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Fishing Forecast

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Offshore trolling action continues to be exceptional along the Carolinas coast, especially out of Oregon Inlet and Hatteras Village.

The catch includes billfish, blackfin tuna, dolphin, some very large wahoo and yellowfin tuna.

Lake Norman: Plentiful white perch all across the reservoir on minnows fished vertically over humps 15-30 feet down. Surface-feeding spotted bass in shaded coves on small crankbaits, jerkbaits. Improving for crappie on minnows. Night-fishing around docks and rocky points for spotted bass also is producing.

Lake Wylie: Scads of white perch on minnows worked around sandy bottom 20 feet deep. Largemouth bass, moving into the creek arms and hitting flukes, topwater lures and twister-tail grubs cast to surfacing schools. Catfish around humps 5-20 feet deep on crawlers, cut baits.

Union County Lakes: Cane Creek Park: Largemouth on soft plastic lures; Lee: Crappie on minnows trolled 20 feet down on double rigs.

Mountain Island Lake: Bream, catfish along the shoreline on traditional baits: crickets and earthworms for the bream, crawlers, chicken livers, cut baits for the catfish.

High Rock, Tuckertown, Badin, Tillery: White perch in surface schools on small jigs, spinners, spoons. Improving steadily for crappie, mainly on minnows.

Lakes Hickory, Rhodhiss: Very improved for crappie on jigs, minnows worked 10-20 feet down around brush, docks. Some largemouth on artificial worms.

Lake James: Catches of crappie are increasing, mostly on minnows. Some smallmouth bass off the points on shiners.

Fontana Lake: Smallmouth on Andrew Minnow lures, small crankbaits trolled 25-35 feet off the shoreline. Largemouth and smallmouth in mixed schools, feeding on the surface uplake between Big Island and Chambers Creek.

Lake Wateree: Crappie around brush 12-18 feet deep in a stretch between Beaver Creek and Wateree Creek. Largemouth around deep structure on jigs, Carolina-rigged artificial worms. Catfish on cut baits drift-fished 10-20 feet deep.

Lake Murray: Good to excellent near the dam and towers for striped bass. Best tactic is using live baits 35-50 feet deep over humps that are in 50-85 feet of water. Trolling Road Runner-type plugs also is producing. Plentiful bream along the shoreline on crickets, earthworms. Catfish at night around the islands on crawlers, cut baits.

Santee Cooper Lakes: Crappie 12-20 feet deep around brush and other cover on minnows. Bream near shallow vegetations and brush on crickets, earthworms. Catfish, moving back and forth on and off the shallows, on cut herring, perch and shad.

Lake Thurmond: Very strong for hybrids, stripers, especially uplake near the Russell Dam tailrace, on cut baits. Bream, shellcrackers along the banks on crickets, earthworms, small Beetlespin lures. Crappie along the river channel on lures and minnows trolled 25 feet deep.

Lake Hartwell: Hybrids, stripers in good numbers at the reservoir's lower end on bucktails, other lures trolled deep with lead-core line. The fish also are hitting live baits on down-rods. Improving for largemouth in surface schools on topwaer lures. Catfish off deep points on crawlers, cut herring.

Lake Jocassee: Fair for trout in the main portion of the impoundment on herring, shiners and trolled spoons.

Lake Keowee: Largemouth, spotted bass off main channel points on drop-shot rigs worked 30-40 feet deep.

Outer Banks: Nags Head area: Cobia to 52 pounds off piers. Blues, puppy drum, large whiting in the surf and at piers; Oregon Inlet: Billfish, blackfin tuna, limits of dolphin and yellowfin tuna offshore. Albacore, blues, Spanish mackerel closer in. Puppy drum in the surf; Hatteras Island: Billfish, limits of dolphin and big wahoo off Hatteras Village. Blues, Spanish mackerel in the surf at Cape Point near Buxton. Blues, puppy drum, Spanish mackerel and whiting in the surf near Hatteras Village. Flounder in the sound near the Village; Ocracoke Island: Trophy-sized red drum by anglers fishing from boats in Ocracoke Inlet. Blues, flounder, puppy drum in the surf; Morehead City area: Excellent for wahoo offshore near Big Rock, along with blackfin tuna, dolphin and sailfish. Spanish mackerel all along the beach. Albacore from the Cape Lookout jetties to Rough Point. Blues, Spanish mackerel, spots, pompano in the surf and at piers.

Southeastern N.C. Coast: Dolphin, king mackerel, Sailfish, wahoo offshore. Flounder, puppy drum in the backwaters and in the lower Cape Fear River. Flounder, reds at the near-shore artificial reefs. Scattered black drum, blues, flounder, pompano, puppy drum and whiting in the surf and at piers.

S.C. Coast: Little River area: Flounder, reds, trout in the Intracoastal Waterway and creeks on live baits. Flounder at Cherry Grove Pier; Grand Strand area: Black drum, reds, sheepshead at the Murrells Inlet and Winyah Bay (Georgetown) jetties on live baits. Black and red drum in the creeks on cut baits. Blues, croaker, ladyfish and whiting in the surf and at piers. Large Spanish mackerel at piers on live bait rigs. Billfish, blackfin tuna, dolphin, king mackerel and wahoo offshore; Charleston area: Continuing excellent catches of trout on live shrimp worked around shell rakes. Flounder in the inlets and at creek mouths on finger mullet, mud minnows. Spottails, or reds, all across the backwaters on shrimp, Gulp! and ZMAN Jerkshad lures. Tarpon in Bull's Bay, at the Charleston Jetties and at North Edisto Inlet on menhaden, mullet; Beaufort area: Reds, "tailing" while they feed in the marsh flats, on crabs and shrimp: and lure imitations of the two. Trout in the Hilton Head section on live shrimp.


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