

## Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

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Weekly Fishing Report  
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission  
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### March 18, 2009 Edition

[Read this newsletter online](#)

This is the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's fishing report for **March 18, 2009**. If there is a body of water you would like included in this report, please call or e-mail us with information on possible sources for that lake or river.

Fishing Tip: Live bait almost always outproduces artificial lures, but it requires a little extra care. Change the water in your bait bucket every couple of hours and add a little livewell treatment or a tablespoon or two of non-iodized salt to keep minnows lively all day.

**Arkansas River Levels** are available at :

[http://www.swl-wc.usace.army.mil/WCDS/Reports/Daily/Pao\\_rvrs.txt](http://www.swl-wc.usace.army.mil/WCDS/Reports/Daily/Pao_rvrs.txt)

**White River Levels** are available at :

[http://www.srh.noaa.gov/lmrfc/forecast/tributaries/status\\_white.shtml](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/lmrfc/forecast/tributaries/status_white.shtml)

**Statewide Family and Community Fishing Report:** Catfish are in Community fishing ponds statewide. For the best action, try Power Bait or nightcrawlers fished just off the bottom on a slip cork or on bottom with a bell sinker. For more stocking information, call the Hotline at 1-866-540-FISH (3474) toll-free.

### CENTRAL ARKANSAS

**Lake Conway:** Bates Field and Stream (501-470-1846) said the water is stained and at normal level. Bream are biting fairly well on crickets and redworms fished around brush and stumps. Crappie are biting well on minnows fished in brush 10 to 15 feet deep. Bass are slow. Catfishing is good on yo-yos.

Dan at Gold Creek Landing (501-607-0590) had no report.

**Little Red River:** [Lindsey's Resort](#) (501-302-3139) said the water is stained and low with little generation. Trout fishing is good on wax worms, marshmallows and Power Bait.

Jed Hollan at the [Little Red Fly Shop](#) said mild temperatures have returned and spring is just around the corner.

Water releases will continue around the clock until Greers Ferry lake level reads 461.44 feet above mean sea level. Aquatic insect hatches continue to diversify with midges, blue winged olives, hexigenia limbata, March browns and caddis flies coming off most days. The best dry flies have been a midge (size 22; cream), elk hair caddis (sizes 18-20; tan), BWO (size 18), para Adams (size 18), American March brown (size 16) and crackleback (size 14). Keep in mind, most trout will eat about fifty sub-surface nymphs for every winged adult on the surface. Tie on a sowbug (sizes 14-16; tan, smoky olive, UV tan or peacock), pheasant tail (size 16), copper john (sizes 14-16; red, green or copper), hare's ear (size 16), zebra midge (sizes 16-22; red, black or copper), red or green butt soft hackle (sizes 14-18), egg pattern (sizes 12-14; roe, peach or salmon), pink soft hackle (size 16) or woolly bugger (sizes 8-12; olive, brown or black).

**Greers Ferry:** As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 461.66 feet MSL.

**Tommy Cauley of Fish Finder Guide Service** said the water is falling and the temperature dropped from 60 degrees down to 47 last week. The walleye action has slowed in the rivers but has picked up in the main lake on a jighead tipped with a minnow and dragged over rocky points and flats. White bass and hybrids are biting well if you can pinpoint them. Some have spawned, some are trying and others are still getting ready to spawn; try grubs in-lines spinners and hair jigs. Crappie are beginning to bite all over the lake. Some are suspended in pole timber, and others are moving shallow. It's time to get after the crappie. Bass fishing is good all over the lake. A recent 80-boat tournament had 53 limits brought to the scales.

Shiloh Marina (501-825-6237) had no report.

**Harris Brake Lake: Coffee Creek Landing** (501-889-2745) said the water is clear and high. Crappie are fair around brush on live minnows. All other species are slow.

**Lake Overcup:** Lakeview Landing (501-354-1470) said the water is clear and at normal level. Bream are biting well on crickets fished around brush. Crappie are biting well on minnows fished around any woody cover. Bass are slow. Catfishing is fair on worms.

