



Fishing

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Weekly Fishing Report
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
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April 09, 2008 Edition

This is the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's fishing report for **April 09**. 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: Having trouble catching spring crappies? Here's a little trick from Wally "Mr. Crappie" Marshall that could help you put a mess of good-eating crappie in your boat:

"Attach a minnow to a number 4 style Mr. Crappie® hook about 3 or 4 feet under a small to medium size bobber without any other kind of weight. When you cast it out, the minnow will drop very slowly through the water. If you don't get a bite, gently sweep the rod tip 3 or 4 feet, pulling the minnow right back to the surface so it can fall through the water again. The sight of that slowly falling, struggling minnow is usually more than even the most finicky crappie can resist."

This tip and many others are available at the [Bass Pro Shops Outdoor Library](#).

Arkansas River Levels: According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as of Tuesday the Arkansas River stages are:

Trimble Lock and Dam (Lock and Dam 13): Headwater – 389.03 feet, Tailwater – 388.27 feet, Flow – 135,250 cubic feet per second

Ozark Lock and Dam (Lock and Dam 12): Headwater – 371.35 feet, Tailwater – 354.68 feet

Dardanelle Lock and Dam (Lock and Dam 10): Headwater – 337.64 feet, Tailwater – 304.26 feet

Ormond Lock and Dam (Lock and Dam 9): Headwater – 285.77 feet, Tailwater – 285.08 feet, Flow – NO READING AVAILABLE

Toad Suck Lock and Dam (Lock and Dam 8): Headwater – 271.32 feet, Tailwater – 270.71 feet

Murray Lock and Dam (Lock and Dam 7): Headwater – 247.96 feet, Tailwater – 241.94 feet, Flow – 203,008

Terry Lock and Dam (Lock and Dam 6): Headwater – 230.70 feet, Tailwater – 229.57 feet, Flow – NO READING AVAILABLE

Sanders Lock and Dam (Lock and Dam 4): Headwater – 196.94 feet, Tailwater – 196.54 feet

Hardin Lock and Dam (Lock and Dam 3): Headwater – 184.91 feet, Tailwater – 183.86 feet

Mills Dam (Dam 2): Headwater – 160.52 feet, Tailwater – 159.35 feet, Flow – 137,079 cubic feet per second

White River Levels: According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as of Wednesday the White River stages are:

7.8 feet at Calico Rock (flood stage – 19 feet)
9.7 feet at Batesville (flood stage – 15 feet)
27.9 feet at Newport (flood stage – 26 feet)
34.3 feet at Augusta (flood stage – 26 feet)
26.7 feet at Georgetown (flood stage – 21 feet)
32.5 feet at Clarendon (flood stage – 26 feet)

Statewide Family and Community Fishing Report: Catfish are now available in selected ponds around Arkansas. To increase your fishing success, be sure to have good fishing line on your reel, fish early morning or late afternoon and try using liver, worms or stinkbait fished near the bottom of the ponds. Bream are becoming more active in the ponds this month. Try worms and crickets near brush tops for better success. For more information on stockings, please call toll-free 1-866-540-FISH (3474).

CENTRAL ARKANSAS

Lake Conway: Bates Field and Stream (501-470-1846) said the water is stained and very high. Bream are fair on worms and crickets. Crappie are fairly good in 7 to 8 feet of water on minnows. Bass are being caught around the banks on flukes and spinnerbaits. Catfish are fair on trotlines.

Daniel Zajac at Gold Creek Landing (501-607-0590) said fishing is slow for all species, but some are starting to improve. Bass are biting fair some days. Catfishing is decent on trotlines and rod-and-reel fished in the current of the creek channels with shiners and nightcrawlers.

Little Red River: [Lindsey's Resort](#) (501-302-3139) said the water is in great shape with little or no generation. Trout fishing is excellent on wax worms, Power Eggs, nightcrawlers, Shad Raps and small crankbaits.

Jed Hollan at the [Little Red Fly Shop](#) said the Greers Ferry Power House is limiting water releases because of flooding along the lower White River. If the lakes should rise to "top flood pool," the Corps of Engineers will have to open all gates and turbines and we will have what is called an "open river." This does not bode well for people living or farming near the White River. The only upside is that fishing on the Little Red right now is incredible! We have a couple of customers who, frankly, rarely catch many fish. One gentleman, who fits precisely in that category, came in the shop the other day and announced that he had landed 60 trout that morning on a woolly bugger. Another customer came in from two hours of fishing at JFK Park. Using a small midge pattern, he landed a lot of fish, including 24 trout in 25 casts. Until the White River drops to 21 feet on the gauge at Georgetown, the fantastic fishing should continue unabated. The water in the river is somewhat murky in spots from the last two rain events, but the fish are striking at everything including: dry flies that mimic the tiny midge (size 22 or smaller in cream or black), American March brown (size 14), elk hair caddis (size 14-16; tan or black) or Adams (size 18-20). Sub-surface flies that are working well include the sowbug (size 14-16; UV tan, UV peacock or light gray), zebra midge (size 16-22; red, black or chartreuse), San Juan worm (size 16-18 pink or red), pheasant tail (size 16), red butt (size 14-16), green butt (size 14-16) or woolly bugger (size 8-12; olive, brown, or black).

