

May is Merry Month for Crappie Anglers

April 21 2020 11:12 AM



The old tune about the merry month of May would be an appropriate theme song for anglers this month - particularly if they are crappie fishermen.

According to reports, the time is now to grab a bucket of minnows and head to your favorite fishing hole. Crappie action is beginning to peak at lakes and ponds throughout the River Bend area.

Reports from area bait shops indicate the crappie are now spawning or moving into the shallows to spawn at many local fishing waters. Smaller lakes and ponds were the first to yield good catches of crappie. Excellent action at large impoundments like Carlyle, Shelbyville and Rend is also now underway.

Anglers at Rend Lake are finding good crappie in the shallow water near brush piles and beaver dams. Most of the better shallow-water action is currently found in the warmer and shallower waters.

Most Rend Lake anglers are also finding good action fishing minnows in buck brush, as well as along the rip rap shorelines. The areas along the bridges have been particularly productive. Good catches each day have been common.

Until recently, crappie fishing at Carlyle Lake has been only fair. However, the warmer weather of the past few weeks has really turned on the fishing at this sprawling Corps of Engineers impoundment.

Action is now rated good, with much of the better crappie coming from the shallow coves. Anglers are using minnows and jigs and fishing in the major coves near Eldon Hazlet and South Shore state parks.

Crappie fishing in the tailwaters below the Carlyle Dam has been very productive. Minnows fished in the discharge area near the cable have produced the best catches.

Like Carlyle, Lake Shelbyville's crappie fishing is just now beginning to heat up. Anglers are using minnows and jigs and fishing anywhere from five to eight feet deep.

The Lake Shelbyville hotspots include the flooded timber at Wilborn Creek and the major coves at Lithia Springs, Eagle Creek and Wolf Creek.

The action in Lake Shelbyville is expected to reach its peak within the next week or so. Surface water temperatures are now nearly ideal for spawning activity.

Even Mark Twain Lake in northeastern Missouri is showing signs of a crappie action. According to local bait shops, the crappie are slowly beginning to move into the shallows.

There have been numerous catches of nice crappie coming from the shallow water areas. Some veteran anglers at this lake are beginning to boat occasional crappies weighing up to a pound. Another day or two of warm weather could really heat things up.

Locally, many of the smaller city-owned lakes have also been yielding excellent crappie fishing. The new city lake at Gillespie has been a crappie hot spot in recent weeks.

Crappie action at other popular area waters like both Carlinville lakes and Litchfield's Lake Lou Yaeger is gaining momentum almost daily.

Depending upon the location, crappie anglers can expect to enjoy another week or two of good fishing. But, if you miss this opportunity, bluegill fishing should peak at most area waters about the time the time crappie action begins to fade.