**Overcup Landing** (501-354-9007) said the water is clear and at normal level. Bream are slow. Crappie are biting well on minnows and jigs fished next to the bank in 4 feet of water. Bass are biting well on crankbaits and plastic worms fished in any brush along the bank. Catfishing is good on yo-yos.

**Brewer Lake: Overcup Landing** (501-354-9007) said the water is clear and at normal level. Bream are fair on redworms fished near the bank. Crappie are fair on minnows fished in brush along the bank. Bass are biting well on buzzbaits and spinnerbaits worked along the edge of brush. Catfishing is fair on worms and cut bait.

**Lake Maumelle: Jolly Roger's Marina** said the fishing is getting very good on Maumelle. As of March 9, the temperature was 61 degrees at the west end of the lake. The rain and cool down dropped the temperature to 46, but it's climbing again. The whites typically stack up in the creeks when the water is 62 degrees. Largemouth bass have moved into shallow areas and are biting well on jerkbaits and jigs. Kentucky bass are biting fairly well in 20 to 30 feet of water on tubes and jigs. Friday night bass tournaments will begin April 3 and Tuesday night tournaments will start April 7. The white bass run has started. The cold weather knocked the fish back to deeper water, but they should be moving back to the creeks soon. The west side of the lake around the chimney area and on the west side of the bridge are producing some good limits of fish. Rogues, Vibic Rooster Tails and Storm Swim Shads are catching most of the white bass. Crappie are being caught around 11 to 15 feet deep on minnows and 1/32-oz. jigs. Bream are slow, but a few have been caught around 25 to 30 feet deep on worms and crickets. Saugeye are fair and are being caught around 15 to 20 feet deep. The saugeye should begin moving to the west end of the lake soon. Catfishing is fair on worms and prepared baits 25 to 30 feet deep.

Hatchet Jack's Sport Shop (501-758-4958) said the water is clear and at normal level. Bream are fair on redworms fished in open water near cover on the bottom. Crappie are biting well on minnows and jigs fished in brush from 3 to 5 feet deep. Bass are biting well on spinnerbaits fished around any shoreline cover you can find. Catfishing is good on cut bait, large minnows and worms.

**Lake Valencia:** Hatchet Jack's Sport Shop (501-758-4958) said the water is fairly clear. Bream are biting fairly well on worms fished right on the bottom. Crappie are biting well in 3 to 4 feet of water around any brushy areas. Bass are biting well on minnows and soft-plastic worms fished from the bank out to about 3 to 5 feet deep. Catfishing is excellent on worms.

**Sunset Lake:** Turbyfill's Outdoor Sports (501-315-3061) said the water clarity is fair and the water is high. Bream are biting well on crickets and jigs fished in shallow water around brush. Crappie are fair on jigs and minnows fished near the bank. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits fished in 5 feet of water near the bank. Catfishing is slow.

**Saline River Access in Benton:** Turbyfill's Outdoor Sports (501-315-3061) said the water is muddy and high. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits fished around any overhangs in 5 feet of water. Bream are fair on crickets fished in brush piles. All other species are slow.

**Arkansas River at Morrilton:** Charley's Hidden Harbor in Oppelo said a few more anglers are getting on the water with the recent warm weather. Catfishing is very good near the deep holes just off the main river jetties and riprap below locks 9 and 10. Live shad fished in the eddies near current breaks are catching some good catfish. Crappie are biting well in Point Remove Creek, Galla Creek, Petit Jean River and Flagg Lake Cutoff. Minnows fished under a slip cork in 4 to 6 feet of water are working the best along the edge of the vegetation. Bream are biting in the creeks and on the shallow backside of main-river jetties. Kentucky bass are biting around the riprap and rock jetties on jig-and-pig combos in crayfish colors. Stripers and white bass are around the rock jetties nearest the creek mouths. They are staging, getting ready to spawn. Medium-diving crankbaits in pearl are the best bet.

**Arkansas River in Little Rock:** Vince Miller from **Fish 'N Stuff** said the water is stained and at normal level. Bass are fair on jigs fished in 2 to 6 feet of water around main river jetties. All other species are slow.

Hatchet Jack's Sport Shop (501-758-4958) said crappie fishing and catfishing are good around Burns Park, Fourche La Fave, Fourche Creek and Palarm Creek. Bass are biting well in the Big Maumelle River and Little Maumelle River.