Greers Ferry: As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 480.70 feet MSL.

Shiloh Marina said the water is high and all fishing has been slow.

[Tommy Cauley of Fish Finder Guide Service](#) said the water is rising and looks like the record of 483.93 feet msl (set in 1973) will be broken. The surface temperature is 54 to 56 degrees. Bass are scattered all over the shallows, but when you find one, there will usually be several nearby. Spinnerbaits, Shakey Hookers or Chatterbaits fished shallow are working well as are tubes and Carolina rigs fished in the old buckbrush line. Walleye are scattered, but a few are being caught coming back down the rivers. The white bass and hybrids are up the rivers on spawning runs and can be caught as long as the river doesn't muddy up. Yesterday, clients of the guide service caught 45 whites and hybrids in two hours.

Harris Brake Lake: [Coffee Creek Landing](#) (501-889-2745) said the water is stained and high. Crappie fishing is good around the docks on minnows and jigs. Bass are biting well on spinnerbaits. Catfish are fair on trotlines.

Lake Overcup: Lakeview Landing (501-354-1470) said the water is murky and high. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair on nightcrawlers and crawfish.

[Overcup Landing](#) (501-354-9007) the water is murky and high. Crappie are fair on minnows.

Arkansas River at Morrilton: Charley's Hidden Harbor at Opello said the river at Lock 9 is still wide open. Backwaters and ditches are going strong for catfish and drum. Backwaters that are calm are very good bass,

bream and crappie. Bass are biting well on jerkbaits and spinnerbaits. Bream fishing is good on crickets and small black Rooster Tails. Crappie are fair on minnows.

Lake Maumelle: [Jolly Rogers Marina](#) said the water is 1.7 feet above the spillway. Black bass are excellent. The Largemouths are on the beds, and fishing is best on the north side of the lake in very shallow water. Spinnerbaits, floating worms and crankbaits are all working well on the bass. The main part of the white bass run is over, but local angler J.O. Brooks is catching limits every day at the west end of the lake and the mouth of the creek. Apparently the white bass are fighting over which one gets to eat a Storm Minnow jig or a Vibric Rooster Tail. Crappie are getting on the beds, but are about 10 days behind normal. They are biting well on minnows and small jigs. Most bream are still deep, but a few have moved shallow and are biting crickets and worms. Catfishing is good on worm and prepared baits.

Sunset Lake: Turbyfill's Outdoor Sports (501-315-3061) said the water is high and muddy. Fishing is slow for all species.

Saline River Access in Benton: Turbyfill's Outdoor Sports (501-315-3061) said the water is extremely high and muddy. No report on fishing.

Arkansas River in Little Rock: Vince Miller from [Fish 'N Stuff](#) said the water is still very high and no anglers are on the water.

Little Maumelle River: River Valley Bait (501-868-3279) said the water is murky and high. Crappie are biting well around cover with minnows and assorted jigs. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits and top-water lures. Catfish are fair on the bottom with any bait.

Clear Lake: McSwain Sports Center (501-945-2471) said the water is extremely muddy and high. All species are slow.

Peckerwood Lake: Herman's Landing (870-241-3731) said the water is dingy and high. Bream are fair on crickets. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. A few catfish have been caught on nightcrawlers and stink bait.

NORTH ARKANSAS

White River: [John Berry of Berry Brothers Guides](#) said two major rain events have caused the reservoirs on the White River system continue to rise. Beaver Lake rose five tenths of a foot to settle at nine and two tenths feet above pool or four tenths of a foot below the top of flood pool. At the time of this writing, the flood gates are open at Beaver. There have been precious few wading opportunities on the White River, but boating conditions have been excellent. The upper White River is fishing particularly well. We have had low level generation (one to two generators). During this period, the upper river from the Bull Shoals Dam Catch-and-Release area to White Hole fished well. The productive flies were black zebra midges, olive scuds and San Juan worms. Another hot spot was Rim Shoals particularly the Jenkins creek area. The water was still lightly stained from the recent flooding but it did not affect the fishing. The hot flies were San Juan worms in bright colors (hot pink, fire orange, cerise and red). The water along the island and below it fished well with Y2Ks and olive woolly buggers.

