

2024 FISHING FORECAST AND TIPS



Welcome to the 2024 Fishing Forecast for Kentucky's major fisheries. The forecast is based on 2023 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 improve their fishing success. Additional fishing information is available from the Department's website at fw.ky.gov, by obtaining copies of the 2024 Kentucky Fishing and Boating Guide available at most sporting goods stores, and now through our new Fish Boat KY App found in both the iTunes App Store and Google Play Store. The Kentucky Trout Waters brochure is contained in the 2024 Fishing and Boating Guide.

To locate fishing access sites in Kentucky, visit our website and click on "Fishing" and then scroll down to the "Find a Place to Fish" section. On our Fish Boat KY App, click on "Waterbody List" on the app's main page. 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 2024 fishing season starts March 1 with the new year's license, so take a trip to your local sporting goods store, get online at fw.ky.gov, or just use the Fish Boat KY App to purchase your 2024 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 and Expanding Fisheries in 2024

- Brown Trout will be stocked into Laurel River Lake (Whitley and Laurel counties) in 2024.
- Rainbow Trout will be stocked for the first time into Black Lick Creek at McCutchen-Coke Park in Auburn, KY (Logan County).
- Blue Catfish stockings in Barren River Lake will resume in 2024.

New Up-and-Comers

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

- Bluegill at West Fork Drakes Reservoir (Simpson County)
- Redear Sunfish at Benjy Kinman Lake (Henry County) and Corinth Lake (Grant County)
- Saugeye at A.J. Jolly Lake (Campbell County)
- Smallmouth Bass at Kentucky Lake (Marshall, Calloway, Lyon, Livingston, and Trigg counties) and Lake Barkley (Trigg, Lyon, and Livingston counties)
- White Bass at Cave Run Lake (Bath, Menifee, Rowan, and Morgan counties)

Fishing Forecast Cheat Sheet

Make sure you check out the Fishing Forecast and FINS lakes Cheat Sheets located towards 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 lets 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 then see which lakes are marked in orange. These are the lakes which 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 provide 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 web site.

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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 50's. 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 both produced multiple state record largemouth bass in the past. Lake Beshear in west Kentucky, Barren River Lake in west-central Kentucky, along with Herrington and Green River lakes in central Kentucky also offer excellent early spring bass fishing. Dewey, Fishtrap, Yatesville, Fishpond, and Highsplint lakes give east Kentucky anglers a great shot for an early spring trophy largemouth bass. The 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 Barkley, 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, 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.

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 2024

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

Water body	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									
Boltz Lake									
Briggs Lake									
Buckhorn Lake/tailwater									
Bullock Pen 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									
Fishpond 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 Creek Reservoir									
Laurel River Lake									
Liberty Lake									
Marion County Lake									
Martin's Fork Lake									
Mauzy Lake									
McNeely Lake									
Metcalfe County Lake									
Mill Creek Lake (Monroe Co.)									
Mill Creek Lake (Powell/Wolfe Co.)									
Nolin River Lake									
Nolin River Lake Tailwater									
Ohio River									
Paintsville Lake/tailwater									
Pennyrile Lake									
Pikeville City 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.

FINS LAKE CHEAT SHEET 2024

(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 number 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						Moderate number of large Bluegill 6-9 inches. High bass numbers with most fish less than 13 inches; some larger bass present. Some nice white crappie as bonus!
Millennium Park Pond	Boyle						Lots of bass over 15 inches; plentiful Bluegill in the 6- to 8-inch range and good chance to catch a trophy Redear Sunfish over 10 inches.
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 which should improve over time with active management.
Southgate Lake	Campbell						Fair number of Bluegill and Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Some Largemouth Bass present over 15 inches.
Panther Creek Park Lake	Daviess						High number of Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 9-inch range with fish up to 12 inches sampled. Good number of Bluegill in the 6- to 8-inch range. Potential for big bass.
Waymond Morris Park Lake	Daviess						Lake renovated and restocked with bass and Bluegill in 2022. Will take a few years to establish a good fishery. Trout and catfish best bet for now.
Yellow Creek Park Lake	Daviess						Good number of Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 9-inch range, with plentiful 6- to 7-inch Bluegill. Lots of bass less than 12 inches, with some large 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 in the 6- to 8-inch range. Largemouth Bass population improving, with some fish over 15 inches present.
Flemingsburg Old Reservoir	Fleming						Good number of Bluegill and Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 9-inch range. Solid number of bass over 15 inches observed in 2023; improving from past years.
Lower Sportsman's Lake	Franklin						Good number of Bluegill and Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Majority of Largemouth Bass are less than 15 inches. Yellow Bass plentiful!
Upper Sportsman's Lake	Franklin						Fair number of Bluegill in the 6- to 8-inch range. Most bass less than 15 inches; however, some larger bass present over 18 inches. Yellow Bass plentiful!
Lake Pollywog	Grant						Exceptional number of Redear Sunfish and Bluegill in the 7- to 9-inch range. Good numbers and size distribution of bass with some larger fish over 18 inches present.
Leary Lake	Grant						Exceptional number of Bluegill in the 6- to 8-inch range, with Redear Sunfish up to 10 inches. Good bass numbers, with larger bass present over 18 inches.
Kess Creek Park Lake	Graves						Good number of large bass over 15 inches. Sunfish numbers relatively low, with majority of sunfish small in size.

FINS LAKE CHEAT SHEET 2024

(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 number 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 number 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 number of Bluegill in the 6- to 8-inch range, with exceptional number of Redear Sunfish up to 10 inches. High bass numbers with most fish less than 12 inches.
Cherokee Park Lake	Jefferson						Good number of Bluegill and Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Bass rebounding from fish kill in 2022.
Fisherman's Park Lake #3	Jefferson						Moderate bass numbers with good number of fish over 15 inches. Fair number of Bluegill and Redear Sunfish with some larger fish present.
Fisherman's Park Lake #4	Jefferson						Moderate bass numbers with good number of fish over 15 inches. Fair number of Bluegill and Redear Sunfish with some larger fish present.
Tom Wallace Park Lake	Jefferson						Low numbers of Bluegill and Redear Sunfish, with some larger fish present. Lots of bass less than 12 inches, with some larger individuals and trophy potential.
Waverly Park Lake	Jefferson						Lots of small bass from a large spawn in 2022. Sunfish size structure should improve in near future with shad removal conducted in early 2022.
William F. Miles Angler Lake	Jefferson						Lots of bass less than 12 inches, with some large bass present. Sunfish size structure should improve in near future with shad removal conducted in early 2022.
William F. Miles Green Heron Lake	Jefferson						Good number of Bluegill over 6 inches and Redear Sunfish over 8 inches. Bass plentiful, with most fish less than 12 inches; some larger fish present.
Lake Mingo	Jessamine						Lots of sunfish present with good number of Bluegill over 6 inches and Redear Sunfish over 8 inches. Some Largemouth Bass present over 15 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						High numbers of sunfish, with lots of Bluegill less than 6 inches and Redear Sunfish up to 9 inches. Bass abundant, with most fish less than 12 inches.
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						High 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 2024