McSwain Sports Center (501-945-2471) said the water is muddy below Terry Lock and Dam. Crappie fishing is fair on live minnows in 9 feet of water next to stumps and woody cover. Bass fishing is fair on jigs fished in 10 feet of water in current breaks. Catfishing is fair below the dam on stink bait. All other species are slow.

**Clear Lake:** McSwain Sports Center (501-945-2471) said the water is muddy and high. Bream are fair on worms and redworms fished in 3 feet of water. Crappie are biting well in 2 feet of water on minnows next to brush and stumps. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits fished in 3 feet of water. Catfishing is fair on worms and cut bait.

**Peckerwood Lake:** Herman's Landing (870-241-3731) said the water is stained and high. Crappie are biting well on yo-yos baited with minnows and on jigs fished in brush piles. Catfishing is fair on worms.

**Pickthorne Lake:** Hatchet Jack's Sport Shop (501-758-4958) said bream fishing is still fair to slow with the cold weather. Crappie are biting well on live minnows. Bass are biting well. Catfish are biting well on live and prepared bait.

## NORTH ARKANSAS

**White River:** John Berry from **Berry Brothers Guide Service** said the generation pattern on the White was for low levels of generation around the clock with a couple of high level spikes during the day. This year's shad kill is basically over, but trout are still hitting shad patterns. The most effective flies have been white marabou jigs and white beadhead woolly buggers. For fishing this area during high levels of generation, I generally use long 4X tippets (a 12-foot leader). Use plenty of lead to get the fly down and a big strike indicator to float it all. There have been reliable reports of excellent fishing on shad patterns from Bull Shoals down to Rim Shoals. The upper river from the Bull Shoals Dam catch-and-release area downstream to Cain Island has been a real hot spot. The lower flows were perfect for drift fishing and, with the trout still keying in on shad patterns, the bite was on. Other effective patterns were zebra midges and San Juan worms. The big story has been the spectacular streamer fishing. Several anglers have been drifting in the upper river from Bull Shoals down to Cotter. They were banging the bank with huge streamers (sculpin and baitfish patterns 5-7 inches long). They were using 8-weight fly rods with 300-grain sink tip lines. This technique resulted in several trophy browns.

**Mountain River Fly Shop** said the shad kill was very good on the White last week, but with a warming trend for the next week, we can expect the shad action to slow. Stay tuned as cooler temperatures, plus higher flows will have the shad back.

Sportsman's White River Resort (870-453-2424) said the water is clear and at normal levels with three generators running. Trout are excellent on wax worms and Power Bait. A 9-lb. brown trout was landed on a crappie jig last weekend.

**White River (From Buffalo Shoals to Norfolk)** – Jim Brentlinger at **Linger's Guide Service and Fishing Lodge** (870-499-5185) said fishing has been excellent lately. Two to three generators have been running and everyone's been catching fish from a boat. White River Zig Jigs in ginger, olive, white or black will do the job. About two thirds of our fish are coming on the jigs. One third is coming on Black/Gold/White No. 7 or 9 Countdown Rapalas.

**Crooked Creek:** John Berry of **Berry Brothers Guide Service** said Crooked Creek is still not fishing well. The water is low and clear but still a bit cold for the smallmouth to be active. As the weather warms and the water

temperature reaches 55 degrees, we can expect the smallmouth action to improve.

**Bull Shoals Lake:** As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 652.90 feet MSL.

**Lake Norfolk:** As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 551.98 feet MSL.

**101 Grocery and Bait** said the last week was beautiful at Norfolk, with air temperature in the 70s and water temperature ranging from 46-52 degrees. Crappie fishing has been good on minnows and jigs. White bass fishing is good. Walleye are fair, with most being caught on stick baits, such as Storm Thundersticks, at night. Bass fishing has been good and the largemouth and Kentucky bass can be found just about anywhere as they start their prespawn feed. Catfishing is slow. Striper fishing is slow. For those who want to use live bait, remember that it is illegal to bring live bait fish from another body of water to Norfolk.

