

February 9, 2017 - Early Spring Striper Techniques

Written by Wayne Gustaveson

Thursday, 09 February 2017 09:19 - Last Updated Thursday, 09 February 2017 09:51

I made my first trip on Lake Powell since before my vacation and after the weather moderated. It seems all the little fish were lined up in a row making this a grand start for the 2017 striper fishing year. There have been good/interesting reports about striper fishing in the southern lake including Warm Creek, Navajo, Last Chance and Rock Creek. If you go, here are the techniques that work when stripers are in the mood. We motored to the back of the canyon and started graphing where water depth was 70 feet. Stripers are easier to find now in the backs of canyons because the depth changes quickly and various strata can be examined in short order. It helps that I have had much experience in all canyons in the southern lake so I know where the fish were found last time. That usually saves me time in finding fish but sometimes my past experience prevents me from finding fish in new locations.

This time a few fish marks were seen on the graph near the spot where many we caught on the last trip in January. Spoons were deployed and two fish were hooked but the big school did not show up. We graphed shallower and then deeper before finding a nice sized school in 68 feet of water. It sometimes takes a while to find fish but this time of year it seems that all the traces seen on the graph in open water are stripers or shad. Hint: Just keep graphing in the back of the canyon until fish traces appear and then deploy spoons right into the middle of the school.

This time the striper school exploded into activity and many fish were caught over the next 2 hours. We located the school about 9 AM and they followed the boat and our spoons until 10:45 AM on a calm day. These deep fish are usually within 10 feet of the bottom. They will rise following a hooked fish on the way to the surface. We saw one hooked fish that was followed by another striper all the way to surface. The friendly companion was close enough to touch the hooked fish and concentrated on the spoon in the other fish's mouth. We flipped a spoon right by the follower and he took the spoon but did not hook up. I really wish I had the GoPro in hand instead of the fishing rod while that event was transpiring.

It was a nice warm day and water temperature rose to 52 degrees. When the deep school lost interest we still had a small top layer of cooler space available so we went to the back of the canyon looking for shallow fish. We trolled LC XD 78 pointers while graphing and soon hooked a small striper on the ghost color lure. The depth was 25 feet but this fish was hooked as the lure went over a shallow (12 ft) ridge. Stripers really like drop-offs as hiding points. We cast lures back to the ridge and hooked 3 other fish in the same spot. When we had about 3 unproductive casts we trolled again, hooked up, and cast again to get 3-5 more fish on each trolling stop. The cooler space was soon gone and when one fish was put in, two jumped out. That is the definition of a full cooler so at noon we headed back to the marina.

On the way out we passed another mile long canyon and I headed in just to see if the same action was going in most of the deep water canyon arms. We got to the back (80 Feet) and started trolling. That did not last long as a striper quickly hit the trolled lure. Then they hit the lures cast to followers. Then a school moved right under the boat and gobbled spoons. We had no room to keep any more fish so we left them wondering where the spoons went?

Back at the cleaning station we counted 75 stripers of which all but 5 were healthy and provided great fillets. What a great day in clear calm weather.

February 9, 2017 - Early Spring Striper Techniques

Written by Wayne Gustaveson

Thursday, 09 February 2017 09:19 - Last Updated Thursday, 09 February 2017 09:51

I spent more time here on technique instead of location because I know that this pattern is repeatable lakewide. Find your own secret canyon, repeat these techniques and return as possible as you can.

It's going to be a great year for spring striper fishing in the backs of canyons with shad. Find a good weather day and come find your honey hole.

I made my first trip on Lake Powell since before my vacation and after the weather moderated. It seems all the little fish were lined up in a row making this a grand start for the 2017 striper fishing year. There have been good/interesting reports about striper fishing in the southern lake including Warm Creek, Navajo, Last Chance and Rock Creek. If you go, here are the techniques that work when stripers are in the mood.

We motored to the back of the canyon and started graphing where water depth was 70 feet. Stripers are easier to find now in the backs of canyons because the depth changes quickly and various strata can be examined in short order. It helps that I have had much experience in all canyons in the southern lake so I know where the fish were found last time. That usually saves me time in finding fish but sometimes my past experience prevents me from finding fish in new locations.

This time a few fish marks were seen on the graph near the spot where many were caught on the last trip in January. Spoons were deployed and two fish were hooked but the big school did not show up. We graphed shallower and then deeper before finding a nice sized school in 68 feet of water. It sometimes takes a while to find fish but this time of year it seems that all the traces seen on the graph in open water are stripers or shad.

Hint: Just keep graphing in the back of the canyon until fish traces appear and then deploy spoons right into the middle of the school.

This time the striper school exploded into activity and many fish were caught over the next 2 hours. We located the school about 9 AM and they followed the boat and our spoons until 10:45 AM on a calm day. These deep fish are usually within 10 feet of the bottom. They will rise following a hooked fish on the way to the surface. We saw one hooked fish that was followed by another striper all the way to surface. The friendly companion was close enough to touch the hooked fish and concentrated on the spoon in the other fish's mouth. We flipped a spoon right by the follower and he took the spoon but did not hook up. I really wish I had the GoPro in hand

February 9, 2017 - Early Spring Striper Techniques

Written by Wayne Gustavson

Thursday, 09 February 2017 09:19 - Last Updated Thursday, 09 February 2017 09:51

instead of the fishing rod while that event was transpiring.

It was a nice warm day and water temperature rose to 52 degrees. When the deep school lost interest we still had a small top layer of cooler space available so we went to the back of the canyon looking for shallow fish. We trolled Lucky Craft XD 78 pointers while graphing and soon hooked a small striper on the ghost color lure. The depth was 25 feet but this fish was hooked as the lure went over a shallow (12 ft) ridge. Stripers really like drop-offs as hiding points. We cast lures back to the ridge and hooked 3 other fish in the same spot. When we had about 3 unproductive casts we trolled again, hooked up, and cast again to get 3-5 more fish on each trolling stop. The cooler space was soon gone and when one fish was put in, two jumped out. That is the definition of a full cooler so at noon we headed back to the marina.

On the way out we passed another mile long canyon and I headed in just to see if the same action was going in most of the deep water canyon arms. We got to the back (80 Feet) and started trolling. That did not last long as a striper quickly hit the trolled lure. Then others hit the lures cast to followers. Then a school moved right under the boat (40 feet) and gobbled spoons. We had no room to keep any more fish so we left them wondering where the spoons went?

Back at the cleaning station we counted 75 stripers of which all but 5 were healthy and provided great fillets. What a great day in clear calm weather.

I spent more time here on technique instead of location because I know that this pattern is repeatable lakewide. Find your own secret canyon, repeat these techniques and return as possible as you can. It's going to be a great year for spring striper fishing in the backs of canyons with shad. Find a good weather day and come find your own honey hole.

P.S. I had a run of great luck while jigging the spoon off the bottom. The fish were thick and close to the bottom. I let the spoon rest on bottom for a quick pause and then jerked it up one foot. Twice in a row I snagged a striper in the tail and hauled it in the boat. I have done this before, but this is the first time I did it on 2 consecutive casts.

February 9, 2017 - Early Spring Striper Techniques

Written by Wayne Gustaveson

Thursday, 09 February 2017 09:19 - Last Updated Thursday, 09 February 2017 09:51

