

# Be sure to follow these fall fishing patterns

BY PHILLIP GENTRY  
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When the end of October rolls around, there are two things on Tim Blackwell's mind — baitfish and deer. On the days he's not sitting in a deer stand waiting on a big buck to wander by, he's out on one of the major reservoirs around the Upstate looking for baitfish.

"This time of year, fish get on a real predictable and dependable pattern," Blackwell said. "Fish are moving out of deep water into the shallows. It's very similar to the spring spawning run, except they are not moving in to spawn — they're following baitfish in to feed."

Blackwell said on some lakes, anglers can expect fish — including bass, crappie, and stripers — to be scattered up and down a tributary arm. On other lakes, the fish will be moving, but in more of a leap-frog fashion, and staging on brush piles, stake beds and natural wood cover along the route.

He gave two examples of this on either end of the spectrum. On Lake Hartwell, bass are glued to mostly manmade cover — stake beds and brush piles. Blackwell has been making the trip over to Hartwell to get some experience with the "forward scan" of his Garmin Live Scope sonar unit.

"Right now, I'm flipping a mophead jig with a junebug trailer into brush

piles," he said. "I am literally seeing the bigger bass on the screen and pitching the bait out in front of the boat to that fish and catching him while I watch it all unfold on the sonar."

While Blackwell has a pretty extensive list of brush piles and fallen logs that are located on Hartwell, he said other anglers can also locate fish with a decent set of electronics.

"Find the bait, find the fish," he said. "Then start looking for structure where bass will be holding and waiting on those baitfish to swim by. If you are more into crappie or striper fishing, you can cast jigs, flukes or troll live bait back in creeks that are loaded with bait and also catch plenty of fish."

Blackwell said the same principle, but a different tactic, will also work on Lake Keowee. The big difference is that almost all the fish you find are spotted bass, and they will orient more to rocky outcroppings or simply be on the move chasing baitfish.

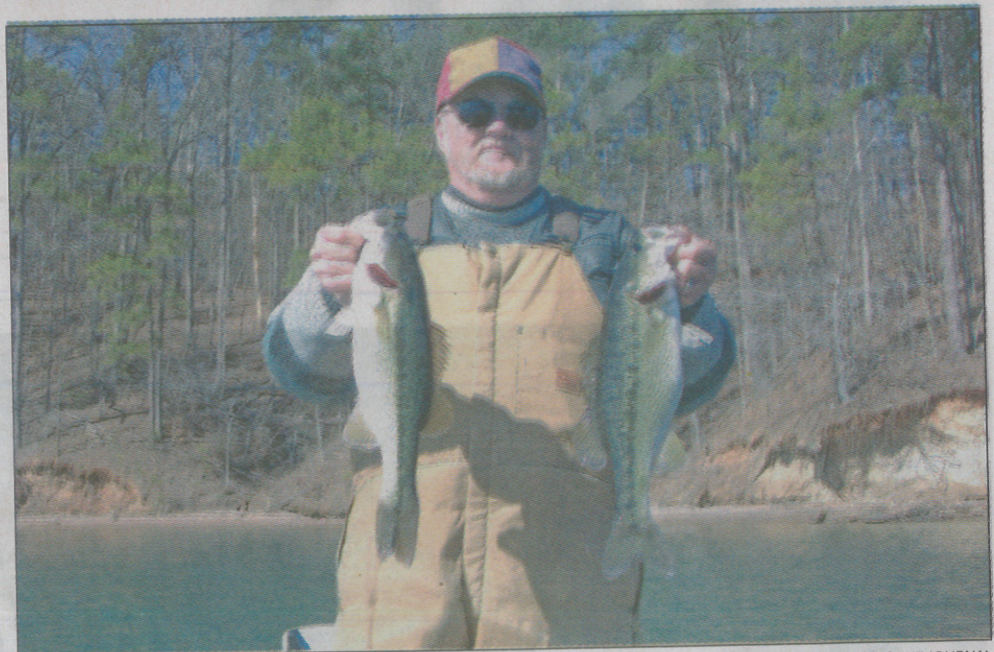
"Keowee is a drop-shot lake, like it or not," Black-

well said. "Early and late, you can get on a top-water bite almost year round, and that works especially in the fall."

Blackwell said he expects the fall pattern to hold up on area lakes until the water temperatures drop below 50 degrees. He said once temperatures drop down to 45 degrees, it's the start of the winter pattern. Once that happens, look for fish to head back out to deeper water and bunch up tightly around structure.

"At that point, they don't feed a whole lot," he said. "When you find them, you can usually catch a bunch of them, but they are bad to eat for only an hour or so and then cut off. There are ways to catch them, but it's not like the fall pattern."

**PHILLIP GENTRY** is the host of the "Upstate Outdoors" broadcast from noon to 2 p.m. Saturdays on **WORD 106.3 FM**. This week's guest will be South Carolina Department of Natural Resources deer project coordinator Charles Ruth. The show can be streamed live online at [1063word.radio.com](http://1063word.radio.com) or via podcast anytime.



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Successful fall fishing around Upstate lakes frequently means following baitfish into the backs of creeks and tributaries to catch fish.