good. Use dark-colored spinnerbaits with Colorado-style blades or crayfish-colored creature baits and jigs. If you're not fishing a tournament, try some live bait like wild-caught shiners or crayfish.
Spotted bass	★☆☆☆☆	Spotted bass are not normally targeted but are caught while fishing for largemouth or smallmouth bass. Spotted bass migrate to the streams at the backs of embayments during the early spring. Gravel bars and points are prime areas to fish during the summer. Secondary points are good during the fall. If you want to catch spots, better hit the tailwaters or the rivers below the lakes.
Striped bass	★★★★★	Striped bass and its hybrid are being caught from the lake while fishing for white bass. Trolling with deep-diver baits which imitate minnows is effective. Targeting "jumps" or active schools of these fish is also a great way to catch them in the spring and summer. The larger fish will often be deeper in those jumps.
White bass	★★★★★	Better fishing is available below Kentucky Dam in the tailwater. Fish congregate below the dam during periods of discharge through the generator section of dam. Live herring is the preferred bait. Fishing from a boat is best, but shoreline fishing is available off the two fishing piers near the dam. From the shoreline, fish with 4-inch Sassy Shad-type baits.
	★★★★★	White bass fishing hasn't been this good since the 1980s, so it's a great time to try it. Fishing is good in the main lake during summer months when white bass are found schooling along secondary creek channels near the main river channel. Trolling can be very effective for locating these fish. Also look for jumps – when groups of white bass chase shad minnows near the water's surface. In-line spinners and silver spoons work great for catching white bass. Look for main channel points and bends; also fish near the canal.
Yellow bass	★★★★★	Good numbers are also found in the Kentucky Dam tailwater area along with its cousin the yellow bass. When fishing from the bank or boat, try using small curly-tail jigs or in-line spinner-type baits.
	★★★★★	Lots of fish, but they don't get very big. Their taste is much better than some anglers believe. Casting the rocky shoreline with a curly-tail jig or rooster tail works great. Large numbers are caught while casting the rocky shoreline in the spring for crappie. Jigging spoons fished nearly vertically also work well. They are a schooling fish, so use your electronics to locate them. They are a great fish for young children as they are easy to catch and do not require a big hook set or long casts.

Kentucky River	255 miles	(main stem)	Central, Northeastern, and Eastern Fisheries Districts
Blue catfish	★★★★★	Best in lower pools of the Kentucky River. Fish below dams and on outside bends with current.	
Bluegill	★★★★★	Shoreline areas around woody debris out of the current hold some quality fish but in low numbers.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Look for silt-free rocky habitat or below dams or palisades.	
Common carp	★★★★★	Bottom fish with grain-based baits below dams.	
Crappie*	★★★★★	Locate in backwater/creek-mouth areas with low current. Fish up to 12 inches or larger possible.	
Flathead catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers and size of fish throughout the length of the river. Large fish present around large boulders and log jams.	
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Sporadic catches of 15- to 20-inch fish below dams.	
Largemouth bass*	★★★★★	Locate in cover just below dams, in creek mouths, bank slides, or around timber. Numbers have been reduced due to recent flood events over the past year.	
Muskellunge	★★★★★	Best in spring around creek mouths and in summer around timber and creek mouths. Stocked annually in upper river. More fish in upper half of river (pools 6–14).	



*These are considered "standing water species" and do best in the river after prolonged periods of low-flow conditions. High water or flooding conditions for extended periods will reduce their numbers in the Kentucky River.

(continued)

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
Kentucky River	255 miles	(main stem)	Central, Northeastern, and Eastern Fisheries Districts
Sauger	★★★★★	Found around sand bars, creek mouths, and below dams around rock and sand bars. Stocked annually.	
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Nice fish possible in mouths of quality tributaries. Also found around rock piles and walls.	
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Sporadic catches of small- to medium-size fish. Usually below dams, but also around palisade rock wall areas.	
Walleye	★★★★★	Present in low numbers due to stockings and escapement from reservoirs in headwaters. More likely to be caught upriver. Good-size fish possible below dams.	
White bass	★★★★★	Many 10- to 12-inch fish below dams.	
Kincaid Lake	183 acres	(Pendleton County)	Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Abundant – most fish are less than 6 inches.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Good number of fish over 15 inches.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Abundant – most 6–9 inches.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Very good numbers of fish over the 12-inch size limit. Good numbers of fish over 15 inches. Excellent potential for a trophy fish.	
Kingfisher Lakes	14 acres and 21 acres	(Davies County)	Northwestern Fisheries District
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked in even-numbered years. Good growth rate. Good numbers of fish over 16 inches. Fishing with nightcrawlers, chicken liver, and/or strawberry chicken is productive throughout the year, especially at night.	
Bluegill	★★★★★	Density has been reduced, and fish growth is improving. 5- to 7-inch fish common with a few larger fish becoming available. Fish from the bank with live bait under a float or with small jigs under overhanging vegetation and in corners where jetties meet the shoreline.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Low-density population with several bass in the 15- to 20-inch range and very healthy. Population structure improving with time. Fish woody shoreline structure all year.	
Lake Barkley and Tailwater	45,600 acres	(Trigg, Lyon, and Livingston counties)	Western Fisheries District
Blue catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of 10- to 20-pounders with the occasional 50-plus pounder. Best fishing is during late spring and summer along deep river channels. Look for good flow in the lake for best fishing conditions. Wintertime trophy fishing is also popular. Blue catfish can be caught year-round in the tailwater. Fresh-caught shad or skipjack is best, but cut-up pieces of silver carp also work well.	
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish up to 9 inches. The best fishing comes in May on sand or gravel spawning beds. Crickets and worms fished under a cork during the spawn is a great option. Fish move deeper as the water warms in summer.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Best fishing is during May along rocky banks and during summer along the main river channel and adjacent flats. Try stink-bait in shallow water in the spring. Jug fishing is a great choice. Channel catfish can also be caught year-round in the tailwater.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Lake Barkley crappie spawns have been very good in recent years. White crappie are most abundant, and fish are looking healthy this year. There are lots of 5- to 7-inch white crappie in the system right now, and many of those fish will be keeper size in the fall of 2023. Fish continue to grow quickly at Lake Barkley, as many crappie are reaching harvestable sizes during their second year.	



