

December 18, 2017 - Striper School Strategy

Written by Wayne Gustaveson
Monday, 18 December 2017 11:11 -

Lake Powell Fish Report – December 18, 2017 Lake Elevation: 3623.92 Water Temperature:
53-56 F By: Wayne
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The last fish report was all about a trophy striper. Here are the details for the regular sized fish. Water temperature this morning was 53.4 at the Wahweap ramp. It is usually a half degree warmer in the main lake. Temperature is important to threadfin shad who cannot take cold temperatures. They move to deep, stable water where a cold windy night cannot cool the water fast enough to catch them off guard and lead to their demise. Threadfin shad recently made their move and stripers followed. Smallmouth bass have gone to dormant mode but may wake up in the late afternoon. Largemouth bass are in the brush piles. Crappie are suspended in the 15-30 foot range usually around submerged trees or rocks. Walleye are quiet.

Striped bass are the easiest target in cold water. They follow shad into deep water and are visible on the graph as small schools instead of the 2-5 fish groups that were seen last month. When a striper is caught the school size quickly grows to large size as the school mates come over to see what the hooked fish has in its mouth. Here is what we found last Friday and Saturday.

Striper schools were found in Warm Creek where the 30-pound striper was caught on Tuesday. They were consistently holding at 75-110 feet deep. Unfortunately the schools were seen on the graph but the fish were not interested in our spoons. It was common to see a long thin horizontal line of fish suspended about 5-10 feet off the bottom. We could tell they were stripers because the spoons dropped to the bottom and then speed reeled through the line of fish would cause individual stripers to rise up slightly in the water column. When lucky enough to hook a fish the rest of the school would follow toward the surface in typical striper fashion. I found that speed reeling about 15 feet followed by jigging at mid depth would occasionally work. In 75 feet of water I would speed reel and stop and jig at least 3 times on the way up. This was hard work but we did catch 8 fish in the morning.

Our friends fishing near us were a lot more patient. They stayed out all day and found that the striper schools finally turned on between 4-5 PM. They caught 34 fish in that magic hour.

Fish near Lone Rock were on a different schedule. Bob Reed reported catching fish all day long on spoons in deep water. His fish were hitting well Friday morning while those in Warm Creek were snoozing. Saturday morning was a repeat performance with stripers hitting well from dawn to 10 AM. Then they threw the switch and no more fish were interested in spoons after 10 AM.

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The lake wide report then is to find striper schools on the graph and drop spoons into the schools. Hopefully they will hit all day long. If not, return to the schools morning, mid day or evening until the feeding schedule is discovered. After that, catching is easy.

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