Sportsman's White River Resort said the water is in excellent shape. Trout fishing has been very good on Rogue lures, Power Bait, Rapalas, silver Little Cleos, blue or black Rooster Tails and white jigs.

[Mountain River Fly Shop](#) said the white seriously has been fishing extremely well for the last 10 days. Generation levels all week have been under two full units, though the recording is saying 2, which allows some wading access. The runoff sediment is clearing and the fishing reports we have had have been amazing. Davy Wotton has been reporting 65 fish at Bull on his sow bugs on Wednesday and some great fishing at Rim Shoals earlier in the week. There have been a bunch of wade fishermen at the dam whacking fish on midges, woolly buggers and big sculpin patterns all week. The high water levels are coming sometime in April. Get in your fishing while you can.

Bull Shoals Lake: As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 687.82 feet MSL.

Lake Norfolk: As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 579.72 feet MSL.

Cranfield Junction Bait and Tackle (870-492-5141) said the water is stained and almost to flood pool. Catfish are fair on stink bait, nightcrawlers and shad. Stripers are biting well on flukes, live bait and Rogue lures.

[101 Grocery and Bait](#) said fishing is excellent. Stripers are biting well on large shiners fished 4 feet off the bottom. The water is stained from the rains and there is of course some debris in the water. Our friends at Hand Cove Resort said the water on their end is clearing up and fishing is also good on their end for stripers and catfish. Hand Cove Resort had several guests that caught their limit of stripers and one was over 25 lbs. The water temperature is around 60 degrees and stained. Bass fishing is good using floating worms or spinnerbaits.

Try fishing close to the shore, most are shallow. Crappie fishing has been fair from 10-25 feet deep using a minnow on a small leadhead jig. Catfish have been good on live bait. White Bass fishing has been good using inline spinners and small jigs with a grub. Walleye fishing has been fair.

Norfolk Tailwater: Gene's Trout Dock (870-499-5381) said the water is clear with little generation. Trout fishing is excellent on worms, frozen shad, and Rogue lures.

John Berry of Berry Brothers Guide Service said Norfolk Lake has risen three and eight tenths feet to rest at twenty five and three tenths of a foot above power pool of 552.00 feet or two and seven tenths feet below the top of flood pool. Norfolk Lake is nearing capacity and the Corps of Engineers will begin drawing it down first, running at max capacity of around 7,000 cubic feet per second until it is at power pool. There is a possibility that they will open the flood gates and run even more water. On the Norfolk River, they have been running a couple of generators and it has been fishing well. High water tactics have been the secret to success here. Be sure and use long leaders, plenty of lead and large strike indicators. Brightly colored San Juan worms along the weed beds have produced some nice fish. The hot colors have been red, hot pink, pale pink, and cerise. Other effective flies have been Y2Ks, black zebra midges, and egg patterns.

Dry Run Creek is still producing trophy trout at a prodigious rate. It must have been spring break this week because there were a lot of kids fishing there this week particularly on the nice warm days. There were a few kids there on the wet cold days and they were rewarded with some true trophy trout. The hot flies have been sowbugs, San Juan worms (worm brown and red were the hot colors), olive woolly buggers, egg patterns and Y2Ks. Be sure and carry a big net and do not forget the camera. The fish in this creek are huge. The trout of a lifetime lives here and is waiting to have his picture taken.

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

Beaver Lake: As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 1,129.24 feet MSL.

JT's Crappie Guide Service (479-640-3980) said bass fishing has been good all over the lake in front of the newly flooded timber. Spinnerbaits and black/blue bass jigs with rattles have been working well on the bass. Crappie have been hit-and-miss. On warm days, males have been moving shallow and biting minnows fished 2 feet deep around flooded timber. As soon as the water temperature hits a consistent 60 degrees, the females and males will move up into the brush and should provide an excellent bite. White bass are biting well upstream from the Highway 45 bridge all the way to the Lake Sequoyia spillway. Anything resembling a minnow will get pummeled when the water clears after the rains. Stripers have been scattered. The best action has been up the White River near the Highway 45 bridge using live brood minnows under a float. Catfishing has been good on cut bait and liver fished from the bank.

Southtown Sporting Goods (479-443-7148) said the water is muddy and high. Bream are fair on crickets. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. Bass are fair in shallow water on spinnerbaits. White bass are biting well on Rooster Tails.

Lake Sequoyah: Lake Sequoyah Boat Dock (479-444-3475) said the water is muddy and high. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. Bass are fair on spinnerbaits.

Sugarloaf Lake: Midland Minimart (479-639-9467) said the water is muddy and high. Bream are starting to pick up on worms and crickets. Crappie are biting well on minnows and jigs. Bass are biting well on bass minnows and assorted lures.