**Norfolk Tailwater:** John Berry from **Berry Brothers Guide Service** said there has been limited generation on the Norfolk with several windows of no generation that has created some excellent wading. With the hot action centered on the upper White River, the fishing pressure has been much lighter on the Norfolk tailwater. Coupled with lower flows and reliable wadable water, this has created some greatly improved fishing. Anglers have reported success with white jigs and white woolly buggers. The better fishing has been on the lower river below the Ackerman Access. The fish seem to be running a bit larger there. Another hot spot has been Quarry Park below Norfolk dam. There have been some spectacular midge hatches on sunny days. The best fly for this hatch has been Dan's turkey tail emerger (size 18-22).

Jim Brentlinger at **Linger's Guide Service and Fishing Lodge** (870-499-5185) said fishing is very slow and spotty. The generation is up and down very quickly and very often. It seems to confuse most of the fish and slow down the bite.

## NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

**Beaver Lake:** As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 1,120.20 feet MSL.

**JT's Crappie Guide Service** (479-640-3980) said spinnerbaits slow-rolled along laydowns, rocks and timber in the middle portion of coves have taken a few bass lately. Crappie fishing has improved. Try a minnow fished under a cork 2 to 4 feet deep along visible brush. The best places to fish have been south of the 412 bridge and upstream in War Eagle Creek. White bass have been biting well up either river arm on anything that resembles baitfish.

Southtown Sporting Goods (479-443-7148) said the water is clear. Crappie are biting fairly well on minnows and jigs fished in brush from 2 to 12 feet deep in the river channels. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits and jigs fished around bluffs dropping from 10 to 50 feet. Catfishing is slow. Bream fishing is slow.

**Beaver Tailwaters:** Ken Richards at **Just Fishing Guides** said the tailwater is fishing well, even with the high water. Some shad have been seen floating during water releases. Fish have not been taking shad on the surface but have been slamming shad patterns fished under the surface. Most fish caught are in the slot, but several above the slot have been caught and released. The best shad flies to use have been 2 to 4 inches long and are white or light gray.

**Lake Fayetteville:** Lake Fayetteville Boat Dock (479-444-3476) said the water is fair and at normal levels. Bream are fair on worms fished around 30 feet deep. Crappie are fair on jigs fished in the brush. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits and crankbaits fished near brushy cover. Catfishing is poor.

**Lake Sequoyah:** Lake Sequoyah Boat Dock (479-444-3475) had no report.

## NORTHEAST ARKANSAS

**Henry Gray Hurricane Lake WMA:** Judy Potts of Judy's Bait Shoppe at the North entrance to Henry Gray Hurricane Lake WMA said the front gate to the WMA has been open for a week and anglers have been steadily coming to try their luck. Crappie have been biting very well on red/white and blue/white jigs as well as on yo-yos baited with medium minnows. Lake levels are at the lowest they have been in two years, offering some really

good fishing. All of the WMA lakes reported good fishing for crappie, bass and catfish. One church group spent the weekend on Mallard Pond and reported a very large catch for their group. Whorl Lake has been very popular for the yo-yo fishermen. Catfish are biting well on nightcrawlers and cut bait. Bream fishing hasn't kicked in yet, but crickets are available for those ready to try their luck. Bass were biting on greenish blue Rapala lures and medium size (3-4 inch) minnows.

**Lake Charles:** [Lake Charles State Park](#) (870-878-6595) had no report.

**Crown Lake:** [Boxhound Marina](#) (870-670-4496) said the water is stained and at normal level. Bream are slow. Crappie are fair on minnows fished in 10 feet of water near the bank. Bass are fair on jigs fished around rocky areas in 12 to 14 feet of water. Catfishing is fair on cut bait. There will be a bass tournament to benefit Arkansas Special Olympics on April 18 from 7 a.m. until 3 p.m. Contact the marina for more information.

**Lake Frierson:** [Lake Frierson State Park](#) will be closed until the end of March because of ice damage.

**Spring River:** Mark Crawford at [Spring River Fly Shop](#) said water levels are perfect and water clarity is great. Fishing has been very good with a variety of flies. Snails, Go-Gos, Brownies and Cotton Candies have been producing well. Caddis, mayfly and midge hatches have been constant during early morning and evening hours.

## SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS

**Lake Chicot:** [Lakeshore Motel and Marina](#) (870-265-9901) said the crappie are excellent on minnows some are being caught on jigs. They have moved in shallow water and are starting to spawn. Catfish are really doing well on yo-yos baited with minnows. Bream are doing well on crickets and wax worms. No report on bass. With the weather being good for the rest of the week, the fishing for all species should be excellent by the weekend.

[Lake Chicot State Park](#) said bass and crappie are biting well. Catfish are picking up, but it's sporadic. Catfish are touch-and-go with some people not catching any, but one angler caught two catfish larger than 40 pounds. There is a lot of boating activity on the lake.

**Lake Monticello:** Fishing guide Greg Gulledge (870-723-3928) of [MonticelloBigBass.com](#) said bass fishing on Lake Monticello is picking up with the temperature. Surface temps in the upper 50s and low 60s have been the norm for the last few days. It's hard to say what the cooler air temperature over the next few days will do to our surface temps. Hopefully, this little bit of winter will be brief. There have been some toads coming in on crankbaits, Texas-rigged lizards and big shiners. Several over 10-lbs. came out of the lake last weekend. The fish seem to be holding around 4 to 8 feet deep.

## SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS

**Millwood Lake:** As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 260.34 feet MSL.

[Millwood Lake Guide Service](#) said surface water temps, which had been ranging in the low 60s, took a beating last week with all the cold nights and rain. Water clarity is very low and current is high. Some high-density vegetation mats, limbs and logs have broken loose and are making navigation very difficult. Many river buoys also are missing. The entire lake is muddy, from Yarborough to Cottonshed. The current at the dam is 15,497 cubic feet per second. The extreme cool down and deluge of water shut down the bass. Prespawn fish have begun to recover, and the bite is climbing back up to the fair category. The best bite remains during the warmest hours of the day, 11a.m.-3p.m., on slow-moving, ¾-ounce Rat-L-Traps and slow-rolled heavy thumping spinnerbaits in the increasingly stained and muddy water. Slow-moving, rattling crankbaits are working fair in creek channels as well. The most consistent reaction bite during heat of the day has been on Rat-L-Traps in Toledo Gold, Millwood Magic or Red Shad colors. Chunky males are being seen in bedding areas for short periods during the warmest parts of the day, but the females have not moved up yet. Bass Assassin shads are beginning to take a few decent largemouths, and trick worms, charms, or Senkos wacky rigged, around hydrilla, lily pad stems, and pondweed are working randomly on points with vegetation or dead lily pad stems in the backs of the oxbows, where water clarity is markedly better than main lake or river sections of Millwood. Best jig colors have been Texas craw, black/blue or green pumpkin/chartreuse. The white bass were beginning to congregate upriver near the Highway 71 bridge and creek mouths, but have disappeared and moved back to deeper water. ½-oz Rat-L-Traps in Diamond Dust, Millwood Magic, and chrome/chartreuse and ½-oz Rooster Tails in chrome/red or white/chartreuse were working prior to the cold front and increase current and muddy

water. Crappie completely shut off. Oxbows were giving up a few random crappie on live shiners where the clarity was much better than the river, and water temps were warmer, but the bites were far and few between in terms of consistency. Channel cats are still feeding very well in the increased current, on trotlines and yo-yos hung under cypress trees with cut bait and Charlie.

**White Oak Lake:** [White Oak Lake State Park](#) had no report.

**Lake Greeson:** Daryl Morris of [Family Fishing Trips](#) said the latest rain and cold weather caused the water temperature to cool 10 degrees. It is warming up again quickly and the crappie are running back into the shallows. They will begin spawning when the water temperature stays above 60 degrees overnight.

**DeGray Lake:** As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation was 406.36 feet MSL.

Local angler George Graves said the water is extremely clear downlake and clear in the upper lake. Surface water temperature is 58 degrees. A few decent crappie catches are coming from the upper end of the lake in the vicinity of Point Cedar and Beaton Creeks. Fish are relating to brush about 20-feet deep. Red/chartreuse 1/16-ounce jigs or minnows are working best. Bass fishing is picking up between Point 14 and Point Cedar. Fish main lake and secondary points in water between 8 to 15 feet deep. Carolina rigged worms and lizards are working well. The shad are starting to move shallow. When you see shad, try a spinnerbait or a small crankbait. The white bass and hybrids should be continuing their upriver run, but very few reports have come in.