(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
Logan Hubble Park Lake	Lincoln						Fish population recovering from substantial fish kill in 2022; will take a couple years for bass and Bluegill to fully recover. Stocked catfish and trout best bet for now.
Whitehall Park Lake	Madison						Plentiful Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 10-inch range; low numbers of large Bluegill. Lots of bass with most fish less than 12 inches; some large bass present.
Mike Miller Park Lake	Marshall						Good number of Bluegill and Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 8-inch range. Moderate numbers of bass, with most fish less than 12 inches.
Maysville-Mason County Rec. Park Lake	Mason						High numbers of Bluegill with most fish less than 7 inches. Moderate bass numbers, with a good proportion over 15 inches.
Lake Montgomery	McCracken						Good number of Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 9-inch range, with plentiful 6- to 7-inch Bluegill. Moderate bass numbers, with a good proportion over 15 inches.
Carlson Lake (Ft. Knox)	Meade						Exceptional number of Redear Sunfish in the 6- to 10-inch range. Fair number of 6- to 7-inch Bluegill. Most bass less than 15 inches. Trout not stocked here.
Easy Walker Park Pond	Montgomery						Good number of Redear Sunfish in the 8- to 10-inch range and Bluegill in the 6- to 7-inch range. High bass numbers with most fish less than 12 inches.
Bloomfield Park Lake	Nelson						Good number of Bluegill in the 6- to 8-inch range. Good bass numbers of all sizes, with larger bass present over 18 inches.
Lusby Lake	Scott						Good bass numbers of all sizes, with large bass over 18 inches present. Majority of Bluegill less than 7 inches, with some larger Redear Sunfish over 8 inches present.
Scott County Park Lake	Scott						Good number of Bluegill in the 6- to 8-inch range, with Redear Sunfish in the 7- to 10-inch range also present. Good bass numbers of all sizes.
Jesse W. Thornton Lake	Warren						Exceptional number of bass over 15 inches; definite trophy potential. Redear Sunfish plentiful in the 6- to 10-inch range. Most Bluegill less than 7 inches.

2024 FISHING FORECAST

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

The fishing forecast is based on 2023 fish population surveys, planned fish stockings, and projections for 2024.