(continued)

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Lake Barkley and Tailwater	45,600 acres	(Trigg, Lyon, and Livingston counties)
		Western Fisheries District
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Shallow water fishing for spawning bass can be amazing in the spring around button ball bushes with floating baits, buzzbaits, spinnerbaits, and plastic creature baits. Post spawn, most bass move to drop-offs in the main lake and mouths of the bays. Try fishing Carolina rigs, jigs, and crankbaits in deeper water when there is good current moving through the reservoir. During summertime, fishing shallow near structure can also be effective, particularly at dawn or dusk. In fall and winter, bass move into the bays to feed on shad. Although numbers of keeper-size fish in Lake Barkley are down, the bass spawn in 2020 has produced our strongest-year class since 2008, which is promising.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of 9- to 11-inch fish with trophies up to 12 inches. Prime fishing occurs in late April and throughout May as fish are spawning. Fish can be found in areas with gravel substrate and vegetation. Redear generally spawn a bit deeper than bluegill. If you catch one fish, keep fishing the same spot as these fish often make colonial spawning beds. If you're looking for trophy redear, Lake Barkley is your destination.
Rough fish	★★★★★	While obviously a negative overall, the invasion of invasive Asian carp (silver, bighead, grass, and black carp) into the lake and tailwaters has created an excellent bowfishing opportunity. Bighead carp are among the largest fish you will find in North America. The best fishing is in the tailwaters where invasive carp and other rough species often congregate. Although often considered no good to eat, rough fish like carp, gar, buffalo, and even drum can taste great if prepared correctly. Please remember to be courteous to other anglers and dispose of fish carcasses properly.
Sauger	★☆☆☆☆	Population consisting of low numbers of harvestable-size (>14.0 inch) fish. Most fish are caught trolling deep-diving crankbaits near secondary channel breaks during the early summer. Sauger can also be caught while fishing for catfish along the main river channel. Fair fishing is found in the tailwaters.
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Smallmouth bass make up an increasing portion of the total bass population. Fishing is best around rocky shorelines near deep water, main lake points, and the canal during late winter and early spring with suspending jerkbaits.
Striped bass	★☆☆☆☆	The tailwater produces better, more consistent catches, but the lake produces some fish as well. Fish deep main-channel ledges near bridges and other places with current. For the best luck, try trolling crankbaits or fishing vertically with large jigs
White bass	★★★★★	Like striped bass, better fishing occurs in the tailwaters. Look for schools of shad breaking the surface during summer and fall. If you can't find them working the surface, fish deeper along ledges on the main lake with a spoon or in-line spinner. Trolling the ledges with lighter-colored crankbaits can be a lot of fun, especially for children and inexperienced anglers.
Yellow bass	★★★★★	These often-overlooked fish are extremely abundant in both big lakes. Fish can be caught on almost anything, but vertical jigging is the most reliable. Although many anglers will throw them back while crappie fishing, yellow bass make excellent table fare. There is no size or creel limit, and harvest is encouraged.

Lake Beshear	760 acres	(Caldwell and Christian counties)
		Western Fisheries District
Blue catfish	★★★★★	Blue catfish are being stocked every third year. Their population is doing fair, with good growth. Some already weigh over 20 pounds.
Bluegill	★★★★★	Numerous small bluegill with occasional 8-inch fish caught. Boat fishing is the most popular method, but some bank fishing opportunities are also available near the spillway.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	High numbers of 10- to 15-inch channel catfish in the population. Channel catfish are stocked every other year at 10–12 inches. This is an underutilized fishery. Most anglers fishing for catfish use jug lines or noodles.
Crappie	★★★★★	Numerous crappie in the 6- to 8-inch range, with an occasional 10-incher. Best fishing during spring in areas of aquatic vegetation and around woody structure. Anglers are encouraged to harvest the small crappie to help improve growth. Statewide limits apply.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	One of the main reasons anglers fish Lake Beshear. The bass population is dominated by 12- to 20-inch largemouth bass. Seven pounders are relatively routine. Best fishing during spring when fish move to shallow water, along the water willow and lily pads. Try fishing the edges of these weeds with a pearl-colored fluke using a short jerk retrieve or use a white spinnerbait. Worms, creature baits, and other soft plastics can also be effective during the spawn. In late afternoon – or on cloudy days – try topwater baits. During summertime, as temperatures heat up, bass often suspend near deep water ledges. These fish can be caught on dropshot rigs or long-lined crankbaits and jerkbaits.



Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Lake Carnico	114 acres	(Nicholas County) Northeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★☆☆☆☆	Low numbers, but fish can be caught by focusing your efforts around weed edges. Note: Bluegill and other sunfish have 15-fish daily creel limit.
Catfish	★★★★☆	Fair numbers of flathead and channel catfish can be found. Catfish spawning boxes have been installed in this lake as well. Stocking will be suspended in hopes that natural reproduction will take its place. Note: Limb lines (set lines), jug lines, and trot lines are illegal at this lake.
Largemouth bass	★★★★☆	Fair numbers of bass present, with a good number of fish between 15 and 20 inches and a few over 20. Concentrate summertime efforts around aquatic weed beds, in the backs of coves, and along deeper channel edges. Note: 15-inch minimum size limit.
Redear sunfish	★☆☆☆☆	Very low numbers. Note: See bluegill.
Saugeye	★★★★☆	Population of larger fish has been established. Fish at night with shad-imitating baits near the bottom. Fish are more active in cooler water. Try targeting deep channel breaks and any feeding flats at night. Note: 14-inch minimum size limit.



NOTE

Coontail is starting to become an issue. Triploid grass carp were stocked in 2018 and 2019. The shoreline was treated with aquatic herbicide this year.

