FISHING REPORT

Lake Jocassee: Trout: Fish can be caught from the surface down to 50 feet by anglers fishing trolling spoons and shiners; trolling large shiners seems to be the best way to avoid small fish. The bite should continue to improve for the next few months. Black bass: Fishing under schools of bait is also a good bet. Surface activity is being reported, and bass will take a lure thrown right on their head after they show themselves. Red Eye Shad, Float-n-fly rigs and jerkbaits will all catch fish.

Lake Keowee: Largemouth and spotted bass: Capt. Chris "Fishboy" Schuber reports he has been catching spotted bass on lower end of lake using shakey head worms in 25 feet of water. He has also caught some bass on Carolina rigged worms fished off main lake points in 25-30 feet of water. Watermelon seed color has been working. Also try Nemire lures Red Ripper Spoons as temperatures get cold.

Lake Hartwell: Striped and hybrid bass: For best results, free line gizzard shad or large herring up the Seneca, Tugaloo or 26 Mile Creek. Pietrykowski reports that if birds can be located, striper will be found, too. Largemouth bass: Fair. Guide Brad Fowler advises that fish are spread out but anglers should key on long deep coves and pockets. The major creeks are good places to fish as long as deep water can be found nearby. Jigs, shakey head worms and crankbaits are all working. Catfish: Fish cut bait in 15-30 feet of water up creeks that have some water flowing into them. Crappie: Try fishing minnows or jigs around brush piles in 25 feet of water. The key at this time of year is working whatever bait or lure you are using very slowly.

Lake Russell: Largemouth and spotted bass: Jigging spoons are the artificial lures of choice, and minnows also will catch fish. Perch and crappie: Fish medium minnows just off the bottom and expect a mixed bag with some bass and catfish thrown in, too. Catfish: Look in 20-25 feet of water around bait schools and fish cut bait on the bottom. Striped bass: Anglers can fish for striped bass by looking for seagulls, then casting half-ounce bucktails toward the birds or pulling free lined live herring through the same areas. Although striper don't seem to have showed up in decent numbers yet, they should arrive soon.

Lake Thurmond: Striped and hybrid bass: The Clark's Hill Herring Hut reports striped and hybrid bass are feeding very well up the Little River arms around Big Heart Creek, Germany Creek and Holiday Park. Follow the birds to locate fish and down line live herring in 30 feet of water. Crappie: The Herring Hut reports crappie are feeding well 15 feet down around brushpiles in 28-35 feet of water. Minnow and jigs will both work. Bream and perch: The Herring Hut reports that below the Savannah River Dam deep holes in the river are holding good numbers of yellow perch and bream as well as crappie. Worms and minnows fished near the bottom will both catch fish. Black bass: Buckeye Lures of Augusta, Ga., reports fish are feeding very shallow around broom sage and other brush in the creeks. They have followed the bait toward the banks and can be caught in 5 or less feet of water. Small crankbaits such as Shad Raps and Team Daiwa Minnows and spot removers will catch fish shallow. When the water temperature drops a few degrees and stays below 55, fish will pull out into warmer water in the deeper ditches where they can be caught on lead headed flukes. To catch pressured fish in the clear water using Gamma fluorocarbon line is important during the cold months.

Lake Greenwood: Largemouth bass: Fish crankbaits and worms in 8-15 feet of water. Striped bass: Sportsman's Friend reports that for the next couple of months the key to catching striped bass on Lake Greenwood is to look for the birds and fish around them. Jigging spoons and free lined live herring will both work – there is almost no down lining right now. For the most part, drifting is the most productive method of finding fish. Whole small threadfin shad and small pieces of cut gizzard shad are working well. Shrimp is still catching a few, but it doesn't perform as well in cold water as it does warm water. Catfish: Drifting whole small threadfin shad or pieces of cut gizzard shad is the most productive method. Crappie: Try minnows around deeper brushpiles.

■ --SCDNR