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Fishing Forecast

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Bream, catfish, crappie and largemouth bass are hitting well on the Catawba and Yadkin/Pee Dee River lakes.

Blewett Falls, Lake Tillery and Lake Hickory are producing especially good catches of bream, which are biting crickets best.

Along the coast of both Carolinas action is picking up, including a splendid offshore catch when sea conditions are favorable.

Lake Norman: Spotted bass, with some largemouth mixed in, on topwater plugs cast to points during early morning. Catfish in the backs of coves on cut baits. Crappie around cover 10 feet deep on minnows.

Lake Wylie: Largemouth on soft plastic lures in shoreline pockets and around docks. Improving for bream, but the crappie catch has dropped off. Catfish on cut bait around creek inflows.

High Rock, Tuckertown, Badin, Tillery, Blewett Falls: Plentiful bream on crickets, earthworms. Largemouth on artificial worms, crankbaits, spinnerbaits. American shad in the tailrace at Blewett Falls on jigs, Shad Dart lures. Catfish in the Pee Dee River below Blewett Falls Dam.

Lakes Hickory, Rhodhiss: Crappie on minnows at both reservoirs. Largemouth on a variety of lures worked along the shoreline. Striped bass uplake at Hickory near the Rhodhiss Dam tailrace on live baits.

Lake James: Good for walleye on crawlers affixed to Bear Paw rigs and cast to clay banks. Smallmouth bass on shiners, crankbaits and twister-tail grubs.

Fontana Lake: Smallmouth along the shoreline on jerkbaits, shiners. Walleye 5-10 feet deep in the Tsali area on crawlers cast to pockets of discolored water.

Lake Wateree: Crappie on trolled jigs. Largemouth on soft plastic lures in shoreline pockets in coves. Catfish on cut gizzard shad.

Lake Murray: Stripers in surface-feeding schools from mid-lake to the dam on topwater lures. Also on live herring trolled shallow across points under planer boards. Excellent for catfish in shallow water on cut herring. Bream and shellcrackers along the banks on crawlers. Crappie on trolled twister-tail jigs.

Santee Cooper Lakes: Very good for blue and channel catfish in the shallows on cut baits. Crappie around brushy cover 10-15 feet deep. Largemouth at both Lakes Marion and Moultrie on skirted spinnerbaits, topwater lures. Stripers in upper Lake Marion near the railroad trestle on cut bait.

Lake Hartwell: Largemouth on surface lures, spinnerbaits. Stripers, hybrids on free-lined live herring worked around the points. Catfish in the backs of creeks and main-lake coves on chicken livers, crawlers and cut herring.

Lake Jocassee: Largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass around shoreline brush on artificial worms. Trout on live baits, spoons fished 30-60 feet down.

Lake Keowee: Largemouth, spotted bass uplake near Gap Hill on artificial worms, crankbaits and dollflies. Topwater lures also are starting to produce.

Outer Banks: Nags Head area: Croaker in the surf and at piers; **Oregon Inlet:** Excellent for bigeye, bluefin and yellowfin tuna offshore, along with dolphin. Croaker, spot at the Bonner Bridge; **Hatteras Island:** Fine bottom-fishing off Hatteras Village for grouper, triggerfish. Blues, croaker, scattered flounder, spot, toadfish, and whiting in the surf and at piers; **Ocracoke Island:** Big red drum and plentiful whiting in the surf. Gray trout at Teach's Hole. Also, big reds for anglers in boats at Ocracoke Inlet. African pompano, king mackerel offshore; **Morehead City area:** Blackfin tuna, gaffer-sized dolphin and wahoo offshore, with the Swansboro Hole area producing especially well. Atlantic bonito at the artificial reefs off Atlantic Beach. False albacore at Cape Lookout. Blues, whiting in the surf and at piers. Reds, speckled trout in the marshes although the water is roiled.

Southeastern N.C. Coast: Blackfin tuna, dolphin and wahoo offshore. Black seabass and flounder at the artificial reefs. Flounder to 4 pounds in the lower Cape Fear River and at Snow's Cut near Carolina Beach. Reds, trout in the Bald Head Island creeks on live shrimp. Blues, Spanish mackerel, spot and whiting at piers.

S.C. Coast: Little River area: Reds, trout at the jetties. Blues, small flounder, whiting at Cherry Grove Pier; **Grand Strand area:** Excellent offshore for blackfin tuna, dolphin to 38 pounds and wahoo. Flounder, reds (or spottails) in Murrells Inlet on mud minnows. Big drum at the jetties at Huntington Beach State Park. Black drum, blues and Spanish mackerel at piers. Reds, trout in Winyah Bay at Georgetown and sheepshead at the jetties; **Charleston area:** Reds on the backwater flats and around docks and rock piles on mud minnows, plus a variety of lures. Sheepshead at bridge pilings, jetties and near-shore artificial reefs on clam strips, fiddler crabs and oysters. Flounder in the inlets on mud minnows.

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