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# Fishing Forecast

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The Southeastern N.C. Coast and Ocracoke Island on the Outer Banks have produced excellent catches during the past few days.

Numerous king mackerel to 40 pounds have been boated out of Wrightsville Beach and other sportfishing ports. Coastal piers in the southeastern counties have had catches of up to 20 large kings per day.

Pier anglers also are taking large pompano and whiting.

A terrific run of trophy-sized red drum has taken place at Ocracoke Island. Both surfcasters and anglers fishing from boats have scored big during the spree.

**Lake Norma:** Plentiful white perch concentrated in schools 14-20 feet deep in the coves. Smallish spotted bass are mixed in with the perch. They're hitting earthworms, minnows, threadfin shad and, small spoons and jigs. Small spotted and largemouth bass around docks on green jigs.

**Lake Wylie:** Largemouth, chasing schools of shad in the backs of creeks, on topwater lures. Much improved for crappie on minnows worked around cover 15-20 feet deep. White perch during early morning on minnows fished 15-30 feet down. Channel catfish on cut white perch.

**Mountain Island Lake:** Increasing catches of crappie on minnows. Bream on crickets, catfish on crawlers, cut baits, stinkbaits.

**Union County Lakes:** Bream at all the municipal reservoirs on crickets, earthworms. Crappie at Cane Creek Park on minnows.

**High Rock, Tuckertown, Badin, Tillery, Blewett Falls:** Striped bass uplake at Tillery near the Badin Dam on Bill Norman lures. Crappie around increasingly shallow cover at all impoundments, mainly on minnows. Blue catfish in the Pee Dee River below Blewett Falls Dam on crawlers, cut baits, stinkbaits.

**Lakes Hickory, Rhodhiss:** Crappie on trolled jigs at Rhodhiss. Little activity at Hickory.

**Lake James:** Improving almost daily for smallmouth bass on shiners, small lures worked around points. Crappie on minnows.

**Fontana Lake:** Smallmouth on crankbaits cast to the shoreline during early morning and late afternoon. During midday hours the smallmouth are hitting Natural Tyke lures trolled about 30 feet off the shoreline.

**Lake Wateree:** Crappie at creek mouths and in brush 10-15 feet deep on jigs, minnows. Catfish on drift-fished cut baits and shiners. Largemouth on crankbaits worked near schools of shad.

**Lake Murray:** Stripers from the dam up to mid-lake. They're being caught trolling, on live baits and on lures cast to surface-feeding schools. Catfish on cut baits, stinkbaits worked around humps. Bream, shellcrackers on crawlers, earthworms fished along the shoreline.

**Santee-Cooper Lakes:** Improved for largemouth around shallow cover on soft plastic lures. Crappie on minnows in brush 10-12 feet deep. Bream in deeper cover on crickets, earthworms, small jigs.

**Lake Thurmond:** Good for stripers, hybrids at the mouths of the Keg, Little and Savannah Rivers on topwater lures cast to surfacing schools. Crappie in growing numbers on minnows fished in cover 30 feet deep.

**Lake Hartwell:** Stripers, hybrids 50-80 feet deep in the main channel on live herring. Some fish are schooling on the surface around bridges on the Seneca River and 26-Mile Creek. Largemouth bass on topwater lures worked around main lake points and in the creeks. Catfish 20-30 feet deep on cut herring.

**Lake Keowee:** Largemouth and spotted bass 10-15 feet down around main lake points on drop-shot rigs.

**Outer Banks:** Nags Head area: Blues to 3 pounds, puppy drum, red drum and small speckled trout in the surf and at piers; Oregon Inlet area: Limits of blackfin tuna, plus dolphin offshore. Numerous false albacore; Hatteras Island: Big red drum at night in the Cape Point surf at Buxton. Black drum, speckled trout at the jetties at the former lighthouse site. Blues almost everywhere in the surf. Whiting in the Avon area. Blackfin tuna, sailfish and wahoo offshore of Hatteras Village along with some sailfish, wahoo. Big reds in the inlet. Blues, gray and speckled trout in the sound; Ocracoke Island: Scads of huge red drum in the inlet and surf. Puppy drum, speckled trout, whiting in the surf; Morehead City area: Good for king mackerel on the east side of the Cape Lookout Shoals, at 30-Minute Rock, 1700 Rock and East Rock. Blackfin tuna, sailfish, wahoo offshore. Blues, Spanish mackerel to 4 pounds and albacore from Cape Lookout to Atlantic Beach. Spots in the shipping channel and Turning Basin. Reds are being boated in the sound by sightcasters.

**Southeastern N.C. Coast:** King mackerel to 40 pounds in near-shore waters, especially around artificial reefs. Wahoo to 50 pounds offshore, along with blackfin tuna and dolphin. Limit catches of grouper, vermillion snapper for bottom fishermen. Flounder, gray trout, red drum at the reefs. Flounder, reds, speckled trout in Carolina Beach Inlet, Bald Head Island and Southport waters. Up to 20 king mackerel per day at piers, along with large pompano and whiting.

**S.C. Coast:** Grand Strand area: Black and red drum in the creeks and at the Murrells Inlet and Georgetown jetties on a variety of baits, including sandfleas. Flounder in Murrells Inlet on mud minnows. Fair for trout in the creeks behind Pawley's Island. Scattered Spanish mackerel at the piers. Blackfin tuna, increasing numbers of king mackerel offshore; Charleston area: Good for spottails, trout in the backwaters on both lures and live baits, especially mud minnows and shrimp. Flounder near the creek mouths on finger mullet, mud minnows. Scattered black drum, blues, whiting at Folly Beach Pier; Beaufort area: Spottails in the backwaters on shrimp, menhaden, cut mullet. Trout in the Hilton Head section on shrimp. Tarpon over structure in deep water on live menhaden.

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