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Fishing Forecast

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Dozens of red drum up to 50 inches are being caught in Pamlico Sound.

Anglers fishing out of Cedar Island and Oriental are using cut baits to boat trophy-class catches, plus smaller keeper-size puppy drum.

The red drum is North Carolina's state saltwater fish.

Offshore activity generally has been disrupted the past few days because of rough seas created by Hurricane Igor near Bermuda. However, conditions are forecast to be much better by this weekend.

Lake Norman: Plentiful white perch on live baits worked around humps 20-40 feet deep. Largemouth and spotted bass on crankbaits cast to cuts and docks near where schools of shad are on the surface. Catfish, moving into the creeks, on cut baits.

Lake Wylie: Good to excellent for catfish, especially channels, on drift-fished cut bait. White perch on minnows worked 25 feet deep over hard bottom. Largemouth near schools of shad in the backs of creeks. The bass, feeding in surface packs, are striking bladed lures and small grubs. Improving for crappie on minnows fished around cover 15-20 feet deep.

Mountain Island Lake: Bream, catfish just off the shoreline on traditional baits.

Union County Lakes: Good for largemouth at Cane Creek Park, Lee and Twitty on soft plastic lures. Crappie also are hitting at Cane Creek, bream and catfish at Twitty.

High Rock, Tuckertown, Badin, Tillery, Blewett Falls: White perch in surface schools on Ice Flies, small jigs and spinners. Crappie action is picking up on these Yadkin/Pee Dee River reservoirs. Blue and flathead catfish in the Pee Dee below Blewett Falls on chicken livers, crawlers, cut baits.

Lakes Hickory, Rhodhiss: Steadily improving for crappie at Hickory. Good for catfish at Rhodhiss.

Lake James: Improving for crappie on minnows. Scattered smallmouth on shiners, small crankbaits cast to the points.

Fontana Lake: Smallmouth bass are starting to hit crankbaits, jerkbaits cast to the shoreline during early morning, late afternoon.

Lake Wateree: Crappie, transitioning from deep brush into creek channels, on minnows trolled 10-15 feet deep. Dutchman, Singleton and Wateree Creeks are producing best. Catfish on cut baits drifted around flats 10-15 feet deep.

Lake Murray: Excellent for striped bass from Spence Island to the dam on live herring fished 45-65 feet deep around humps and off points. Stripers are starting to feed in surfacing schools. Plentiful bream and shellcrackers along the shoreline during the full moon period on crickets, earthworms. Catfish on stink baits, cut herring and white perch.

Santee Cooper Lakes: Excellent for bream around shallow vegetations on crickets, earthworms. Crappie around brush 12-20 feet down on minnows. Blue catfish, moving in and out of the shallows both day and night, on cut herring, perch and shad.

Lake Thurmond: Stripers, hybrids in surfacing school across the reservoir's lower section on a variety of topwater lures and Ice Flies. Bream, shellcrackers 7-10 feet deep off the shoreline on crickets, earthworms, small Beetlespin lures.

Lake Hartwell: Stripers, hybrids, holding 50-75 feet deep and hitting live herring along the river channels and off the points. Largemouth on surface lures worked over deep points. Flathead catfish 25-35 feet deep on drift-fished live bream.

Lake Jocassee: Fair for trout on shiners fished 90 feet deep at the thermocline.

Lake Keowee: Fair for largemouth, spotted bass on drop-shot rigs worked 40 feet down off points. Some surface schooling activity is starting to take place.

Outer Banks: Nags Head area: Spots, small trout at piers; Hatteras Island: Fair for blues, keeper-sized flounder, puppy drum in the surf from Avon to Hatteras Inlet. Flounder in Pamlico Sound near Hatteras Village; Ocracoke Island: Blues, puppy drum, Spanish mackerel, spot and whiting in the surf; Morehead City area: Lots of blues, Spanish mackerel from Beaufort Inlet to the Cape Lookout Shoals. Large wahoo, blackfin tuna, sailfish offshore when sea conditions are favorable. Blues, Croaker, pompano, Spanish mackerel, coolers of spots and whiting at piers. Reds in the marshes.

Southeastern N.C. Coast: Wahoo, to 50 pounds offshore, along with sailfish and also terrific catches of bottom species such as grouper. Flounder, Spanish mackerel on the near-shore reefs. Flounder in the lower Cape Fear River near Southport and in the Intracoastal Waterway at Ocean Isle. Reds, speckled trout in the backwaters at Bald Head Island. Black drum, blues, pompano, Spanish mackerel, spots and whiting at piers.

S.C. Coast: Little River area: Flounder, reds, trout in the creeks on mud minnows, mullet. Flounder, pompano, Spanish mackerel at Cherry Grove Pier; Grand Strand area: Black and red drum in the creeks and at the jetties at Murrells Inlet during the changing tides on cut baits, sand fleas. Big reds, sheepshead at the Winyah Bay (Georgetown) jetties on traditional baits. Improving for flounder in the backwaters on mud minnows. Blues, croaker, Spanish mackerel, trout and whiting in the surf and at piers.

Charleston area: Spottails, or reds, all across the estuaries, around docks and rock piles and at the mouths of feeder creeks on mud minnows, mullet, shrimp. Medium-sized trout around shell rakes on live shrimp. Good numbers of tarpon in Bull's Bay, at the Charleston jetties and in North Edisto Inlet on large menhaden and mullet. Flounder at the creek mouths on mud minnows.

Beaufort area: Spottails on crabs, shrimp, flies. Trout on live shrimp worked under floats.

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