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 and 8 inches.
Largemouth Bass	★★★☆☆	Fair number of bass including a 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 in tailwater area during and following lake discharge periods. Flatheads not uncommon and of good size. Good numbers and sizes of all throughout river to confluence w/ Green River.
Crappie	★★★★☆	Best in lake tailwater area. Good numbers after heavier lake releases (except during summer months).
Hybrid Striped Bass	★★★★☆	Barren River Lake tailwater area is best, especially during or following periods of heavy lake discharge (especially non-summer months). Fair fishing also below instream dam at Bowling Green.
Muskellunge	★★★★☆	40-inch plus fish present. Target mouth of feeder creeks, springs, and around laydown tree/logjams or other current breaks. Stocked annually when available (2023, 2019, 2017, 2016, 2014).
Smallmouth Bass	★★★★☆	Fair number of larger fish (15-inch plus), few intermediate sizes, but good number of smaller fish (<9 inches). Fishing best 1 to 2 miles below Barren River Lake 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; buzzbaits and misc. soft plastics during summer.
Walleye/Sauger	★★★☆☆	Fishing best below instream dams (Barren River Lake and Bowling Green good at times) especially during December-March. Good-size Walleye (15-30 inch) and occasional Sauger (15-20 inch) also available throughout system in deeper pools near transition areas. Walleye numbers best in Drakes Creek system.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
BARREN RIVER (above lake upstream from Long Creek confluence)		Southwestern Fisheries District
Bass	★★★★☆	Largemouth, Spotted, and Smallmouth bass 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.
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, swim baits, or curly-tailed grubs.
White Bass, Hybrids, and Yellow Bass	★★★☆☆	Spawning runs still present in late March to mid-April. Small crankbaits and inline spinners for White and Yellow bass. Bigger swimbaits and spinners for Hybrids.
BARREN RIVER LAKE 10,000 acres (Allen and Barren counties)		Southwestern Fisheries District
Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 15-18 feet.		
Bluegill (sunfish)	★★★★☆	Good number 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, 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) with good number of fish starting to break into the 10-inch size range by early summer. Number of keeper White Crappie (10-inch plus) is good, but few larger Black Crappie (10-inch plus) available. Crappie mix in Barren River arm is skewed towards Black Crappie, while Skaggs and Beaver Creek arms slightly skewed towards White 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.
Hybrid Striped Bass	★★★★☆	Overall numbers are good with large fish (25-inch plus) available. Spring fishing best in upper lake portions at 1st and 2nd riffle areas with spinners, crankbaits, and curly-tailed jigs. Target main lake (around islands in mid- to lower lake) or dam area at night; wee hours of early morning have produced best in recent years. Stocked annually; higher number stocked 4 of the last 10 years.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Fair numbers overall and above average number of 18-inch fish.
Smallmouth Bass	★★★☆☆	Very low-density population overall, but good quality when you find them. Target lower 1/3 of the lake near the dam, fishing rock outcroppings and rocky transition areas.
Spotted Bass	★★★☆☆	Lower-density population overall; however, better than average quality fish (14 inches plus) available. Target bridge pylons and bluff walls with rock slides.
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	★★★☆☆	Most fish are 7- to 9 inches in length. Bite readily on small jigs, spinners, and minnows. Bridge pylons excellent areas to target for summertime action.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
BEAVER LAKE 158 acres (Anderson County) Central Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number of 6- to 7-inch fish; ≥8-inch fish present.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Majority of fish over 15 inches. Fish present up to 27 inches. Flatheads present in lake.
Crappie	★★★★☆	Good number due to big spawn in 2020; majority of the crappie are between 8-10 inches; larger fish possible.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Majority of the bass are 8-13 inches; increasing number of bass over 15 inches; bass over 20 inches are present. Note: Largemouth Bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Overall number increasing. Good number of 6- to 8-inch fish available; 10- to 11-inch fish possible.
BENJY KINMAN LAKE 88 acres (Henry County) Central Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Fair number; most fish are 6-7 inches.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Good number over 15 inches; trophy-size fish present.
Crappie	★★★★☆	Good number of fish between 8-10 inches; larger fish possible. Good spawn in 2023.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Majority of bass are 8-10 inches. Fair potential for quality-size fish and bass over 20 inches.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Number increasing; majority of "Shellcrackers" are 6-8 inches
BOLTZ LAKE 92 acres (Grant County) Central Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number of fish between 6-7 inches; ≥ 8-inch fish present.
Catfish	★★★★☆	Good number of Channel Catfish over the 12-inch size limit. Low number of Blue Catfish; 25-inch plus Blue Catfish possible.
Crappie	★★★★☆	Abundant; majority of fish around 8-10 inches; larger fish possible.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Good number of bass in and above the 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit; potential for bass ≥20 inches. Note: Largemouth Bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit.
Redear Sunfish	★★☆☆☆	Low number of 6- to 9-inch fish available.
Saugeye	★★☆☆☆	Low number; harvestable-size Saugeye present.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
BRIGGS LAKE 18 acres (Logan County)		Southwestern Fisheries District
Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 7 feet.		
Bluegill	★★★★★	Good number of 6- to 7-inch fish available.
Channel Catfish	★★★☆☆	All sizes available. Stocked in even-numbered years.
Crappie	★★★★☆	Large fish present. Fish laydown trees, stakebeds, and brushpiles in late winter and early spring.
Largemouth Bass	★★★☆☆	Better than average number of 12-inch plus fish. Lake is managed as a Bluegill/Redear lake.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★★	Good number of larger fish (8-inch plus) available. Larger fish very shallow in early spring; then move to thermocline depth.
Warmouth	★★★☆☆	Fair number of fish available. Fish in or near vegetation.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
BUCKHORN LAKE and TAILWATER 1,230 acres (Leslie and Perry counties)		Eastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	Good size distribution and good number of fish in the 7- to 8-inch range. 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, 2022, 2023, and stocking is planned again for 2024.
Catfish	★★★☆☆	Good number 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 spawning. Tailwater provides additional good fishery.
Crappie	★★★☆☆	Recent creel survey shows good number of legal-size fish available with occasional larger fish up to 14 inches. July and August can provide some very good fishing over shallow mud flats adjacent to the main lake channel. Try trolling crankbaits over the flats at depths of 12- to 15-feet deep. Also, October-November during drawdown to winter pool can be very good in the upper lake locations above the marina.
Largemouth Bass	★★☆☆☆	Good recruitment of young bass over the last several years. Number of keeper fish has increased somewhat with most being 15-17 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. In the fall, look for larger fish in the back of coves near shallow water vegetation.
Muskellunge	★★★☆☆	Overall number is increasing with the majority of fish less than 36 inches. Fish over 40 inches are available and slightly more numerous. During January-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 KY River) provides 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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
BULLOCK PEN LAKE	134 acres (Grant County)	Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★☆☆☆☆	Most fish are 6 inches or less and very abundant.
Catfish	★★★☆☆	Good number of Channel Catfish over the 12-inch size limit; potential for larger fish (≥ 20 inches). Blue Catfish are present; 25-inch plus fish possible. Flathead Catfish present.
Crappie	★★☆☆☆	Abundant population, mainly 6-8 inches; a few larger fish are present.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★★	Good number of bass at and above the 12-inch size limit. Excellent potential for quality-size fish and bass over 20 inches.
Redear Sunfish	★☆☆☆☆	Very low number of fish.
Saugeye	★★★☆☆	Low number. Harvestable-size Saugeye are present. Note: this lake is home to the current state record Saugeye.
White Bass	★☆☆☆☆	Very small population; however, quality fish in the 14- to 17-inch range possible.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
CARPENTER LAKE	68 acres (Daviess 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 lillies 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 number of 20+-inch 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 number 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 swim baits or crank baits.
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 five years. Growth is very good and harvestable-size (24 inch) fish were seen in 2023. 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 towards dam.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
CARR CREEK LAKE	710 acres (Knott County)	Eastern Fisheries District
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.		
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	Good number of small Bluegill present with some 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 deep-water stake beds in Litt Carr arm hold larger fish in spring.
Catfish	★★★★☆	Primary species are Channel and Flathead catfish, but Blue Catfish have been stocked since 2020 and some are now available over 20 inches. Try fishing open water with jugs and cut bait for Blue Catfish. Abundant Channel Catfish can be found in the 12- to 18-inch range. 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 with 36- to 40-inch fish available.
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 "blacknose" Black Crappie in 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. A number of hardwood hinge cut trees are added to the lake every year. These trees continue to hold large crappie throughout the season. Large stake bed structures in Litt Carr arm of the lake are effective in early spring.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Good number of fish up to 17 inches. Larger bass up to 21 inches are frequently caught in the early spring. Catch rates of legal fish over 15 inches is improving. Growth rates have remained high in recent years. During late spring through summer, best results are often at night.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Redear Sunfish were stocked in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023, and are planned to be stocked again in 2024. Fishing opportunity is very good with larger fish up to 10 inches. The best fishing opportunity 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 banks or cliff drops.
Spotted Bass	★★★☆☆	Best numbers are concentrated in lower and mid lake; a few large fish up to 17 inches with fair number through 15 inches. Carr Creek Lake remains one of our better lakes in eastern Kentucky for quality-size Spotted Bass although catch rates are fewer. Rocky banks below the campground have traditionally produced larger fish.
Walleye	★★★☆☆	Decent number of fish from 16-21 inches with a few larger fish. March through May are good months to try during daylight. Anglers still report some success fishing at night during late spring and early summer and again in October. Target fish in shallow shoreline laydowns in early spring. Later in summer, move to deeper, open water areas with schools of shad that Walleye suspend beneath. Rocky points and bank line trees hold the majority of fish in early spring. Walleye are stocked annually.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
CAVE RUN LAKE	8,270 acres (Bath, Menifee, Rowan and Morgan counties)	Northeastern Fisheries District
<p>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.</p>		