DeGray One Stop (501-865-3511) had no report.

**Iron Mountain Lodge and Marina** said the surface temperature is 50 degrees. Largemouth bass are fair on watermelonseed and green pumpkin ½-oz. cannon ball jigs and Zoom super chunk trailers fished 18-25 feet deep around main-lake points. Spinnerbaits and rattling Hot Spots fished on flats and humps are catching a few fish as well. In the upper lake, crayfish-colored crankbaits are catching a few fish. Hybrids and white bass are fair on ¾-oz. spoons, red or gray bucktail jigs and shad-colored crankbaits fished around flats near 20 feet of water. Crappie are biting well on Tennessee shad-colored grubs fished around brush piles in 12-20 feet of water.

## WEST-CENTRAL ARKANSAS

**Lake Dardanelle:** Regina Olson at [Spadra Marina](#) said catfish have been biting very well this week. Last week they were doing best on stink bait, and this week they are biting on bass minnows. There have been reports of limits almost daily. Crappie are biting 2-4 feet deep. The water temperature has risen to almost 60 degrees. No reports on bass this week, most tournaments have had disappointing weigh-ins for this time of year.

Murphy's Sporting Goods (479-229-3200) said the water is clearing up and is at normal levels. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits and crankbaits fished near planted brush piles. Catfishing is good on minnows below the dam. All other species are slow.

**Ozark Pool:** Lakeside Food Mart (479-667-5155) said the water is muddy and at 45 degrees. Crappie are fair on jigs tipped with minnows or shad fished in open water 6 feet deep. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits fished around the edge of cover. Catfishing is fair on cut shad and minnows. Bream are slow.

**Lake Ouachita:** As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 573.85 feet MSL.

Larry Hurley from [Poorman's Guide Service](#) said bass are excellent with the water temperature climbing and fish moving shallow. Shad-colored crankbaits and Revenge spinnerbaits are working around secondary points and coves with grass and wind.

**Mountain Harbor Resort** said the water is clear and the surface temperature ranges from 55 to 58 degrees. Largemouth bass are excellent and can be caught on Rat-L-Traps and white spinnerbaits fished on the outside edge of the moss. Carolina-rigged lizards and speed craws are hot on main-lake and secondary points. Walleye are fair and being caught on crankbaits and jerk baits up the river channels. Stripers are still good on live shad or trotline minnows. Wild eye shad baits and gray hair jigs are working as well. Bream are fair to good on worms or crickets in 18 to 25 feet of water. Crappie are biting very well over brush in 15 to 30 feet of water on minnows and crappie grubs. Catfish are fair and being caught on cut bait and live bait on jug lines and trotlines.

**Trader Bill's Outdoor Sports** said the lake is 5 feet below the roots of the buckbrush, and the water

temperature is in the mid-50s. The lake is falling and clearing up quickly. Bass are holding around any new growth in the weedline. Most of the lake has brown moss, which the fish are avoiding. Look for green moss in the middle of the lake. It is holding more and better fish. Bass are being caught on crankbaits and jigs around that new moss.

**Lake Hamilton:** [Trader Bill's Outdoor Sports](#) said the lake is full and warming slowly through the 50s; with a warm week it could be in the low 60s by Saturday. The water is clear but there are many floating leaves and sticks. Fishing is good on crankbaits that run 5 to 7 feet deep. Also try a ½-oz. Rat-L-Trap on the flats in the afternoons when the sun warms them. White bass are staging and running up all the creeks.

