Everything will be biting this weekend

BY PHILLIP GENTRY
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Upstate anglers will have a hard time deciding on which lake they should fish during the long weekend ahead of them.

With three days off and three local reservoirs reporting good catches of just about everything that swims, the best choice may be to fish them all.

Add in the full moon that will peak at the end of the week and high temperatures in the upper 70's and it's hard to ask for a better fishing scenario.

Let's take a look at what some local fishing guides recommend for those who plan to hit the water in the next few days.



PHILLIP GENTRY | SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

With the long Memorial Day weekend ahead, deciding which of the Upstate lakes to fish will be harder than catching fish once you get there.

LAKE JOCASSEE

Steve Pietrykowski of Fishski Business Charters in Seneca reported that he had witnessed some good top-water schooling action from spotted bass in the backs of Jocassee's long tributaries. Though he has not targeted them yet this year, the guide suggested the full moon was going to find largemouth bass on the beds in these tributaries in 30-40 feet of water.

Pietrykowski stated the trout fishing on Jocassee has been phenomenal over the past week.

LAKE KEOWEE

Brad Fowler of Fowler's Fishing Guide Service in Pendleton said the spotted bass fishing on Lake Keowee has been good over the last few weeks with early top-water action taking place off long tapered points from the Oconee Nuclear Station to South Cove Landing. Later in the day, the guide is catching bass in scattered locations using drop-shot plastic worm rigs. He suggested looking in the backs of pockets and creeks for bass still on the beds.

LAKE HARTWELL

Bill Plumley of Capt. Bill's Fishing Adventures in Townville said it doesn't really matter where you fish on Lake Hartwell this weekend, as everything is biting.

After a long drought, Hartwell finally reached full pool at 660 feet over the last week. Plumley suggested that anglers looking for both largemouth and spotted bass should target the submerged grass and weeds now under water with the rising lake level. With many species of fish having just completed their spring spawn, the shallows are full of fry and baitfish, and Plumley recommended casting any minnow imitating lure around long points that had submerged grass on them.

The bite for striped bass and hybrids has been excellent of late. Plumley said he has had the best luck from the forks of the Seneca and Tugaloo Rivers down to the dam. He prefers to free line live herring, indicating that most of the fish were holding near shore early in the morning and out in the lake later in the day. He said the fish were not holding deep, usually within 20 feet of the surface no matter what depth water they were over.

The full moon in May is traditionally the best time to target bream species, particularly bluegills and shellcrackers. Plumley indicated that he has better luck using worms for bait to catch shellcrackers and live crickets to catch bluegill.

Finally, Plumley targets Hartwell's numerous eating-sized channel catfish in water less than 15 feet deep anywhere along the bank in coves and creeks. Channel catfish will hit worms, crickets and his favorite, Hoss'Hawg Catfish dip bait.

Be safe and good luck this weekend. Let us know how you do by sending in photos of your catch.

PHILLIP GENTRY can be reached by e-mail at pgentry6@bellsouth.net.