Lake Cumberland	50,250 acres	(Russell, Wayne, Clinton, and Pulaski counties) Southeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good numbers of fish present with larger fish (> 8 inches) available. Target coves and cuts using crickets, nightcrawlers, or redworms.
Channel catfish	★★★★☆	Good density of 2- to 5-pound channel catfish with some larger fish available. Nightcrawlers still-fished or slowly trolled on main lake flats and cuts in the midsection of the lake during the late summer and fall are good options to try. Riverine section of the upper lake has been producing good numbers of catfish.
Crappie	★★★★☆	Moderate-density population but larger fish (12–14 inches) are relatively common. Headwater areas (mouth of Laurel and Rockcastle rivers) in the early spring and fall and around cover in the major tributaries (Fishing, Beaver, and Wolf creeks) in the fall are good options to try using minnows and jigs.
Largemouth bass	★★★★☆	Population remains stable with fish over 15 inches common and fish over 20 inches available. Good numbers of large fish are found throughout the lake, but upper lake tributaries generally have higher numbers. Abundant shallow water cover in the tributaries is a good bet in the spring and fall.
Smallmouth bass	★★★★☆	Consistent fishery with a good variety of sizes in the population. Fish up to 20 inches present. Good numbers of fish in the 14- to 17-inch range should help bolster the population in the years to come. Float-n-fly techniques and jigs offer good wintertime fishing. Main lake points tend to hold fish throughout the year. Lily Creek has also been productive the last few years.
Spotted bass	★★★★☆	Population continues to increase with high numbers of 12- to 14-inch fish. Larger fish up to 16 inches available. Spotted bass can be found throughout the lake, but higher densities can be found in lower lake areas.
Striped bass	★★★★☆	Strong classes from 2020–2022 are making up the bulk of the population. Good numbers of legal-size fish available, but you may have to sort out some short fish. Growth rates remain strong, and fish are looking healthy heading into 2023. A 22-inch size limit and 2-fish daily creel limit remain in effect.
Walleye	★★★★☆	Population numbers have been stable the last few years with good numbers of fish in the 16- to 20-inch size range and fish up to 23 inches available. In the spring, surface baits fished at night are a good bet. During the summer months, switch to trolling night crawler rigs 25- to 30-feet deep on main lake points and flats.
White bass	★☆☆☆☆	Low-density population concentrated in the upper half of the lake. Try fishing headwater areas in the early spring for your best chance to catch them.



NOTE

The boundaries of Lake Cumberland are defined as Cumberland Falls on the Cumberland River, Devils Jump on the Big South Fork, the Narrows of Rockcastle River, and Laurel River Lake Dam on Laurel River.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Lake Cumberland Tailwater		(Russell, Cumberland, Clinton, and Monroe counties) SE and SW Fisheries Districts
Brook trout	★☆☆☆☆	Stocked annually in the tailwater. Low-density population with most fish in the 10- to 12-inch range, but a few larger fish are available.
Brown trout	★★★★★	The brown trout population in the tailwater remains at low levels; however, increased numbers of 9- to 11-inch fish were observed during fall 2022 sampling. Some keeper fish (>20 inches) are still present but rare.
Cutthroat trout	★★★★★	Stocked for the first time in 2019 and again in 2021 and 2022. It remains a low-density population with fish in the 10- to 12-inch range.
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	Numbers of fish in the slot (15–20 inches) have been relatively stable with some trout over 20 inches present. Ample numbers of stock-size fish (9–11 inches) available for anglers throughout the year.
Sauger	★★★★★	Low-density population found throughout the tailwater. Try near the dam in the winter and early spring with small jigs and grubs for your best chance at catching one.
Striped bass	★★★★★	Increasing numbers of fish and good-size distribution, with some fish over 20 pounds available. Although they can be found throughout the tailwater, the best areas are below Burkesville using live bait or trolling shad or trout-colored crankbaits or swimbaits during the summer months.
Walleye	★★★★★	Moderate-density population with decent size distribution of 2- to 5-pound fish, with some larger fish present. Fishing near the dam in late winter and early spring is a good bet. Try trolling shad-colored crankbaits or nightcrawler rigs in the lower sections of the tailwater in the summer and fall.
White bass	★★★★★	Low-density population. Fishing lower areas in the tailwater near creek mouths during the winter and early spring is a good option.

Lake George	36 acres	(Crittenden County)	Western Fisheries District
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Lake George was drained early in 2022 due to a levee failure. Check back for future fishing opportunities.

Lake Malone	767 acres	(Muhlenburg, Todd, and Logan counties)	Northwestern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Lots of 4- to 7-inch fish. Some larger fish can be found at the peak of spawn. Target flats in the upper reaches of the lake and backs of coves near overhead cover.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked in odd-numbered years. Good number of 15- to 18-inch fish with a few 20 inches plus. Target coves, backs of tributaries, and upper-lake flats.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Moderate number of 9- to 10-inch fish. Fish brush piles and fallen trees along some of the steeper banks or flats upstream of Shady Cliff and toward Sherwood Point.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good number of fish 15 to 20 inches and over 20 inches. Fish the shoreline water willow during spring and at night during summer. Also, fish submerged trees and brush along deeper banks during summer with spinnerbaits and jigs. Fish open water with Alabama rigs and swimbaits early summer through fall as bass follow schools of shad. Target rocky banks during fall when bass are feeding heavily on crayfish.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Low number of redear, but good size (9–13 inches). Target upper reaches of the lake, midway back in the coves, and the deep edge of shoreline water willow in spring/early summer. Move to deeper submerged structure as water warms during summer.	

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Lake Reba	76 acres	(Madison County)
Northeastern Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★★	Most catchable fish are over 6–8 inches. Excellent bank access and high pressure. Getting away from the well-beaten paths and forging your own trail to some lesser-fished portions of the lake will produce better results.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked in even-numbered years. Sampling shows high numbers of these stock-size fish and several over this size. Note: 12-inch minimum size limit. Limb lines (set lines), jug lines, and trot lines are illegal at this lake.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Great numbers of fish overall. Extremely high angling pressure makes getting away from the easily fished areas a must on this lake.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Angling from a boat will produce good catches, especially when fishing closer to the bass spawn temperatures and away from the crowds and pressure. Excellent numbers of medium to larger fish, with a few memorable-size fish in this smaller lake.
Lake Wilgreen	169 acres	(Madison County)
Northeastern Fisheries District		
Blue catfish	★★★★★	Stocked every third year. Good catches regularly reported in the summer.
Bluegill	★★★★★	Similar number as previous years, and most fish are less than 6 inches. The population is healthy up to that point.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	High numbers of fish over 15 and 20 inches. These fish are fat and healthy for their sizes. All indicators are continuing to show an increase in this population. Should be another great year.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Similar numbers to previous years, and most fish are less than 7 inches.
Saugeye	★★★★★	Population of larger fish has been established. Fish at night with shad-imitating baits near the bottom. Fish more active in cooler water. Try targeting deep channel breaks and any feeding flats at night. Note: 14-inch minimum size limit.
Laurel River Lake	5,830 acres	(Whitley and Laurel counties)
Southeastern Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★★	Decent numbers of fish with numerous fish in the 5- to 6-inch range. Try fishing in the upper Laurel River Arm during the summer using crickets and redworms.
Crappie	★★★★★	Increasing population dominated by black crappie with 10- to 12-inch fish present. Surplus crappie stocked in 2022 to help bolster the population. Upper portion of Laurel River Arm near city dam is the best area to target them.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Increasing numbers of fish over 15 inches. Largemouth bass stocked in fall 2022 should give the population a boost in the coming years. Although they can be found in good numbers throughout the lake, better numbers generally found in the upper Laurel River Arm.
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Low-density population, but larger, quality-size (over 3 pounds) fish present. Increased number of fish across all size groups, coupled with stockings, should help bolster the population for the next few years. In the winter and early spring, casting jigs and swimbaits are good options for targeting larger fish.
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Numbers of fish have improved with good numbers of fish across all sizes. Moderate density of 10- to 13-inch fish bodes well for the future of the fishery. Mid and lower sections of the lake are the best areas to target spotted bass, but good numbers of fish can be found throughout the lake.
Walleye	★★★★★	Good numbers of 17- to 20-inch fish present, with some fish up to 22 inches. Strong 2019- and 2020-year classes will help bolster the population the next few years. Try surface baits at night during the spring or troll deep-diving crankbaits or spinner rigs across points and islands in the summer and fall.
White bass	★★★★★	Low-density population of moderate-size fish. Generally found up in the Laurel River Arm.



Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
Marion County Lake	32 acres	(Marion County)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Very good numbers of 6- to 8-inch-plus fish.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	All sizes available. Stocked in even-numbered years.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	High numbers of 11- to 13-inch fish, but 20-inch-plus fish available.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	10-inch-plus fish available, plus good numbers of 8-inch-plus. Larger fish up shallow in late-March to early/mid-April for spawn. Then they move out to thermocline depth.	
White crappie	★★★★★	Large fish available. Fish laydown trees in the upper end of the lake in spring and brush piles in summer and winter.	



Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 11 feet.

Martins Fork Lake	334 acres	(Harlan County)	Eastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	A popular bluegill fishery with local anglers. Most harvested fish are 7 inches or less. Fish near old roadbeds and shallow brush on rocky banks in spring and summer.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Most fish are less than 24 inches. Good fishing can be found in the Martins Fork creek arm of the lake in the old river channel. This area has abundant underwater stumps and tree roots. Fish at night or on cloudy days for better results as water is very clear. There are several, easy-to-access bank fishing sites near the ramp and beach area. Fish are stocked in even-numbered years. Note: Jug and limb lines are prohibited.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Harvested fish are typically 9 to 10 inches. Larger fish up to 13 inches are available. Crappie can often be found in standing timber around the lake. Fish deeper along the timber in early spring. Slowly work roadbed edges adjacent to standing timber in the spring and fall at more shallow depths.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of smaller fish up to 14 inches. Fish over 15 inches have decreased slightly, however, fish up to 19 inches are still available. This lake contains four species of black bass that may be caught by anglers (largemouth, smallmouth, spotted, and coosa bass). Largemouth bass numbers account for approximately 80% of the black bass in the lake. Fishing success is generally greater at night during most of spring and summer.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Redear were stocked in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. Good numbers and size distribution throughout the lake. Larger fish over 10 inches are available. Good fishing can be found in the deeper water flats with adjacent vegetation and riprap near the tunnel. Stocking is planned again for 2023.	
Walleye	★★★★★	Native-strain walleye have been stocked annually since 2013. A creel survey in 2021 showed poor success in catching walleye in the lake. As a result, fish should be targeted in the headwaters above the lake in early spring (early- to mid-March). The tailwaters of this lake also produce good catches of spring walleye as the Upper Cumberland River is also stocked. Note: Two-fish daily creel limit. 18- to 26-inch protective slot limit.	

Mauzy Lake	81 acres	(Union County, Higginson-Henry WMA)	Northwestern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Moderate numbers with most fish 4–6 inches. Aquatic vegetation management will continue in 2023. This should reduce hiding places, increase predation, and increase fish growth. Look for bluegill numbers to continue to drop and size to improve in 2023.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked in odd-numbered years. Many 16- to 22-inch-plus fish in the population. Catfish receive very little fishing pressure.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Excessive vegetation has hindered bass foraging success and growth in recent years. Vegetation management should improve bass growth and susceptibility to angling in 2023. Fish plastic baits and spinnerbaits around offshore brush throughout the year.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Most fish 6–8 inches with a few over 8 inches. Redear outnumber bluegill. Intense vegetation management should have a positive impact on redear growth as well.	

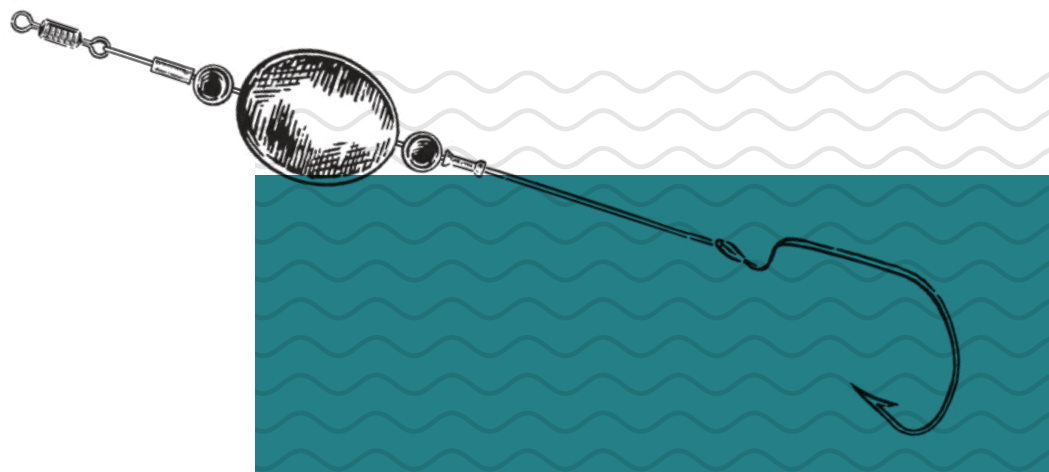
Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
McNeely Lake	51 acres	(Jefferson County)
		Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish through 8 inches. ≥8-inch fish are present.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Channel catfish stocked annually. Large fish possible.
Common carp	★★★★★	A few large fish present.
Crappie	★★★★★	Low numbers, but quality-size fish possible. Fish near weed beds and fallen trees.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	New Regulation: Largemouth bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit. Majority of the bass are 8–12 inches. Good numbers of fish over 15 inches with fish over 20 inches present. Best cover is water willows, fallen trees, and stumps.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish through 9 inches. ≥10-inch fish are present.
Warmouth	★★★★★	Large fish present around weed beds.

