



February 2019 What's Biting Report

Temp: Low 50s

Clarity: Clear.

Bass: Fair. Predicting the fishing has been tough so far this winter. Up and down water temps, lake levels, clear to muddy water, wind or no wind, all these varying conditions affect the bite. With the cold weather predicted for late January and early February, I don't expect a big improvement anytime soon, but who knows? The shallow bite remains fair at best now, but it could improve, especially if the water temps in the 50s. Baits such as Rat-L-Traps, Square Bill crankbaits and Chatter Baits are catching some of these shallower fish. Try red or crawfish patterns in the stained water. Try to fish these baits in coves and pockets with small feeder creeks or around schools of shallow baitfish. Fish the open water in the pockets with an Alabama Rig or Flash Mob Jr. to tempt bites from suspended fish. Keep a jig or shaky head handy to pitch around any wood cover. If it turns off cold and dry during the month, the water should clear back up, cool down in the low 50s or 40s. If that happens target deeper offshore structures like brush piles in 20 to 30 feet of water.

Bluegill: Fair. The water has been really muddy most of the winter, which is not ideal for Bluegill fishing. Most of the Bluegill fish seem to be holding 20 to 30 feet deep. The fish are still moving around a good bit but should lock in on a certain thermocline as the water cools. Casting a 3/8- or 1/2-oz. white Rooster Tail, a chrome C.C. Spoon and several other small shad imitators have also been producing. Also, as the water cools, a bucktail jig or Fish head Spin becomes very effective, as well. The colder it gets, the better the fishing usually is—within reason of course.

Crappie: Fair. Try tight-lining a 1/16-oz. or smaller jig around bridge pilings, brush piles and blowdowns in 6 to 15 feet of water. Concentrate on trees and brush that are close to the old creek channels. Pitching or shooting docks with small tube or feather jigs around or under the docks can still produce this time of year. Bridge pilings also hold fish this time of year. As usual, crappie seem to love shade and cover.

Good luck, but don't stop fishing!

Doug Stinnette

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