Catfish	★★★★☆☆	Good number of Channel Catfish up to two feet long are common along with a few larger sizes. Many are found along shallow rocky shoreline areas in early May-June where they seek cover in rock piles and submerged logs to spawn. Later they tend to be found in deeper water. Not as plentiful, but 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 in the ideal range for harvesting. Starting in May, fish around department-placed and natural brush piles in the lower end of the lake. Fishing is slower in the fall and winter, but try up in the riverine sections of the lake for best results at this time.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆☆	Good number of fish over 15 inches in the lake, but still high number 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.
Muskellunge	★★★★☆☆	Several years of lower stocking numbers are starting to show in this population. Trophy fish exist and 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. Stocking numbers back to normal in 2022 and 2023. Note: 40-inch minimum size, one fish daily 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 number 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 6-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	★★★★★★	Fantastic population with the potential for widespread jumps in the summer months. Areas around the confluence, Clay Lick, Alfrey, and the dam can produce good jumps. Be prepared for White Bass while fishing the lake for anything in early summer. Note: no more than 5 White Bass in the daily limit may be greater than 15-inches long.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
CEDAR CREEK LAKE	784 acres (Lincoln County)	Southeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	Moderate-density population with most fish under 5 inches, although some larger fish can be found. Several designated bank fishing locations around the lake provide good opportunities for targeting sunfish.
Channel Catfish	★★★☆☆	Decent number of 12- to 16-inch fish with fish over 20 inches available. Stocked in even-numbered years.
Crappie	★★★☆☆	Moderate-density population with good number of fish in the 8- to 10-inch range but 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	★★★★☆	Population remains strong with good number of fish over 15 inches available. Good spawns the last few years should bolster the population in the coming years. It remains one of the best options in southeast Kentucky for catching fish over 15 inches. Target edges of weed beds in the summer. Note: 20-inch minimum size limit, 1-fish daily limit regulation is in effect on this lake.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Moderate-density population with most fish in the 4- to 8-inch range. Good number of fish over 8 inches with fish over 10 inches available. The increase in vegetation on the lake has benefitted the population and better numbers of fish are being seen. Target flats in the springtime using mealworms.
CLEAR CREEK LAKE	40 acres (Bath County)	Northeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	Good number 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 in an effort to help with natural reproduction. In order 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 number of 6- to 8-inch fish; ≥8-inch fish present.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Good number of Channel Catfish over the 12-inch size limit; fish over 15 inches common.
Crappie	★★☆☆☆	Fair number of fish; most fish between 8 and 9 inches.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Majority of the bass are 8-12 inches; good potential for bass between 15-20 inches. Note: Largemouth Bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Good number of fish up to 9 inches; few trophy-size fish present.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
DALE HOLLOW LAKE	6,614 acres in Kentucky (Clinton and Cumberland counties)	Southeastern Fisheries District
Largemouth Bass	★★★★★	Good numbers with fish over 15 inches making up a good portion of the population. Target Largemouth in cuts and coves in creeks and around sunken structure in the spring and fall and grassy areas during the summer.
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. Target main lake points and bluff walls earlier in the year, and troll nightcrawler rigs and crankbaits over flats in 20-25 feet of water in the summer months and going into fall.
DEWEY LAKE	1,100 acres (Floyd County)	Eastern Fisheries District
Zebra mussels and hydrilla are present at Dewey 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.		
Blue Catfish	★★★★☆	Popular fishery with jug fishing spring through early fall. Moderate density population with good number of 18- to 24-inch fish. Larger fish over 36 inches are available, though infrequent. Fish over 40 inches have been caught in the tailwater. Blues are stocked annually.
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	Fair number; most fish are 6-7 inches. Good spawning beds can usually be found located at the back of lower and mid lake coves.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Good number of 12- to 18-inch fish. Abundant bank fishing access along roadside and parking areas.
Crappie	★★★★☆	A good population of both Black and White crappie exist. Most keeper-size fish are 9-13 inches for White Crappie and 9-11 inches for Black Crappie. Good bank fishing access along roadway pull off sites with nearby brush piles.
Flathead Catfish	★★★☆☆	Good size distribution; a few large fish from 20-30 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 number 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. As spring progresses, fish transition to hinged trees and other woody structures near the shoreline. Good potential for quality-size fish.
Muskellunge	★★★☆☆	A moderate density population that continues to improve. Muskellunge are stocked annually. Anglers continue to report catching larger fish each year, some now over 40 inches. Fish feed aggressively on shad at the back of larger coves like Big Branch and shallow banks along the road-side. Note: a new regulation (40-inch minimum) went into effect in 2023.
Redear Sunfish	★★☆☆☆	Fish are present up to 9 inches, but in low numbers. Rocky areas with surrounding vegetation consistently hold more fish. Hydrilla is expanding at Dewey Lake and vegetation is becoming more abundant.
White Bass	★★★★☆	A locally popular fishery in John's Creek will congregate fish in 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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
DIX RIVER – below Herrington Lake (Garrard and Mercer counties)		Central Fisheries District
Brown Trout	★★☆☆☆☆	Very low number of holdover fish expected due to poor water conditions. Brown Trout (300) are stocked annually.
Rainbow Trout	★★☆☆☆☆	Low number of holdover fish expected due to poor water conditions. Rainbow Trout (4,500) are stocked annually; five stockings 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 number 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. Note: Largemouth and Smallmouth bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit on main stem of Elkhorn Creek.
Rock Bass	★★★★☆	Many fish between 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 number of fish greater than 15 inches. Note: Largemouth and Smallmouth bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit on main stem of Elkhorn Creek.
ELMER DAVIS LAKE 149 acres (Owen County)		Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Excellent number of fish between 6-8 inches. Additionally, good number of fish ≥8 inches.
Channel Catfish	★★★☆☆	Fair number of fish present; most fish over 20 inches.
Crappie	★★★☆☆	Most around 8 to 10 inches; larger fish present. Good spawn in 2020.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★★	Excellent number of bass in the 12- to- 15-inch slot. Good number of bass greater than 15 inches. Trophy-size bass present.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★★	Good number of fish between 6-9 inches. “Shellcrackers” greater than 10 inches are present.
Warmouth	★★★☆☆	Abundant with majority between 6-9 inches. Locally known as “redeye” or “rockbass”.
FAGAN BRANCH LAKE 140 acres (Marion County)		Southwestern Fisheries District
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.		
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	Fair number of 6-inch plus fish available.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Good number 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 number 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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
FAGAN BRANCH LAKE (continued)		
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 November. 15-inch plus fish available.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Good number of larger fish (8-inch plus) present. Fish edges of deep weed beds (15-20 feet) during summer.
FISHPOND LAKE 32 acres (Letcher county) Eastern Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number of 6- to 8-inch fish. Look for spawning beds in the shallow backwater areas of coves in May. Fish stump beds and brush piles on the main lank banks, especially in the upper end of the lake for late spring and fall.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Channel catfish stocked in even-numbered years. Fish over 12 inches common.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★★	Good destination for trophy bass. Good number of fish over 15 inches with very good potential for large fish over 20 inches. Water is extremely clear and fish spook easily in early spring. Note: electric motors only.
Rainbow Trout	★★★☆☆	Rainbow trout are stocked annually in January, April, May, and October (4,000 total). Good bank access areas available throughout the lake.
FISHTRAP LAKE and TAILWATER 1,131 acres (Pike County) Eastern Fisheries District		
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.		
Blue Catfish	★★★★☆	Good number of all sizes of fish with many quality-size fish available up to 36 inches or larger. Many 10- to 15-pound fish observed during sampling. This fishery provides an excellent jug fishing opportunity in early spring through summer. The lower lake can provide an excellent opportunity for rod and reel anglers in late fall. Blues are stocked annually.
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Excellent number 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 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 area around Miller's Creek in the fall. Also good above Lick Creek boat ramp access in the spring.
Crappie	★★★☆☆	Good number of fish from 9-10 inches. Fish up to 11-12 inches present but in lower numbers. Fish can be found up to 15 inches. Fish surveys indicate a large year class was produced in 2023; evidence of a very successful spawn. If water is clear, fish often hold on sharp break lines from shallow to deeper water. Larger fish are found in the mid-lake section during winter pool, often on flats adjacent to brush piles and channel breaks.
Flathead Catfish	★★★★☆	Good numbers found in the lower lake year-round, especially larger fish. Fish of all sizes available up to 36-inches or larger. Live bait makes an excellent choice on rod and reel as well as jug lines. Flatheads feed more aggressively at night.
Hybrid Striped Bass	★★★★☆	Good number of hybrids in the lower lake in late summer and at winter pool. Good size distribution of fish up to 22 inches with occasional larger fish available. Fish will actively chase shad in the summer as well as fall during draw down. Fish will move into the shallow headwaters in April during the white bass spawn. Look for fish in the jumps from May-July. Hybrids are stocked annually.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
FISHTRAP LAKE and TAILWATER (continued)		
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Number of 15- to 20-inch fish continues to increase with good number of 17- to 20-inch fish present. Overall population structure is improving with time. This lake provides a good opportunity to catch large bass in the fall, particularly in the lower lake sections like Hurrigan and Jonican. Larger fish transition to hinged trees and piles of floating driftwood that accumulates in pockets along the main lake shoreline, especially in the lower lake.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Good size distribution throughout the lower and mid sections of the lake. Larger fish exist in the 10- to 12-inch range. Target spawning areas near weed beds in shallow water at the backs of larger coves.
Smallmouth Bass	★★★☆☆	Numbers remain steady with larger fish over 21 inches present. Fishing is often best in the lower lake along rocky shorelines and points or areas where the channel edge breaks over. Crayfish pattern jigs and crankbaits worked slowly through these areas can be especially effective.
White Bass	★★★★☆	Numerous fish from 12-14 inches. During fall and at winter pool try from Hurrigan Branch to dam. During the spring, fish will move upstream into Levisa Fork above the Lick Creek boat ramp to the first few riffles to spawn. Various small spinners in white, black or silver can be effective.