Metcalfe County Lake	22 acres	(Metcalfe County)
		Southwestern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	High numbers overall with good numbers of 6-inch fish; however, few exceed 8 inches.
Blue catfish	★★★★★	Low numbers overall, with some trophy-size fish (30-inch-plus) available. Fish with live or cut bait near creek channel. Stocked every third year.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Fair numbers available. Stocked in odd-numbered years.
Crappie	★★★★★	Plenty of smaller-size (7–9 inch) fish; better sizes available but not overly abundant.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Not a high-density population; however, trophy fish (20-inch-plus) potential consistently above average. Try trout-colored jerkbaits in mid-March to mid-May.
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	500 fish stocked in March for a put-and-take fishery. Water too warm by mid-May to support trout through the summer.



NOTE

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Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Mill Creek Lake	109 acres	(Monroe County)
		Southwestern Fisheries District
Blue catfish	★★★★★	Stocked every third year since 2008.
Bluegill	★★★★★	Most fish 3–5 inches with few 6- to 7-inch fish.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of all size ranges. Stocked in odd-numbered years.
Crappie	★★★★★	Fair number of 8- to 9-inch fish. Larger crappie present but at low numbers.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of larger fish (15-inch-plus) overall. 18-inch-plus fish numbers above average.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Decent numbers overall, with some 7- to 9-inch fish available.
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Fair numbers, but slow growing with few fish exceeding 12 inches.



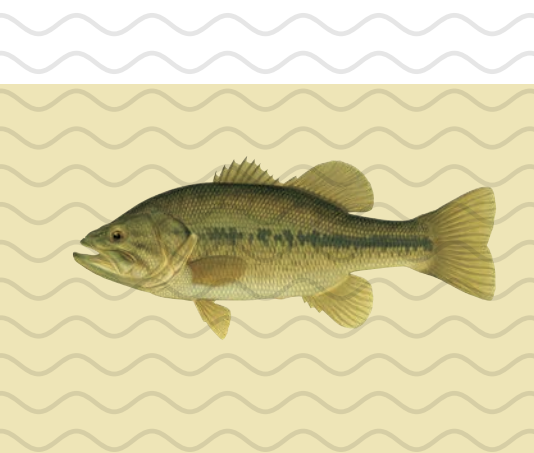
Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 12 feet.

Mill Creek Lake	41 acres	(Powell/Wolfe County – Natural Bridge State Park)	Northeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish over 8 inches. Water is extremely clear and can be difficult to fish. Look for beds in the back end of the lake.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked every other year. Note: Limb lines (set lines), jug lines, and trot lines are illegal at this lake.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Typical eastern Kentucky mountain lake – deep and clear – and fish are slower-growing. However, there are some excellent trophy-size fish in this lake if you get into the back and far side (away from the boat ramp) of the lake. Anglers should approach their preferred fishing locations cautiously and quietly. With the clarity of the lake, these fish most certainly see you before you can fish toward them. Try focusing on deep-standing timber. Note: 15-inch minimum size limit.	
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	Stocked annually. Best time to fish is within the first few days after stocking.	

Nolin River Lake	5,795 acres	(Grayson, Edmonson, and Hart counties)	Northwestern Fisheries District
Catfish	★★★★★	<u>Channel catfish</u> – Good number of 15- to 20-inch fish and many larger. Fish upper lake (Sportsman's Paradise and Cane Run) and river area in early spring and rocky main lake banks mid-May through June. <u>Flathead catfish</u> – lower numbers than channels but several large fish (30-plus pounds) harvested annually.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Solid population. Overall numbers not high, but good proportion of 10-inch-plus fish are available. Fish shallow structure and rocky banks for spawning fish. During summer, fall, and winter, fish main lake brush and standing timber in creeks 12- to 18-feet deep.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Stable population with good number of fish over 15 inches. Fish are often difficult to find during summer months. Fish on lower end of lake often found deeper. Water and fishing conditions change regularly, so be flexible in fishing location, tactic, and pattern.	
Walleye	★★★★★	Low density. Most fish 16–18 inches with a few over 20 inches. In early spring, fish Bacon Creek and upper river with lead-head jigs and plastic grubs. In summer, troll Sportsman's Paradise, Conoloway Creek, and the longer main lake points. Also in summer, try fishing at night under lights near the main channel upper lake with jigging spoons or minnows. Some fish remain in upper river year-round.	
White bass	★★★★★	Large number of 11- to 14-inch white bass. Fish from Bacon Creek upstream during April spawning run with lead-head jigs rigged with plastics, small crankbaits, or live bait. Fish longer main lake points or jumps in summer. Also in summer, fish at night under lights near main channel with jigging spoons or live minnows.	

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Nolin River Lake Tailwater		(Edmonson County – 7 miles of river until confluence with Green River) Southwestern Fisheries Districts
Black bass	★★★★★	Largemouth and spotted bass present in fair numbers in uppermost four miles of the tailwater. Smallmouth present, but in low numbers.
Catfish	★★★★★	Very good size channel catfish, especially after elevated lake releases. Flatheads are less common, but good sizes are available.
Rock bass	★★★★★	All sizes available. Best numbers are in the uppermost four miles of tailwater.
Trout	★★★★★	Rainbows stocked monthly (April–November) except for August. There are some holdover fish up to 16 inches. Brown trout stocked since 2017, but not commonly encountered. Trout most abundant in first 3.5 miles of tailwater.
Walleye/sauger	★★★★★	Recent removal of lock and dams downstream has allowed more fish movement into the tailwater. Look for shaded and/or deeper holes, back end of pools, and current breaks (logjams, laydowns, and boulders).
White bass and hybrids	★★★★★	High numbers of white bass in spring from mid-March to mid-April. Hybrids present at times, but sporadic.

