

Summer Fishing Tips

Bass (largemouth, smallmouth and spotted)

Location: Look for bass shallow early in the morning and late in the evening. Fish deeper as the day progresses. Good areas to fish include main lake points, ledges, and any other type of deep structure. Farm ponds will also produce early in morning and late in evening. A way to catch bass with the added benefit of heat relief is by wading one of Kentucky's many productive smallmouth bass streams. The flowing water at the beginning and end of stream drops hold stream smallmouth in summer. Avoid fishing the slack water in the middle of deep holes, as the feeding smallmouth use the flowing water instead.

Baits/Lures: Good topwater baits include Pop-R, buzzbaits, weedless frogs and weightless senko-type baits. Use jigs, soft plastics and crankbaits for deeper water fishing. Tough bites may require lighter line and weights with smaller plastic baits. For stream smallmouth bass, fish 3-inch black or brown curly-tailed grubs and 4-inch finesse worms rigged on 1/8-ounce leadheads with 4-to 6-pound test line. Small topwater lures work well early in the morning and at dusk.

Top Bass Lakes: <http://fw.ky.gov/pdf/2012fishingforecast.pdf>
Smallmouth Streams: <http://fw.ky.gov/smallmouthstreams.asp>

Bluegill and Other Panfish

Location: Bluegill can be found in about every water body in Kentucky. Look for bluegill around weeds, wood or rock structure. During the summer, bigger fish may be found deeper. Farm ponds are great places to catch bluegill during the summer.

Baits/Lures: Worms, crickets and wax worms work well under a slip bobber. Keep trying different depths until you start getting bites. You can also cast jigs and spinners and fish poppers with a fly rod to cover more ground.

Top Bluegill Lakes: <http://fw.ky.gov/pdf/2012fishingforecast.pdf>

Crappie

Location: Look for crappie to move deeper during the summer. Often, they will be located just above the thermocline (layer which separates water with sufficient oxygen from deeper water with insufficient oxygen). Creek channels, mud flats and standing timber are good bets. Using a depth-finder will help you find schools of crappie in the summer.

Baits/Lures: Jigs tipped with a minnow are the standard lures for crappie, but you can also troll or drift spinners and small swimming baits.

Top Crappie Lakes: <http://fw.ky.gov/pdf/2012fishingforecast.pdf>

Channel Catfish

Location: Channel catfish can be found in small to large lakes across the state as well as most river systems. Night fishing is very popular for catfish. In larger reservoirs, look for channel catfish near creek channels in the summer. In smaller lakes, channel catfish can be found most everywhere, but may congregate near creek inflows

Baits/Lures: Channel catfish are scavengers and a variety of baits will work. Some of the most popular are stink baits, night crawlers, shrimp, cut bait and chicken liver. You can fish the bait tight-lined on the bottom, suspended under a slip bobber.

Top Catfish Lakes: <http://fw.ky.gov/pdf/2012fishingforecast.pdf>

FINS Lakes across the state: <http://fw.ky.gov/urbanfishing.asp>

Walleye

Location: Walleye will seek depths with optimal temperature and oxygen. Depending on the lake, this may be 20-30 feet deep in the summer. Best areas to fish include main lake points, humps, islands, stump beds, and standing timber.

Baits/Lures: The two best methods for summertime walleye are bottom bouncing worm harnesses, and trolling or casting crankbaits.

Top Walleye Lakes: <http://fw.ky.gov/pdf/2012fishingforecast.pdf>

White Bass

Location: In reservoirs, white bass can be found in schools at the surface early and late in the day busting baitfish. Heavy cloud cover can extend the surface bite. At other times, schools for white bass will be found deeper, and associated with main lake creek channels, points, and ledges with structure. Schools may also suspend in areas of concentrated baitfish. A depth-finder is key to locating these schools of baitfish. White bass can also be found associated with tailwaters and current breaks in the Ohio River and other rivers across Kentucky.

Baits/Lures: If white bass are found at the surface, try topwater baits or shallow running baits that imitate baitfish. Deeper white bass can be caught with jigging spoons, twister tail jigs, curly tail grubs, and deeper-running crankbaits.

Top White Bass Lakes: <http://fw.ky.gov/pdf/2012fishingforecast.pdf>

Hybrid Striped Bass

Location: Hybrid striped bass can also be found in schools at the surface early and late in the day busting baitfish. Heavy cloud cover can extend the surface bite. At other times, fish in the main lake river channels near shallow flats. Also try deep water associated with main lake points, or locate suspended fish with a depthfinder. Hybrid striped bass can also be found during the summer in the main river channel and in tailwaters below the dams on the Ohio River as well as the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers below Kentucky and Barkley lakes.

Baits/Lures: Top water and shallow running baits work well for fish on the surface. Deeper fish can be caught jigging and trolling spoons. Trolling crankbaits will also work. Live and cut baits are also effective for hybrid striped bass. Surprisingly, chicken liver fished on the bottom or suspended is also a great bait for hybrid striped bass.

Top Hybrid Striped Bass Lakes: <http://fw.ky.gov/pdf/2012fishingforecast.pdf>

Striped Bass

Location: Lake Cumberland is the only reservoir in Kentucky that KDFWR stocks with striped bass. However, striped bass can also be found in the Ohio River, Kentucky Lake and Barkley Lake tailwaters and other large rivers such as the Green River. In Lake Cumberland, the majority of fish will be deep; associated with main lake humps, drop offs on mud flats, points, and suspended below schools of baitfish. Tailwaters are good places to fish on the rivers.

Baits/Lures: In Lake Cumberland, stripers can be caught with both lures and live bait. Hair jigs work well, but most anglers use live bait either directly below the boat or drifted/trolled. Finding schools of baitfish is critical to catching striped bass in Lake Cumberland. In the tailwaters, casting jigs and other baits imitating baitfish is effective. Drifting live shad or skipjack herring is also very effective.

Top Striped Bass Lakes: <http://fw.ky.gov/pdf/2012fishingforecast.pdf>

Trout

The tailwater areas below our major reservoirs offer great summer trout fishing. The best is the Cumberland River below Wolf Creek Dam. Rainbow and brook trout hold in the flowing shoals while brown trout lurk near woody cover in deeper water. KDFWR stocks some clear water mountainous lakes such as Laurel River Lake and Paintsville Lake with trout. These fish provide excellent nighttime summer fishing.

Baits/Lures: In tailwaters, small suspending jerkbaits in bright colors such as chartreuse, white, and pink attract trout, as do in-line spinners and small casting spoons. Productive flies are the generalist pattern, the Chicago Fly that resembles a mohair leech, and beadhead pheasant nymphs and cracklebacks. For lakes, fish with corn, red worms or small minnows under floating lights. Adjust the depth of the offering until trout hit. The trout hit these offerings subtly, so

watch your line intently. Look for a slight pull down of the rod tip and sweep the rod upward gently.

Top Trout Waters: <http://fw.ky.gov/pdf/2012fishguidetroutwaters.pdf>