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 number of Channel and fair number 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 number of fish in the 7- to 9-inch range, and fair number 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 middle reaches of the lake. Good number of smaller (under the size limit) fish can produce fun days of catching many fish. High water helps to 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 2/3 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. Fishing success highly dependent on weather and flow.
White Bass	★★★☆☆	Fish tributary mouths in spring and below dams mid-spring through fall. 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. Fishing success highly dependent on weather and flow.

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 when available throughout river above Rochester.
Rock Bass	★★★★☆	Good number 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 in area below Green River Lake dam (Walleye) and instream dams (Sauger) from early winter through spring. Walleye bite below Green River Lake dam in summer is best after or during discharge events. Summer Sauger more common in mid to lower reaches of river below Mammoth Cave.

GREEN RIVER LAKE 8,210 acres (Taylor and Adair counties)		Southwestern Fisheries District
Summertime (mid-June through mid-October) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 18-20 feet.		
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 mid-summer to fall.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Exceptional number of quality-size fish (15-inch plus) and good number of 18-inch plus fish.
Muskellunge	★★★★☆	Legal-size fish (40-inch) and trophy fish (45-inch plus) numbers fair. Fall, late winter, and spring are excellent times to catch trophy fish. Trolling main lake flats is good option summer through fall. Population maintained by annual stocking.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
GREEN RIVER LAKE (continued)		
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 number of 12-inch plus fish. 15-inch plus spots not uncommon.
Walleye	★★★☆☆	Overall number of fish is fair as is number 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	★★★☆☆	Fair number >12 inches. Fish headwater areas in spring (mid-March to early-April); troll flats and fish under floating lights during summer on into fall.
White Crappie	★★★★☆	Good number of harvestable-size fish (9-inches plus) with better than normal number of 11- to 13-inch fish available. Lots of sub-legal fish present.

GREENBO LAKE 181 acres (Greenup County - Greenbo State Park) Northeastern Fisheries District

Hydrilla and Elodea continue to grow but stocked Grass Carp are helping to combat this problem. 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.

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 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: 1 fish daily limit and 16-inch size limit.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Stocked in even-numbered 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 to use at this lake.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Good number of fish over 15 inches 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	★★★☆☆	Number of fish is low; however, there are fish upwards of 11 inches. Fish deeper water than you would for Bluegill. Note: see Bluegill regulation.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
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 number 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	★★★★☆	Abundant throughout lake; 3- to 4-pound fish common; larger fish present.
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 number 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; fish ≥8 inches possible. 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	★★★☆☆	Stocked annually since 2021. Number of fish is improving; most fish 8-10 inches. Crappie 12-15 inches present. Best around brush or fallen trees in upper half of lake.
Flathead Catfish	★★★★☆	All sizes present; usually feed at night on sunfish and shad.
Hybrid Striped Bass	★★★★☆	Number of fish is increasing slightly and 2- to 5-pound fish are present; possible trophy-size fish. Stocked annually.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Good number 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 number of fish in the 13- to 15-inch range; trophy-size present.
KENTUCKY LAKE and TAILWATER 57,101 acres (Marshall, Calloway, Lyon, Livingston and Trigg counties)		WFD
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, night crawlers, grass hoppers, or catalpa worms.
	★★★★★	In the tailwaters there are year-round fishing opportunities. The ideal times are in April and May, and 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 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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
KENTUCKY LAKE and TAILWATER (continued)		
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	<p>There is a high number 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 night crawlers.</p>
Channel Catfish	★★★★★	<p>In the lake, the best fishing occurs during the late spring along chunky rock shoreline of the lake, and rip-rap 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.</p>
	★★★☆☆	<p>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.</p>
Crappie	★★★★☆	<p>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 brushpiles. 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. For trophy or tournament anglers there are still a lot of 7- and 8-year-old (13-17 inch) fish in the system from some prior excellent spawns, but the majority of the keepers will be 10-12 inches.</p>
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	<p>A fantastic year class in 2016 has led to a large number of 17- to 18-inch bass in the system right now. A great year class in 2020 and a strong year 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 top water 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.</p>
	★★★★☆	<p>There is some fine bass fishing in the tailwaters below Kentucky Dam. Try fishing white spinner baits along the rip rap shoreline on the eastern bank.</p>
Redear Sunfish	★★★★★	<p>Best fishing is in late April and early May. Redear like areas with gravel substrate. If there are yellow mustard flowers inundated by water in the backs of embayments during this time, this is 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; hence 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.</p>

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
KENTUCKY LAKE and TAILWATER (continued)		
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 Jan 1 through May 31, it's 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 either 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. Numbers have improved greatly over the past two years. Best fishing is in the 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.
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 color 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.
	★★★★☆	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	★★★★☆	White Bass fishing hasn't been this good since the 1980's 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 near the canal.
	★★★★☆	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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
KENTUCKY LAKE and TAILWATER (continued)		
Yellow Bass	★★★★★	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 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).
Sauger	★★★☆☆	Found around sand bars, creek mouths, 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.

*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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
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 between 6-8 inches. Larger fish available.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★★	Very good number of fish over the 12-inch size limit; good number of fish over 15 inches; excellent potential for a trophy fish.
KINGFISHER LAKES 14 acres and 21 acres (Daviness County)		Northwestern Fisheries District
Channel Catfish	★★★☆☆	Stocked in even-numbered years. Good growth rate; good number 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. Five- to seven-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 for spawning fish.
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 number of 10- to 20-pounders with the occasional 50+ 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 works well.
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number 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 occurs in 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	★★★★☆	The strong 2021 year class is starting to reach the 10-inch minimum size limit. White Crappie are most abundant and fish are looking healthy this year. There is a good number of 8- to 9-inch White Crappie in the system right now, and these fish should be keepers in 2024. Fish continue to grow quickly at Lake Barkley, as most crappie are reaching harvestable sizes in just 2-3 years.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Shallow water fishing for spawning bass can be very productive in the spring around button ball bushes with floating baits, buzzbaits, spinnerbaits, and plastic creature baits. During 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 the number of keeper-size fish in Lake Barkley is down, the bass spawn in 2023 produced our strongest year class ever recorded, with many fish being larger than our 5-inch goal last fall. This is encouraging and should lead to more keepers as these fish age and grow.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
LAKE BARKLEY and TAILWATER (continued)		
Redear Sunfish	★★★★★	Good number 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 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 number 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. Anglers may find slightly better luck in the tailwaters.
Smallmouth Bass	★★★★☆	Smallmouth Bass make up an increasing portion of the total bass population. Many tournament anglers are finding more success catching Smallmouth Bass in the last couple years than any other time in recent history. Fishing is best around rocky shorelines near deep water, main lake points, and the canal during late winter and early spring with suspending jerk baits.
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 inline 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. 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 can be fine to eat. There is no size or creel limit and harvest is encouraged.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
LAKE BESHEAR 760 acres (Caldwell and Christian counties)		Western Fisheries District
Blue Catfish	★★★★☆	Blue Catfish are stocked every third year. Their population is doing fair, with good growth. Some 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 number 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. The population is considered stunted; therefore it is ok to harvest the small crappie. 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 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
		Coontail is starting to become an issue. Triploid Grass Carp were stocked in 2018 and 2019. The shoreline was treated with aquatic herbicide last year.
Bluegill	★★☆☆☆	Low number of fish, but they can be caught by focusing your efforts around weed edges. Note: Bluegill and other sunfish - 15 fish daily limit.
Catfish	★★☆☆☆	Fair numbers of Flathead and Channel catfish can be found. Catfish spawning boxes have been installed in this lake as well. Stocking has been suspended in hopes that natural reproduction will take its place. Note: limb lines (set lines), jug lines, and trot lines are illegal to use at this lake.
Largemouth Bass	★★☆☆☆	Fair number of bass present, with a good number of fish between 15 and 20 inches and a few over 20 inches. 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 number of fish. Note: see Bluegill.
Saugeye	★★☆☆☆	Population of larger fish is established with continuing annual stockings. Fish at night with shad imitating baits near the bottom or twister tail grubs tipped with 2 inches of an earthworm. There will be more success when fishing in cooler water. Try targeting deep channel breaks and any feeding flats at night. Note: 14-inch minimum size limit.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
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LAKE CUMBERLAND	50,250 acres (Russell, Wayne, Clinton, and Pulaski counties)	Southeastern Fisheries District
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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.

Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number 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 mid-section 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 with good number of fish over 10 inches and larger fish (12-14 inches) are relatively common. White Crappie population has been stable the last few years. 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 number of small fish should bode well for the future. Large fish found throughout the lake, but upper lake tributaries generally have higher number. Shallow water cover in the tributaries are good bets in the spring and fall.
Smallmouth Bass	★★★★☆	Consistent fishery with a good variety of sizes in the population. Fish up to 20 inches present and good number of small fish should help bolster the population going forward. Float-n-fly techniques and jigs offer good wintertime fishing. Main lake points tend to hold fish throughout the year. Lily Creek remains a productive area for Smallmouth.
Spotted Bass	★★★★☆	Population density remains high but number of 8- to 14-inch fish has been down. Larger fish up to 17 inches available. Spotted Bass can be found throughout the lake but higher density found in lower lake areas.
Striped Bass	★★★★☆	Good mix of sizes available in the population, so you may have to sort through some short fish. Good number of fish coming up should bode well for the next few years. Growth rates remain strong and fish are looking healthy heading into 2024. Note: 22-inch size limit, 2 fish daily limit remains in effect.
Walleye	★★★★☆	Numbers have been stable the last few years with good number of fish in the 16- to 20-inch size range, but larger fish are available. In the spring, surface baits fished at night is a good bet. During the summer months, switch to trolling nightcrawler rigs 25- to 30-foot 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 at catching them.

LAKE CUMBERLAND TAILWATER	(Russell, Cumberland, Clinton, and Monroe counties)	SE and SW Fisheries districts
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Brook Trout	★☆☆☆☆	Stocked annually in the tailwater. Low density population with most fish in the 10- to 12-inch range, with an occasional larger fish.
Brown Trout	★★☆☆☆	The Brown Trout population in the tailwater remains at low levels; however, an increased number of 15- to 18-inch fish were observed during fall 2023 sampling. Some keeper fish (>20 inches) still present but rare.
Cutthroat Trout	★☆☆☆☆	Low density population that has been stocked annually since 2021. Most fish in the 10- to 12-inch range.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
LAKE CUMBERLAND TAILWATER (continued)		
Rainbow Trout	★★★★☆	Numbers of fish in the slot (15-20 inches) were down during fall sampling and overall numbers were down in the middle reaches of the tailwater. Good number of stock-size fish (9-11 inches) available year-round with some trout over 20 inches present.
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	★★★★☆	Best below Burkesville using live bait or trolling shad or trout-colored crankbaits or swimbaits during summer. Fish 20 pounds plus available. Fish can be found throughout the tailwater from mid-October through April.
Walleye	★★★★☆	Moderate-density population throughout the tailwater and 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
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 towards 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 inch). Target upper reaches of the lake, mid-way 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.

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 a high number 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 to use at this lake.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Great number of fish overall. Extremely high angling pressure makes getting away from the easily fished areas a must on this lake.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
LAKE REBA (continued)		
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 number 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 number of fish over 15 and 20 inches. These fish are fat and healthy for their size. All indicators are continuing to show an increase in this population. Should be another great year.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Similar numbers as previous years and most fish are less than 7 inches. Note: see Bluegill.
Saugeye	★★★☆☆	Population of larger fish has been established. Fish at night with shad-imitating baits near the bottom. There will be more success when fishing in cooler water. Try targeting deep channel breaks and any feeding flats at night.. Note: 14-inch minimum size limit.
LAUREL CREEK RESERVOIR 43 acres (McCreary County) Southeastern Fisheries District		
Channel Catfish	★★★☆☆	Moderate number of 12- to 15-inch fish with some up to 20 inches. Stocked in even-numbered years.
Largemouth Bass	★★★☆☆	Moderate- to high-density bass population present. Good number of fish in the 8- to 13-inch range, with a few larger fish present.
LAUREL RIVER LAKE 5,830 acres (Whitley and Laurel counties) Southeastern Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Decent number 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 into the lake in 2022 and 2023 will help bolster the population. Upper portion of Laurel River Arm near city dam is the best area to target them.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Increasing number of fish over 15 inches. Strong number of small fish 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 small fish should help 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	★★★★☆	Number of fish in the population has improved the last few years with good number of fish across all sizes. Increasing number of fish over 14 inches and strong number of small fish should bode well for the future of the fishery. Mid and lower sections of the lake are the best areas to target Spotted Bass, but good number of fish can be found throughout the lake. Craigs Creek area has shown increases in catch rates the last few years.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
LAUREL RIVER LAKE (continued)		
Walleye	★★★☆☆	Good number of 19- to 21-inch fish present, with some fish up to 24 inches. The 2019 and 2020 year classes remain strong and are helping drive the population. 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.
LIBERTY LAKE 79 acres (Casey County) Southeastern Fisheries District		
Channel Catfish	★★☆☆☆	Decent number of 16- to 19-inch fish with bigger fish over 20 inches present.
Largemouth Bass	★★★☆☆	High density population comprised primarily of 9- to 13-inch fish, but larger fish are available. Strong reproduction the last few years will keep population numbers up in the future.
Spotted Bass	★★☆☆☆	Low density population and most fish are small (7-10 inches), but some up to 13 inches are present.
MARION COUNTY LAKE 32 acres (Marion County) Southwestern Fisheries District		
Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 11 feet.		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number of 6- to 8-inch plus fish.
Channel Catfish	★★★☆☆	All sizes available. Stocked in even-numbered years.
Largemouth Bass	★★★☆☆	High number of 11- to 13-inch fish, but 20-inch plus fish available.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	10-inch plus fish available, plus good number of 8-inch plus. Larger fish up shallow in late-March to early/mid April for spawn then move out to thermocline depth.
White Crappie	★★★☆☆	Large fish available. Fish laydown trees in the upper end of the lake in spring and brushpiles in summer and winter.
MARTINS FORK LAKE 334 acres (Harlan County) Eastern Fisheries District		
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	A popular fishery with local anglers. Most harvested fish are 7 inches or less. Look for spawning areas near old roadbeds and in the heads of coves. Also try fishing 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 along the channel edges. There are several easy-to-access bank fishing sites near the ramp and beach area. Fish are stocked in even-numbered years. Note: trot, jug, and limb lines are prohibited.
Crappie	★★★☆☆	Fish from 7-10 inches are most commonly caught. Larger fish up to 13 inches are available but few in number. 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 late spring and fall at more shallow depths.
Largemouth Bass	★★★☆☆	Good number of smaller fish up to 14 inches. Fish over 15 inches are fewer in number; however, fish up to 20 inches are still available. Pondweeds are expanding in lake coves by fall providing additional opportunities for large bass to forage on prey. This lake contains 4 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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
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MARTINS FORK LAKE (continued)

Redear Sunfish

★★★★☆

Redear were stocked in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. Good numbers and size distribution throughout the lake. Larger fish over 10 inches are available. Fish in shallow water from mid-March through April. Later, good fishing can be found in the deeper water flats with adjacent vegetation and rip rap near the tunnel. Fish are planned to be stocked again in 2024.

