

Taking a look at the advantages of fishing

BY PHILLIP GENTRY
FOR THE JOURNAL

With the summer heat hitting its peak, fishing may be the last thing on anyone's mind. But have you ever considered making the move to a kayak or giving kayak fishing a try?

A lot of Upstate residents may own kayaks but never give much thought to trying to fish from them.

A strong patron of the kayak fishing community is Carl Hudson of Pendleton. One of the primary reasons he prefers his plastic boat over a fiberglass one is for the solitude as well as the reliability.

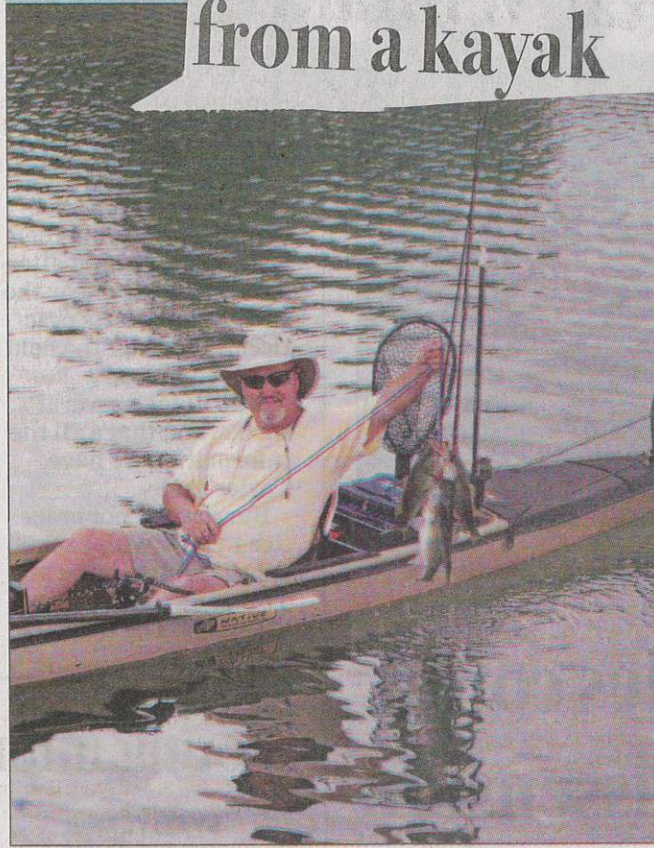
"I've always had a love for fishing out of paddleboats," Hudson said. "I tell folks my boat starts every time I go to the lake. I don't have to spend any money on fuel. I don't have to worry about my motor or other mechanical things breaking down, so on and so forth. The

main thing I like is I can get into places that other people just don't fish."

Even when fishing big public water like Hartwell or Keowee, Hudson feels like he still has a sizeable advantage over other anglers fishing from larger power boats. He passes on the need for speed and the desire to run all over the lake, looking for one bite here and one bite there. The paddleboat allows him to concentrate on one home area and target every big fish in it.

"Kayak anglers have an advantage when it comes to catching big fish," Hudson said. "The bigger boats tend to fish out on the main lake areas. They tend to fish just the open-water places that get picked over several times a week, maybe even every day. I like to fish in places where I can get in close around boat docks, marinas, grass beds and back in behind places that people usually don't think to fish — the overlooked spots. I've always enjoys

from a kayak



PHILLIP GENTRY | FOR THE JOURNAL

Kayak fishing is a great way to enjoy the water as well as target big fish that other anglers overlook.

fishing places that other anglers overlook." Hudson fishes for multi-

ple species of fish but admits he has an affinity for kayak bass fishing. Even

during the hottest parts of the summer — and tons of recreational traffic to deal with — he said catching trophy bass from his kayak is more common than most people think.

"A trophy bass is a homebody. He's not roving all over the lake," Hudson said. "So, the way I fish, from a kayak, I can get right in there with the solitary fish, especially around boat docks, humps, back ends of covers — the places where the bigger fish are going to be. I may only catch one or two in a day, but they're going to be better than average fish."

For those anglers who may be interested in kayak fishing but don't know where to start, fishing kayaks come in two flavors — sit-on tops and cockpit boats. Very few anglers are happy fishing from a cockpit-style boat.

Sit-on tops allow more freedom of movement and have scuppers to let water that will and does get in the boat drain out.

A one-piece, roto-mold-

ed boat is generally better than a two-piece seamed boat because eventually the seam will leak. It is better to buy a good used boat than a bad new boat. Holes or wear spots in a good used boat can be repaired cheaper than buying a new high-dollar boat.

Don't buy the biggest and best new kayak on the market when starting out. If you start with a good entry-level used boat and like the sport, you will want to go better — meaning pricier — in your next boat. Kayak anglers are always swapping out boats.

If you don't like the sport, a good used boat is easier to get your money back out of.

Remember to wear your life preserver every trip out on the water. With today's inflatables, there's no excuse not to.

PHILLIP GENTRY is a freelance outdoor writer who has been writing a wide variety of outdoor articles across the Southeast since 2004.