

Bass fishing predictions for 2021

BY PHILLIP GENTRY
FOR THE JOURNAL

After 2020, it's good to have something to look forward to in the new year, and if you're a bass fisherman, you understand how fortunate you are to live in South Carolina.

Every corner of the state can boast some type of better-than-average bass-fishing potential, and the status of bass fishing has been on the rise in the Palmetto State for some time.

Much of this is due in part to some outstanding management of the resources by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and the other part is due to the anglers themselves. While the popularity of bass fishing in the state has exploded in the last 10 or so years — thanks to some high-profile tournaments — the everyday angler deserves a lot of credit for taking care of the resource by not overharvesting and practicing strict catch-and-release fishing.

For the coming year, here's a look at some of the high-potential bass-fishing venues:

TROPHY BASS — LAKE JOCASSEE

Lake Jocassee is not a lake you go to looking for numbers of bites on any given day, but of the half dozen give-or-take bites you get, there's some real potential for hooking an 8-pound-plus largemouth bass.

By lake management standards, Jocassee is a highly infertile lake, meaning the deep, clear waters don't offer much in the way of nutrient load that someplace like Santee-Cooper offers.

It does have a very strong forage base of blueback herring, which are protected from commercial harvest, and a multitude of stocked rainbow and brown trout.



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South Carolina has been blessed for many years with several black bass fisheries. That trend looks to continue into the new year.

Jocassee may not be much of a nursery — seeing that shallow in the mountain impoundment is something in the 20–40 foot range, as well as being subject to frequent level changes — but once a bass attains the size to eat herring, it can feed and grow and begin really nutrient loading on stocked trout.