

April 10, 2019 - Bass Spawning update- Bait fishing for stripers

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Lake Powell Fish Report – April 10, 2019

Lake Elevation: 3568

Water temperature: 54-60 F

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The warm, calm weather that we have recently enjoyed was blown away by the strong two-day windstorm with cool temperatures. Before the wind, morning water temperature was as high as 60F. Now the lake temperature is back to the mid 50s which slows down the highly anticipated bass spawn. Expect to wait another week before bass go shallow and start making spawning beds. Bass spawning should peak from the last week of April through early May.

Bass fishing is solid as reported by the participants from the weekend bass tournament held at Wahweap. The winning weight (5 fish) was 16 pounds on Saturday and 18 pounds on Sunday. Most of the fish were caught in Wahweap, Navajo or Warm Creek. Some tournament anglers ran further uplake and caught more fish but they were of smaller size.

Crappie and walleye are being caught more often but they must be specifically targeted. Crappie are found in shallow muddy water and hit small jigs or grubs. Walleye are on the bottom at 10-20 feet and will hit s-l-o-w-l-y moving, dark colored, Ned Rigs. (Check out a discussion of Ned Rigs on the Fishing Forum at Wayneswords.com.)

Crappie will follow the same schedule. Hopefully some tumbleweeds blew into the water with the recent wind storm to give both bass and crappie some more spawning structure.

Striper schools are on the move. They can be in the backs of the canyons in 10-20 feet of water in the morning and then move out to deeper water later in the day. Once in deep water they are prone to come up from the depths to check out shallower humps looking for forage. A 40-foot hump in deep water can be a trolling target. Use shallow running rattletraps and crankbaits for shallow stripers, then switch to 20-foot deep running lures (Deep Thunderstick) when the stripers are in deeper water. When the hotspot is located, retrace the route each time instead of trolling in a long straight line. Stripers are schooling fish and there will usually be more than the one fish caught on the trolling rod, interested in the same bait. Repeat the trolling path to catch more fish. Cast lures in the general area while the hooked fish by trolling fights behind the boat.

Bait fishing is taking off. There have been many stripers caught at the Dam (West side near 3rd barricade), Buoy 3 (south side, on corner before reaching Antelope Canyon), and Navajo Canyon (first point on left after passing the double islands). These locations are very familiar areas where stripers have been caught in previous years. There are many visible stripers swimming in shallow water in the back of West Canyon. These can be caught on bait.

Bait fishing uplake in the Bullfrog area usually peaks a week or two later than in the southern lake.

If you have found a productive bait fishing spots in a previous year it would be worth a try again now as stiper schools are on the move.