

Cooler weather brings better fishing

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The return of seasonable temperatures has inspired more anglers to take advantage of the much-improved fishing currently found at each of Illinois' three large Corps of Engineer reservoirs.

Reports from bait shops within the vicinity of each of these lakes show the number of fishermen has increased with the arrival of cooler weather. And, these anglers are being rewarded with some of the finest fishing success of the past few months.

Fishing was actually a bit disappointing throughout most of the summer. Sweltering daytime temperatures and high water kept many anglers from enjoying these popular lakes. Those dedicated anglers willing to challenge the uncomfortable conditions generally reported limited success.

One area of good success has been Lake Shelbyville's crappie fishery. Unbelievable catches of quality fish have stirred a great deal of attention among anglers at this location. Throughout the summer, good catches of big fish have been common. According to many local crappie fishing enthusiasts, the past few years has brought to Lake Shelbyville some of the finest crappie fishing in the country.

White bass fishing, however, has been a bit more sporadic and is just now beginning to improve at Lake Shelbyville and Carlyle Lake. Catches of 20 to 30 fish per day are becoming more common at both locations. Anglers frequenting these waters actually expect fishing to only improve during the next few months.

Catfish anglers are also finding success at Rend and Carlyle lakes. In recent weeks, good catches of channel catfish (some quite large) have come from both locations. In fact, this good fishing has been in place for several months.

Bluegill are being caught in good numbers from all three locations. Lake Shelbyville anglers are also enjoying fair success for largemouth bass.

The already good crappie action at Rend Lake has many local anglers predicating even better fall fishing. They feel angling success for this species should only improve as water temperatures continue to fall.

The Carlyle tailwaters are yielding a potpourri of angling opportunities. Panfish and walleye are producing occasional flurries of fair to good action. White bass, too, bring spurts of good fishing action.

In recent weeks, several huge flathead catfish have been pulled from this popular shoreline fishing destination. Channel catfish, too, are one of the better catches in the tailwaters at this time.

Due to reduced water passing through the dams, tailwater action at Rend and Shelbyville lakes has been less than spectacular. Here, buffalo, carp and drum are providing the bulk of the action.

With the recent rains, lake levels are likely to rise slightly at all three locations. Corps personnel report all recreational facilities are still operational. This influx of water, however, could trigger some new and exciting action at each of the tailwater locations.

Anglers can check out the latest fishing conditions at these and other popular Illinois fishing holes by viewing the Illinois Department of Natural Resource's special sportfishing website at www.ifishillinois.org.