**Lake Catherine:** Shane Goodner, owner of [Catch'em All Guide Service](#), reports that the winter drawdown is over and the lake has been refilled to normal levels. Water clarity is very good and temperatures are holding in the mid-40s. Rainbow trout fishing remains excellent and will rival that of any fishery in the state. Bank fishermen casting wax worms and meal worms under a bobber have done very well. Redworms and nightcrawlers work just as well floated off the bottom with marshmallows. Fishermen trolling the channels with small crankbaits that imitate shad or crawfish are catching limits of quality trout with ease. Most of the good fishing takes place during periods of generation; however, using a trolling motor instead of the main engine in the calm water can also produce good results. Fly-fishermen can't access the same areas with the increased water levels, but continue to hook trout using woolly buggers and micro-jigs with a strike indicator. Egg patterns offer a nice change when the fish are refusing other lures. The walleye run is in full swing, but fishing is hit and miss. Live bait rigs with shad or nightcrawlers give anglers the best chance for success. Trolling channel ledges can often help find spawning areas. Crappie are beginning to show up in the tailrace as their spawning time grows near. The smaller males are being caught with only a few of the larger females seen. The next week should bring the spawn into full gear with the warmer temperatures forecast. Striper activity has been low, but big ones are always present as they seek to make an easy meal of unsuspecting trout. Always carry a heavy action rod and reel in the boat when fishing at Carpenter Dam as these huge predators can appear at a moment's notice.

**Lake Hinkle:** Bill's Bait Shop (479-637-4719) said the water is clear and at normal pool. All species are slow.

**Lake Atkins:** Lucky Landing (479-641-7615) said the water is muddy and high. The surface temperature ranges from 52 to 54 degrees. Bream are biting fairly well on crickets fished near the banks in 3 to 4 feet of water. Crappie are biting fairly well on minnows fished in brush piles around 3 to 4 feet deep. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits and worms fished 3 to 4 feet deep. Catfishing is good on blood bait and worms.

## SOUTH CENTRAL ARKANSAS

**Moro Bay:** [Moro Bay State Park](#) said the Ouachita River is at 68 feet above sea level (only 3 feet higher than the summer norm). It appears to be receding slowly each day. The warm weather is bringing folks back to the bay for some pretty good bream fishing. Large red-eared sunfish can be caught on the bottom using worms in the bay. They are holding close to cover such as docks and cypress trees. Crappie have been off and on all winter but never consistent for more than a day or two. A few bass fishermen have had success on soft-plastic worms, but few fish caught meet the new 14-inch minimum size limit. Those with special netting licenses have caught some nice buffalo lately but that appears to be slowing down.

**Tri-County Lake:** Windy weather rolling across the lake made fishing extremely difficult. All species were slow.

**Ouachita River Oxbows:** Spotted bass are hitting jigs well, but there isn't much size to them. Largemouths are still hitting shallow-running crankbaits (2-5 foot depth) and slow-rolled spinnerbaits around creek channels.

## EAST ARKANSAS

**Arkansas River at Pine Bluff:** The Tackle Box (870-534-1498) said the water is muddy. Bream are biting fairly well on crickets and redworms fished in 4 to 6 feet of water. Crappie are biting excellently in 4 feet of water on minnows and jigs. The crappie are holding tight to woody cover and rocks. Bass are biting well on crankbaits fished in 4 to 8 feet of water. Catfishing is good on worms.

**White River:** Triangle Sports (870-793-7122) said the water is clear and at normal levels. Bream and crappie are slow. Bass are biting fairly well on crankbaits and tubes fished in 2 to 7 feet of water in the main river channel. Walleye are fair on live minnows fished in deep holes of the river.

**Maddox Bay:** Maddox Bay Landing (870-462-8317) said the water is fairly muddy and dropping to normal levels. Bream are slow. Crappie are fair on minnows fished in brush and stumps around 3 feet deep. Bass are fair in 3 feet of water on spinnerbaits bumped against woody cover. Catfishing is fair on yo-yos baited with worms.

**Bear Creek Lake:** Arkansas Outdoors (870-295-4240) said the water is clear and at normal levels. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits crawled slowly along the bottom. Bream, crappie and catfish are all slow.

**Island 40 Chute:** Daily's Boat Dock (870-739-3478) said the water is clear and at normal level with a surface temperature of 45 degrees. Bass are biting fairly well on spinnerbaits fished in heavy brush 4 to 5 feet deep. All other species are slow.

**Horseshoe Lake:** Local angler Clyde Gregory said the water is clear and at normal level. Crappie are biting well on minnows fished in open water around 20 feet deep. Catfishing is fair on worms. All other species are slow.

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