Walleye

★☆☆☆☆

Native strain Walleye have been stocked annually since 2013. A creel survey in 2021 showed no angler success catching these walleye in the lake. Recent fish surveys are showing some 1- to 2-year-old fish up on the banks at night in the fall. Fish should be targeted in the head waters above the lake in early spring (early- to mid-March) and on shallow rocky points and adjacent roadbeds in the fall. The tailwaters of this lake also produce good catches of spring walleye as the Upper Cumberland River is also stocked. **Note: 2-fish daily creel limit; 18- to 26-inch protective slot limit.**

MAUZY LAKE 81 acres (Union County, Higginson-Henry WMA)	Northwestern Fisheries District
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Bluegill

★★☆☆☆

Moderate number, most fish 4-6 inches. Aquatic vegetation significantly reduced during 2023. Look for Bluegill numbers to continue to drop as bass are able to forage effectively and Bluegill size to improve in 2024.

Channel Catfish

★★★★☆

Stocked in odd-numbered years. Many 16- to 22-inch plus fish in the population. Catfish receive little fishing pressure.

Largemouth Bass

★★☆☆☆

Excessive vegetation has hindered bass foraging success and growth in recent years. Aquatic vegetation significantly reduced during 2023. Bass growth should increase in 2024. 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.

MCNEELY LAKE 51 acres (Jefferson County)	Central Fisheries District
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Bluegill

★★★★☆

Good number of fish through 8 inches; ≥8-inch fish are present.

Channel Catfish

★★★☆☆

Channel Catfish stocked annually; majority of fish over 15 inches.

Common Carp

★★☆☆☆

A few large fish present.

Crappie

★★★☆☆

Low number, but quality-size fish possible. Fish near weed beds and fallen trees.

Largemouth Bass

★★★★☆

Majority of the bass are 8-12 inches. Good number of fish over 15 inches with fish over 20 inches present. Best cover is water willows, fallen trees, and stumps. **Note: Largemouth Bass 12- to 15-inch protective slot limit.**

Redear Sunfish

★★★★☆

Good number of fish through 9 inches; ≥10-inch fish are present.

Warmouth

★★☆☆☆

Low number of 6- to 8-in fish present.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
METCALFE COUNTY LAKE	22 acres (Metcalf County)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 7 feet.		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	High number overall with good number of 6-inch fish; however, few exceed 8 inches.
Blue Catfish	★★★☆☆	Low number overall, with some trophy-size fish (30-inch plus) available. Fish with live or cut bait near creek channel. Stocked every 3rd year.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Fair number 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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
MILL CREEK LAKE	109 acres (Monroe County)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 12 feet.		
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 number.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Good number of larger fish (15-inch plus) overall; Number of 18-inch plus fish above average.
Redear Sunfish	★★★☆☆	Decent number overall, with some 7- to 9-inch fish available.
Spotted Bass	★★★☆☆	Fair number, but slow growing with few fish exceeding 12 inches.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
MILL CREEK LAKE	41 acres (Powell/Wolfe County – Natural Bridge State Park)	Northeastern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number of fish over 8 inches with plenty of fish for table fare. Water is extremely clear and can be difficult to fish. Look for beds in the back end of the lake and in small coves near wood structure.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Stocked every other year. Note: limb lines (set lines), jug lines, and trot lines are illegal to use at this lake.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Deep and clear lake leads to slower growing bass. Trophy fish can still be caught in the upper reaches of the lake away from the boat ramp. This lake requires anglers to approach areas with caution to not spook their intended catch. Focus on deep standing timber using finesse when fishing. Note: 15-inch minimum size limit.
Rainbow Trout	★★★★☆	Stocked annually. Best time to fish is within the first few days after stocking.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
NOLIN RIVER LAKE 5,795 acres (Grayson, Edmonson and Hart counties) Northwestern Fisheries District		
Catfish	★★★★☆	Channel Catfish - 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. Flathead Catfish - lower number of fish than Channels but several large Flatheads (30+ lbs) harvested annually.
Crappie	★★★★☆	Solid population. Overall number not high but good proportion of 10-inch plus fish 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-foot 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 14-18 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 the 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.

NOLIN RIVER LAKE TAILWATER (Edmonson County - 7 miles of river until confluence with Green River)		SWFD
Black Bass	★★★☆☆	Largemouth and Spotted bass present in fair numbers in uppermost four miles of the tailwater. Smallmouth present, but in low numbers.
Catfish	★★★★☆	Channel Catfish very good especially after elevated lake releases. Flatheads less common, but good sizes available.
Rock Bass	★★★★☆	All sizes available. Best numbers are in the uppermost 4 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 Hybrid Striped Bass	★★★☆☆	High number of White Bass in spring from mid-March to mid-April, but catches can be sporadic; 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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
OHIO RIVER (continued)		
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	★★☆☆☆	Mid-summer 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.

PAINTSVILLE LAKE and TAILWATER 1,139 acres (Morgan and Johnson counties) Eastern Fisheries District

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.

Brown Trout	★★★☆☆	First stocked in 2021. Annual stockings will continue in late winter. These fish survive summer water temperatures to carry over and grow to larger size. Note: statewide regulation is 16-inch minimum length limit.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Large catfish present in low density in upper lake areas like Patoker boat ramp access. Good number of 18- to 24-inch fish can be found in the lower lake around riprap shoreline areas and islands.
Crappie	★★★☆☆	White Crappie are the dominant species of crappie available with individuals sampled up to 15 inches. This fishery also contains "blacknose" Black Crappie up to 10-12 inches. In early spring, larger fish can be found on brush piles and laydowns near the shoreline and in shallow water. Excellent locations for spring fishing extend from the Patoker boat ramp to lower Sandlick; however, fish are available lake wide. The 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" Black Crappie were stocked in 2022 and 2023.
Hybrid Striped Bass	★★★☆☆	Low density population. Stocked for first time in 2015. A second stocking occurred in 2020 and these fish are now reaching 18-20 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	★★★☆☆	This lake has a moderate density population with fewer number of fish greater than 15 inches. Occasional fish up to 22 inches are available. March is a popular time for catching lunker 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.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
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PAINTSVILLE LAKE and TAILWATER (continued)

Walleye



Fish present up to 28 inches with potential for trophy size but few in number. Population numbers have slowly decreased over time. Smaller fish still showing up in fair number in lower lake sections as well as Open Fork. Look for active fish to be suspended in March around 8 foot depth near lower lake islands or mid lake standing timber. May and October are good months to fish with live night crawlers on a jig head fished off the bottom. During summer, target weed bed edges where they transition from shallow shelves to deeper water with minnows, night crawlers, or jiggging spoons. Walleye are stocked annually.

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 a decent number of Bluegill greater than 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 angler catch rates. Fishing around fallen trees and beaver huts with nightcrawlers should prove successful. **Note: 12-inch minimum size limit on catfish.**

Crappie



Low overall number, 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 a good number 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.

PIKEVILLE CITY LAKE 24 acres (Pike County)

Eastern Fisheries District

Channel Catfish



Decent number of 12- to 15-inch fish with some over 20 inches available. Stocked in even-numbered years.

Crappie



Average numbers. Most fish between 6-8 inches.