Ohio River		Northeastern, Central, Northwestern, and Western Fisheries Districts
Blue catfish	★★★★★	Good populations in tailwaters and deep holes around outside bends with moderate current. Try using fresh cut bait rather than frozen or prepackaged baits.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Look for silt-free, rocky habitat and embayments.
Common carp	★★★★★	Large fish possible. Tributaries and backwaters away from current are best areas.
Crappie	★★★★★	Fish can be found in backwater areas adjacent to woody habitat year-round.
Flathead catfish	★★★★★	Potential for very large fish. Look for cover such as sunken logs, boulders, or other large objects. Live bait is your best option.
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Fish up to 6 pounds in and around tailwaters.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Fishing is best in tributaries and backwater areas. Fingerlings stocked annually in the Greenup, Meldahl, Markland, and Cannelton pools.
Sauger	★★★★★	Spring and fall below dams with minnows or jigs on bottom.
Smallmouth bass	★★★★★	Low population in mid/upper river in sections of rocky habitat and tailwaters.
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Fish can be found in the main channel as well as backwater areas.
Striped bass	★★★★★	Midsummer to late-fall good for 6- to 10-pound fish. More common in lower pools.
Walleye	★★★★★	Occasionally found in tailwaters.
White bass	★★★★★	Can be caught in tailwaters in winter and spring and creek mouths during the fall.



Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Paintsville Lake and Tailwater	1,139 acres	(Morgan and Johnson counties)
		Eastern Fisheries District
Brown trout	★★★★★	First stocked in 2021. Annual stockings will continue in late winter.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Large catfish present in low densities in upper lake areas such as Patoker boat ramp access. Decent numbers of 18- to 24-inch fish can be found in the lower lake around riprap shoreline areas and islands.
Crappie	★★★★★	The most successful fishing is on the upper end of the lake into Open Fork and Little Paint creeks. White crappie are the dominant species and sampled up to 15 inches. Also, this fishery contains blacknose crappie up to 10–12 inches. Sunny days in late March can often provide good catches of keeper fish in shallow water from Patoker boat ramp to lower Sandlick. Lower lake will have larger fish often holding at edges of deeper weed beds and submerged brush piles, especially on the edge of channel breaks. Surplus blacknose crappie were stocked in 2022.
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Low-density population. Stocked for first time in June 2015. A second stocking occurred in 2020, and these fish are now reaching 16–18 inches with some larger. Quality fish from the first stocking remain in the population. These fish will be over 22 inches. Stocking was discontinued in 2022.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Numbers of 12- to 15-inch fish are increasing. High survival of young fish due in part to presence of hydrilla keeps growth rates slow. This lake has a fairly stable population with high numbers of fish less than 12 inches, but fish sampled up to 22 inches. March is a popular time for catching lunger fish in standing timber and around lower lake islands. Note: Size and creel limits now follow statewide regulation.
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	Best fishing in shallow water during winter to early spring after the February stocking. Some fish present in summer at depth of 20–25 feet.
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Low-density population. Most fish less than 10 inches. Some larger spotted bass are present up to 14 inches.
Walleye	★★★★★	Fair numbers through 28 inches. Potential for trophy size. Look for active fish to be suspended in March around the 8-foot depth near the lower lake islands or mid lake-standing timber. May and October are also good months to fish with live nightcrawlers on a jig head fished off the bottom. During summer, drop minnows, nightcrawlers, or jigging spoons along weed-bed edges.



Keep Fisheries Clean

Hydrilla is present at Paintsville Lake. Boaters are asked to take measures to prevent the spread of this damaging non-native invasive species by properly inspecting and disinfecting boats, trailers, and equipment.

Pennyrile Lake	47 acres	(Christian County)
		Western Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Trophy sunfish is the primary management goal in this small but scenic lake. Some really nice bluegill are present as a result of the stunted bass population. Recent surveys found decent numbers of bluegill >8 inches. There are a lot of fish in the 6- to 8-inch range as well. Perfect for bank anglers and kayakers.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Low numbers of catfish in recent sampling. Catfish were re-stocked in the fall of 2022, which should improve catch rates. Fishing around fallen trees and beaver huts with nightcrawlers should prove successful. Note: There is a 12-inch minimum size limit on catfish.
Crappie	★★★★★	Low overall numbers, but fish are good size.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Most bass are 12 inches and smaller, but there are a lot of them. It is a great place to take kids fishing!
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Recent surveys found good numbers of redear greater than 8 inches, with numerous fish in the 6- to 8-inch range as well. Few redear present greater than 10 inches. Try fishing a small piece of nightcrawler near the bottom for best success.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Rough River Lake and Tailwater	5,100 acres	(Breckinridge and Grayson counties)
		Northwestern Fisheries District
Catfish	★★★★★	Large number of 20-inch-plus channel catfish available, with lower number of flathead catfish. Fish upper lake areas in early spring and steeper rocky banks during mid-May to June for spawning fish. Fish upper river areas and main lake river bends in the fall/early winter as water level begins to drop.
Crappie	★★★★★	Overall numbers lower than 2018–2020. Numerous 7- to 10-inch fish from 2021 are now harvestable. Fish shallow water structure and rock for spawning fish. Brush and standing timber 10- to 15-feet deep hold larger fish during summer, especially mid/lower lake. During fall/early winter, fish near shore structure along river channel as water level drops.
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Excellent population of hybrid striped bass. Large number over 15 inches and many over 20 inches and up to 10 pounds. Fish from Eveleigh upstream in spring. Troll main lake points and underwater features in summer or fish jumps in main lake (Dam to Tules Creek on north fork and Dam to Ski Island on south fork). The thermocline typically keeps most fish less than 16 feet deep June through September. Fish main lake points and sand/mud flats in fall and winter.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Stable population with good number of bass 15 inches plus. Bass have proven difficult to catch during the summer when water quality/conditions are suboptimal. May and September have been the most productive months for bass anglers based on creel data. Water and fishing conditions change regularly, so be flexible in fishing location, tactic, and pattern.
Tailwater	★★★★★	Tailwater will continue to be open until final phase of construction on the dam begins. However, could be closed intermittently for outflow/dam instrumentation monitoring. Good to excellent fishing for hybrid striped bass, flathead and channel catfish, and crappie. Hybrids and crappie best in April. Catfish are best late May through June.

Shanty Hollow Lake	135 acres	(Warren and Edmonson counties)
		Southwestern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of 6-inch-plus fish. Fish 8–10 feet deep on brush piles, plastic pallet trees, laydown trees, or rock outcroppings in summer.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Most fish 10–14 inches. Stocked in even-numbered years.
Crappie	★★★★★	Large fish (10–14 inches) available. Fish stakebeds and shallow brush piles in spring and deeper brush in late winter and summer.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish under 15 inches.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Lower-density population overall, but larger fish available. Fish up shallow mid-March through mid-April and then at deeper depths near thermocline by early summer.



