McGuffin: Jocassee bass on the rise

BY PHILLIP GENTRY
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Monty McGuffin, the 'Ol Carolina Outdoorsman, leads the list of fishing reporters this week as he touted he has had some really good fishing outings of late on Lake Jocassee fishing top-water baits for bass.

"I believe the fish have already spawned based on what I saw in late March as well as the activity we had back in May," McGuffin said. "But that don't mean you can't catch them now.

"The last few trips I've made I've caught good numbers of largemouth bass, and a few of those fish were in the 8-pound class, the ones Jocassee is known for."

McGuffin said with Jocassee at full pool, all of the scrub grass, weeds and bushes that grew up inside the perimeter of the lake are now under water.

The best place to look for fish is in the backs of creeks and cuts on any of the winding tributaries. Any location where a creek deposits water into the lake would have been an oasis for plant growth during the drought, but is now a flooded jungle.

"Fish the backs of these creeks and cuts, even if there's no water coming in because there'll still be a flat with 10-20 feet of water on the bottom," McGuffin said. "On your way into or out of those creeks, also be on the lookout for blown-down trees (that) are either under the water or sticking out in the water.

"Bass love to hang out in the shade of those trees and ambush anything that comes close."

McGuffin's go-to bait for fishing both the creek outlets and blown-down trees is any top-water bait in a frog pattern. He suggests easing up on the area with your trolling motor so you don't spook the fish.

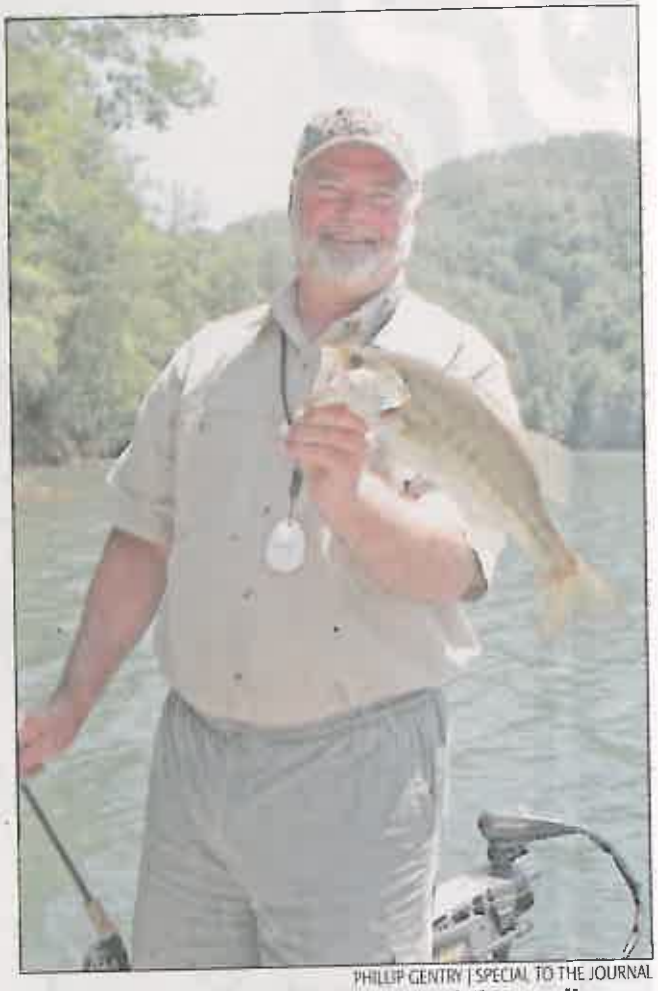
"Typically, you'll get one, maybe two casts to a specific area," he said. "If he's there and he's willing, he'll nail it on the first cast, provided you put your bait all the way into the back of the cut or lay it right next to an opening in a blown-down tree. Then it's time to move on to the next spot."

All four of the major creeks that feed Jocassee — Whitewater, Thompson, Horsepasture and Toxaway — are good bets to fish, as well as any of the their smaller tributaries.

"Start out fishing in North Carolina and work your way south," McGuffin said. "Just make sure you have a license for each state, because there is no reciprocal agreement."

For more updates from McGuffin, watch The Carolina Outdoorsman Show on Fox SportSouth on Sunday mornings 10:30 a.m. The show can also be seen Monday mornings at 4:30 a.m., and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m.

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Westminster's Monty McGuffin, host of The Carolina Outdoorsman Show, displays a Jocassee largemouth bass that hit a top-water lure.