Largemouth Bass



Great destination for trophy bass. Good number of fish over 15 inches with great potential for large fish over 20 inches. **Note: catch and release only regulation remains in effect at this lake. All Largemouth bass must be released immediately.**

Rainbow Trout



Trout are stocked annually during the months of March and November (2,500 total). Good location for paddlecraft with some bank access. **Note: electric motor only.**

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 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. The numerous 7- to 10-inch fish seen in 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 nearshore 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. 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 best late May through June. Success can be hit or miss depending on weather and flow.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
SHANTY HOLLOW LAKE 135 acres (Warren and Edmonson counties) Southwestern Fisheries District		
Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 10 feet.		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number of 6-inch plus fish. Fish 8-10 feet deep on brushpiles, 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 brushpiles in spring; deeper brush in late winter and summer.
Largemouth Bass	★★★☆☆	Good number of fish under 15 inches.
Redear Sunfish	★★★☆☆	Lower density population overall, but larger fish available. Fish up shallow mid-March through mid-April, then at deeper depths near thermocline by early summer.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
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 to use at this lake.
Largemouth Bass	★★☆☆☆	Population continues to improve. There are plenty of chances to catch a good number of fish, but the size is still small overall. 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; 6-fish daily limit.
SPURLINGTON LAKE	27 acres (Taylor County)	Southwestern Fisheries District
Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 7 feet.		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number of 6-inch plush fish, with 8-inch plus available.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	All sizes present. Stocked in even-numbered years. Sizeable bullhead population with good number of fish 12-14 inches.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Better than average number of larger fish (15-inch plus). Excellent big bass (20-inch plus) opportunities.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Good number of fish overall; with 10-inch plus available.
TAYLORSVILLE LAKE	3,050 acres (Spencer, Anderson and Nelson counties)	Central Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	Good number 6- to 7-inch fish around standing timber in coves.
Catfish	★★★★☆	<u>Blue Catfish</u> population stable; fish over 40 inches possible. Blue Catfish are stocked annually. Fish with live bait and cut bait (open water areas) <u>Channel Catfish</u> numerous in all sizes; look for bigger fish in the timber in spring, head of creeks in fall, points next to river or creek channel any time. <u>Flathead Catfish</u> are present in good numbers.
Crappie	★★★★☆	Very good number of 7- to 9-inch fish. Good number of fish present from 10 to 13 inches. Note: 10-inch size limit.
Hybrid Striped Bass	★★★☆☆	Hybrid Striped Bass numbers remain stable with good number of fish greater than 15 inches. In spring and fall, fish in the headwaters of the lake. Look for jumps early and late in day July-September. Fish sampled over 10 pounds. Hybrids are stocked annually.
Largemouth Bass	★★★★☆	Good spawns in 2022 and 2023. Good number of 12- to 17-inch fish present; fish over 20 inches available. Best in timber coves; concentrate effort on primary points on main lake and secondary points in creeks.
Saugeye	★★★★☆	Good number of harvestable-size (≥14 inch) Saugeye, with fish up to 25 inches possible. Saugeye concentrate in high numbers in the Salt River above the lake during the spring and fall. Fish stocked annually.
White Bass	★★★★☆	Good number in Salt River above the lake in spring (with good flow from rains) and also in the fall; many 8- to 12-inch fish present.

Location/Species	Forecast	Comments
WASHBURN LAKE 18 acres (Ohio County)		Northwestern Fisheries District
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	Moderate number; 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 jettys using nightcrawlers, chicken liver, or strawberry chicken about a foot off of 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 but several 20+-inch fish in the lake. Target woody structure 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 popeye jigs.
WEST FORK DRAKES RESERVOIR 88 acres (Simpson County)		Southwestern Fisheries District
Summertime (mid-June through September) oxygen levels are too low to support fish below 8 feet.		
Bluegill	★★★★☆	Good number of 6- to 7-inch fish, with some 8-inch plus fish available.
Channel Catfish	★★★☆☆	All sizes available. Stocked in even-numbered years. Fishing best at night near creek channel.
Crappie	★★★☆☆	Good number of fish, but will have to weed through smaller fish to find larger fish.
Largemouth Bass	★★★☆☆	Average number of 12-inch plus fish, but few fish over 15 inches.
Muskie	★★★☆☆	Fish stocked in creek below the dam. Fishing best in deeper holes from dam to Barren River confluence year-round using bucktails and jerkbaits.
Redear Sunfish	★★★★☆	Good number of 6- to 8-inch fish; limited number of larger fish.
WOOD CREEK LAKE 672 acres (Laurel County)		Southeastern Fisheries District
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.		
Bluegill	★★★☆☆	Low to moderate density population with decent number of 6- to 7-inch fish.
Channel Catfish	★★☆☆☆	Good number of 12- to 18-inch fish present. Stocked in odd-numbered years.
Crappie	★★☆☆☆	Moderate number of smaller fish in the 7- to 8-inch range with some larger fish present. Target areas with woody cover in the middle and upper portions of the lake.
Largemouth Bass	★★★☆☆	Moderate to high density population composed primarily of 10- to 12-inch fish. Number of big fish has improved the last few years, with some fish over 20 inches present. Target bigger bass in the upper arms of the lake.
Rainbow Trout	★★☆☆☆	Stocked annually in February and October. Most fish in the 10- to 13-inch range.
Redear Sunfish	★★☆☆☆	Low numbers of fish make up the population with most fish under 8 inches, but some larger fish available. Try targeting them in the mid and upper lake areas.
Spotted Bass	★☆☆☆☆	Low density population with few fish exceeding 10 inches. Although Spotted Bass can be found in all areas of the lake, the middle and lower lake areas hold better numbers.

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 7.0-7.5 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 pond weeds have increased in the last two years increasing available habitat.
Channel Catfish	★★★★☆	Quality size distribution and density of catfish exists 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 dropoffs 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 35 pounds. 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 number of 15- to 20-inch fish. Fish over 21 inches are being caught in the spring and fall. Growth rates have increased in recent years. Beds of curly leaf pond weed continue to expand lake wide improving forage availability and cover. Popular lake for tournament fishing. Bigger bass are often caught in the headwaters in early spring as water begins to warm up.
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 2024

Blue catfish	During the summer, fish along the main river channel with minnows, cut shad/skipjack herring, and stink baits. An alternative bait option is pieces of silver carp. One might jump in your boat or ask a bow fisherman for one. Winter-time trophy fishing is becoming increasingly popular.
Channel catfish	In spring, fish with leeches or night crawlers around rip rap. 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	<p>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.</p> <p>In spring fish shallow with a Rapala #11 or #13 gold with black back, and floating or shallow diving stick baits. Black/brown or black/blue ½ ounce jig with #11 or #1 pork frog in the yellow mustard flowers in the backs of embayments. Around woody structure use a spinner bait, or plastic lizards either pumpkin or june bug color. Shaky head jigs tipped with finesse worms make an excellent search lure for shallow bass.</p> <p>During summer, fish ledges near river channels with Carolina-rigged and Texas-rigged soft plastics, and deep-diving crank baits. 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.</p> <p>During fall, fish along main lake ledges around stumps and brush with shad-color or and blue/chartreuse color crank baits. Use top water baits (zara spook or devil 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 spinner baits around main lake stumps.</p> <p>In recent years we have seen very little submerged aquatic vegetation (grass). However, if the grass comes back, top water baits such as spooks, stick baits, plastic frogs, and buzz baits are great choices. Plastics, such as worms, and spinner baits are also good when fishing the edges of the weed beds.</p>
Sauger	Troll mainlake 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 (US Highway 79).
White bass	Fish the jumps from July – September with slab spoons or white roostertails.

Fishing Tips for Kentucky and Barkley Tailwaters 2024

Blue and channel catfish	Best time is in May-June using cut bait or live bait fishing just off the bottom.
Sauger	Fish $\frac{3}{4}$ 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 1-2 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.
Invasive carp	If you want to catch invasive 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 18-24 inches above the end of the line, 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.