NOTE

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Smoky Valley Lake	36 acres	(Carter County – Carter Caves State Park)
		Northeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Slightly improving population, but most fish still less than 7 inches.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked in even-numbered years. Note: Limb lines (set lines), jug lines, and trot lines are illegal at this lake.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Slowly improving population. There are plenty of chances to catch a good number of fish, but the size is still small overall for this population. Angler harvest is the key to improving this fish population. Fish the creek flowing into the lake for your best success and focus on habitat areas like flats, beaver lodges, and natural brush. Note: 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit; six-fish daily creel limit.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Spurlington Lake	27 acres	(Taylor County)
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good numbers of 6-inch-plus fish, with 8-inch-plus available.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	All sizes present. Stocked in even-numbered years. Sizeable bullhead population with good numbers of fish 12–14 inches.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Better-than-average numbers of larger fish (15-inch-plus). Excellent big bass (20-inch-plus) opportunities.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish overall, with 10-inch-plus available.

Southwestern Fisheries District



NOTE

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Taylorsville Lake	3,050 acres	(Spencer, Anderson, and Nelson counties)
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good number of fish 6 inches and longer around standing timber in coves.
Catfish	★★★★★	Blue catfish population stable. Fish with live bait and cut bait (open water areas). Fish over 40 inches possible. Many channel catfish of all sizes. Look for bigger fish in the timber in spring, head of creeks in fall, points next to river or creek channel anytime. Good numbers of flathead catfish are present.
Crappie	★★★★★	Increasing numbers of fish at and above the 10-inch size limit. Very good spawn in 2019, which means increasing numbers of harvestable fish for crappie fishing in 2023.
Hybrid striped bass	★★★★★	Hybrid striped bass numbers are fairly stable. Good numbers of fish greater than 15 inches. In spring and fall, there are good numbers of fish in the headwaters. Look for jumps early and late in day July–September. Hybrids are stocked annually.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Very good numbers of 12- to 15-inch fish. Good numbers of 15- to 18-inch fish. Best in timber coves. Concentrate effort on primary points on main lake and secondary points in creeks.
Saugeye	★★★★★	Good numbers of harvestable-size (≥14 in) saugeye, with fish up to 25 inches possible. Good numbers in the Salt River above the lake in the spring and fall.
White bass	★★★★★	Good numbers in Salt River above the lake in spring (with good flow from rains) and fall. Many 8- to 12-inch fish present.

Central Fisheries District

Washburn Lake	18 acres	(Ohio County)
Bluegill	★★★★★	Moderate numbers. Several bluegill over 8 inches in the population. Target upper end of lake and behind the small island for spawning fish. Fish with live bait under a float near overhead cover summer through winter.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Good number of fish greater than 18 inches. Fish at night from the jetties using nightcrawlers, chicken liver, or strawberry chicken about a foot off the bottom. From a boat, target areas where water runs into the lake and fish with the same baits.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Population currently dominated by 5- to 10-inch fish. Few 12- to 20-inch fish exist, but several 20-inch-plus fish exist in the lake. Target woody structures throughout the year with plastics, spinnerbaits, and shallow-running crankbaits.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Most redear in the 7- to 8-inch range with some over 9 inches. Target slightly deeper water than for bluegill using live bait and popeyes.

Northwestern Fisheries District



Location/Species	Forecast	Comments	
West Fork Drakes Reservoir	88 acres	(Simpson County)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Fair numbers of 6- to 7-inch fish, but few 8-inch-plus fish.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	All sizes available. Stocked in even-numbered years. Fishing best at night near creek channel.	
Crappie	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish. Will need to weed through smaller fish to find larger fish.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Average numbers of 12-inch-plus fish, but few fish over 15 inches.	
Muskie	★★★★★	Fish stocked in creek below the dam. Fishing best below the dam year-round using large in-line spinners and jerkbaits.	
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Good numbers of 6- to 7-inch fish. Limited numbers above 8 inches.	



NOTE

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Wood Creek Lake	672 acres	(Laurel County)	Southeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Low- to moderate-density population with decent numbers of 6- to 7-inch fish.	
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Stocked in odd-numbered years. Stock-size fish common with 12- to 15-inch fish present.	
Crappie	★★★☆☆	Moderate numbers of smaller fish in the 7- to 8-inch range with an occasional fish exceeding 9 inches. Target areas with woody cover in the middle and upper portions of the lake.	
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	High-density population composed primarily of 7- to 12-inch fish. Numbers of big fish have improved, with some fish over 20 inches present. Target bigger bass in the upper arms of the lake.	
Rainbow trout	★★★★★	Stocked annually in October and February. Most fish in the 10- to 13-inch range.	
Redear sunfish	★★★☆☆	Low numbers of fish up to 8 inches with some larger fish available. Try targeting them in the mid- and upper-lake areas.	
Spotted bass	★★★★★	Low-density population, with few fish exceeding 11 inches. Although spotted bass can be found in all areas of the lake, the mid- and lower-lake areas hold better numbers.	

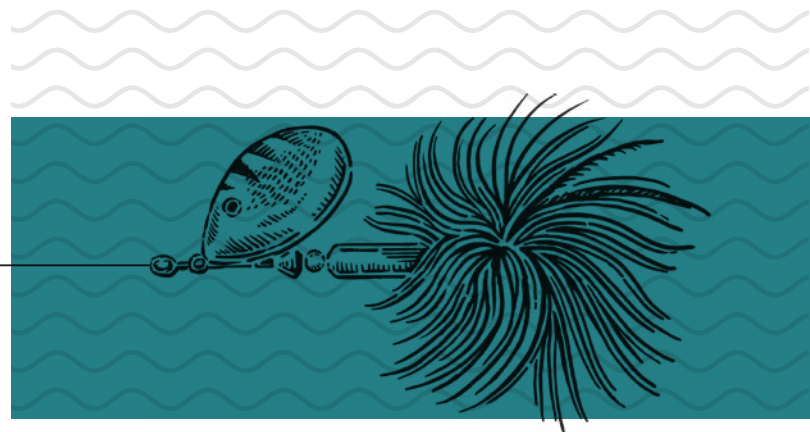


NOTE

Keep Fisheries Clean

The Brazilian elodea, a non-native, invasive plant that once carpeted much of the shallow water areas in the middle and upper sections of the lake, has been greatly reduced.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
Yatesville Lake	2,314 acres	(Lawrence County)
		Eastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★★	Excellent numbers and size distribution throughout the lake. Numerous fish 7–7.5 inches, with larger fish reaching 8.5 inches. Good spawning areas can be found at the backs of mid-lake coves. Curly leaf and other pondweeds have increased in the last two years, increasing available habitat.
Channel catfish	★★★★★	Quality size distribution and densities of catfish exist in all areas of the lake. Numerous fish are present from 14–20 inches with larger sizes available. During early spring and fall, many fish are shallow in the upper lake. Abundant bank access is available in most sections of the lake.
Crappie	★★★★★	Recent years have had excellent spawns yielding higher densities of smaller fish. Most of the larger fish range from 11 to 13 inches with some up to 15 inches. Larger crappie will aggressively go after shad or minnows. Deadfall trees, brush piles, and channel breaks adjacent to shallow water are good locations for spawning fish in spring. Shallow driftwood piles and stumps close to drop-offs will hold fish year-round. In the fall, crappie in clear water will stay deeper, down to 12 feet. Muddy water tends to bring fish shallower, around 6 feet.
Flathead catfish	★★★★★	Good-size distribution with larger fish up to 40 pounds. Bank fishing on rocky shorelines provides best opportunity with bluegill and green sunfish as bait. Flatheads are very active at night. Live bait fished on rod and reel, limb lines, and jugs fished late in the evening or overnight provide the best opportunity.
Largemouth bass	★★★★★	Good numbers of fish in the population and numbers of fish over 15 inches are increasing. Fish over 21 inches are being caught in the spring. Growth rates have increased in recent years. Beds of curly-leaf pondweed have expanded lake-wide in the last three years, improving forage availability and cover. Popular lake for tournament fishing. To avoid boat access and congestion problems at ramp, utilize KDFWR website for viewing tournament schedules.
Redear sunfish	★★★★★	Population is building in numbers due to increased growth of weed-bed areas with larger fish up to 11 inches. Target areas with weed beds or submerged roadbeds with rocky substrate. The coves around Carter Island and Rich Creek often hold larger fish.



Fishing Tips for Kentucky and Barkley Lakes

Blue catfish

During the summer, fish along the main river channel with minnows, cut shad/skipjack herring, and stink baits. Pieces of silver carp are an alternative bait option. One might jump in your boat, or you can ask a bow fisherman for one. Winter-time trophy fishing is becoming increasingly popular.

Channel catfish

In spring, fish with leeches or nightcrawlers around riprap. During summer, fish with cut shad, chicken livers, minnows, leeches, and worms along the main river channel.

Crappie

In spring, fish shallow and over flats with jigs and minnows. Cork fish around buttonball bushes. During summer, white bass anglers trolling small crankbaits near the river channel and primary points in the lake catch many crappie. During fall, fish jigs and minnows next to deep ledges formed by the river channel. Fish may also be caught suspended on flats adjacent to the secondary channel around 10 feet deep near structure. Fall is also a good time to catch black crappie along gravelly shoreline, fishing with a curly-tail jig.

Largemouth bass

During late winter/early spring, look for suspended schools of fish near primary and secondary points. Once located, try using suspended jerkbaits or Alabama rigs. Vary your twitch speeds with your jerkbait until you've found what the fish seem to prefer for the day. Fishing slower is often better, as fish can be slow to take a lure in cold water.

In spring, fish shallow with a Rapala #11 or #13 gold with black back or use floating or shallow-diving stick baits. Use black/brown or black/blue half-ounce jig with #11 or #1 pork frog in the yellow mustard flowers in the backs of embayments. Around woody structures, use a spinnerbait or plastic lizards either pumpkin or June-bug color. Shaky-head jigs tipped with finesse worms make an excellent search lure for shallow bass.

During summer, fish ledges near river channels with Carolina-rigged and Texas-rigged soft plastics and deep-diving crankbaits. Also, fish stumps on the main lake in the mornings and evenings with topwater baits like the Zara Spook (current is the key to these main lake stumps being productive). Using a 10-inch plastic worm fished along the ledges during the summer months is also good. A good color is plum.

During fall, fish along main lake ledges around stumps and brush with shad-color or and blue/chartreuse-color crankbaits. Use topwater baits (Zara Spook or Devil's Horse) in the flats of embayments on cloudy days or at dawn and dusk. Muskie-style topwater lures are becoming more popular for targeting trophy fish. Use white spinnerbaits around main lake stumps.

In recent years we have seen very little submerged aquatic vegetation (grass). However, if the grass comes back, topwater baits such as spooks, stick baits, plastic frogs, and buzzbaits are great choices.

Plastics, such as worms, and spinnerbaits are also good when fishing the edges of the weed beds.



Sauger

Troll main lake bars during the late summer and early fall with Wiggle Warts or crankbaits which bump bottom. During fall and winter, use jigs and minnows along the old river channel, along primary points near the river channel, and where a secondary channel meets the old river channel. A good site for fishing is along the river channel just north of the Paris Landing Bridge (U.S. Highway 79).

White bass

Fish the jumps July–September with slab spoons or white Rooster Tails.

Fishing Tips for Kentucky and Barkley Tailwaters

Blue and channel catfish

Best time is in May–June using cut bait or live bait fishing just off the bottom.

Sauger

Fish 3/4 oz. or 1 oz. jigs with minnows bumping bottom in back eddies and near current. Trolling is also good during the winter and early spring. Best fishing is between December and February.

Striped bass and hybrids

Best time is from April–June using live bait (skipjack herring) or 4-inch Sassy Shad baits with 1- to 2-ounce head (depending on amount of current, bump the bottom) in pearl or chartreuse color. Live bait can be caught in the tailwaters using a cast net or a skipjack rod.

Asian carp

If you want to catch Asian carp, the tailwaters are your best option. Snagging or bowfishing is extremely popular and can be a lot of fun. Snagging regulations at both tailwaters are unique, so check your fishing guide under special regulations before heading out. You will need a heavy rod and reel setup for snagging. We recommend at least 65-pound monofilament with a 9.0 or 10.0 treble hook rigged with at least an 8-ounce sinker. Tie the hook about 18 to 24 inches above the end of the line and then tie your sinker onto the end of the line. Wrapping the sinker line several times around the center of your treble hook will help keep the treble hook in line with your fishing line. Cast out as far as possible and then start jerking the rod backwards while reeling in your line. Do not let the hook touch the bottom if you want to avoid losing it. It is common to snag a fish on every cast when conditions are right.