NORTHEAST ARKANSAS

Crown Lake: **Boxhound Marina** (870-670-4496) said the water is dingy and a little high. Bream are fair on worms. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Bass are biting well on jigs and spinnerbaits. A few catfish have been caught on minnows.

Spring River : **Mark's Fly Shop** reports that the water is still high and seems to be clearing up. Dark pattern lures seem to be working the best right now.

SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS

Lake Chicot : Bass Tracker Marine (870-265-5374) said the water is clear and still high. Bream are biting well

on worms and crickets. Crappie fishing is good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are doing well on trotlines with soap.

SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS

Millwood Lake: As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 263.49 feet MSL.

[Millwood Lake Guide Service](#) said main lake and Little River surface temperature is 60 to 69 degrees. Water clarity is minimal because of all the runoff. Current is 30,431 cubic feet per second. Increased current in Little River and increase in discharge at Millwood Dam is beginning to slowly lower the elevated lake level. Some bass are still pre-spawn, others have already spawned. Keepers up to 9-10 pounds full of eggs, and a 12.8 pound largemouth were caught over the last week. Be observant of floating debris, logs, tree limbs and broken vegetation in heavy current of Little River, because of increased discharge at the dam. Many river buoys are clogged with broken loose grass and vegetation mats, missing, or have been forced out of the channel. Closed, or unusable USACE boat ramps on Millwood are: Wilton Landing, Cottonshed south, Beard's Bluff, White Cliffs (past no. 3), River Run East and River Run West, and all campsites close to the water. Yarborough and Jack's Isle boat ramps are open. Numerous males and fat female bass have been seen and caught in bedding areas. The most aggressive bite is on Bass Assassin Shads, trick worms and Senkos. Pitching and flipping Texas-rigged, Southern Pro Flipping or Fattbutt Tubes (with rattles) in black/red flake is still working in off-colored water. Black or chartreuse pepper lizards, or big bulky 12-inch worms, Hog Assassins and Brush Hogs in blackberry are still working in those areas as well. Rat-L-Traps in red pepper, red coach dog, Sexy Shad or Toledo Gold are drawing strikes in the less muddy/off-colored water. Buzzing Toads are beginning to turn a few heads and draw some decent blow-ups. Buzzbaits are yet to draw any decent responses from big fish. With all the muddy water and current, the white bass remained elusive again this week. Not much change in the crappie bite either with all the muddy water and current in Little River. The influx of fresh muddy water has tapered off their bite and pre-spawn movements another week, although a few big crappie have been caught under cypress trees on jigs, late last week. Channel catfish are excellent in Little River over the past couple weeks using hot dogs, cut bait or chicken livers, on trotlines and yo-yo's along the river and in oxbows hung from cypress trees in 9-14 feet of water, near river current.

Lake Columbia: Steve's Marine (870-234-2222) said water is murky and high. Bream are starting to move to shallow water and are being caught on worms and crickets. Crappie are fair in deeper water on jigs and shiners. Bass are following the bream to shallow water and can be caught on black or chartreuse worms and lizards. Catfish are biting well on trotlines baited with live shiners or stink bait.

Lake Erling: Steve's Marine (870-234-2222) said crappie can be caught using yo-yos baited with minnows.

White Oak Lake: [White Oak Lake State Park](#) said fishing continues to be excellent on all sport fish – crappie, bream, catfish and bass. The lake is at full pool and the panfish seem ready to spawn. Bass are active in both lakes on live and artificial baits fished 12 to 14 feet deep.

Lake Greeson: As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 557.35 feet MSL.

Lakeside Grocery reports that all of Lake Greeson is completely closed. There are no ramps open at this time.

DeGray Lake: As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 415.27 feet MSL.

DeGray One Stop (501-865-3511) said the water is murky and extremely high. Few ramps are open with the water level so high. Bream are fair in shallow water on crickets. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. Black bass and Kentucky bass are biting well on buzz baits and jerkbaits. Whites and hybrids are being caught on spoons and Rooster Tails. Catfish are fair on live bait.

WEST-CENTRAL ARKANSAS

Lake Dardanelle: Murphy's Sporting Goods (479-229-3200) said the water is muddy and high. Bass fishing is good on spinnerbaits and crankbaits. Catfish are starting to bite on stink bait and nightcrawlers.

Bill's Bait and Tackle (479-754-6354) said the water is muddy and high. Bream are starting to pick up on crickets. Bass are fair on shiners. Catfish are biting well on stink bait and shad.

Blue Mountain Lake: As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation at 421.45 feet MSL.

CNC's End of the Line (479-947-2398) said the water is murky and still very high. Crappie are the best thing going and are being caught around the bridge at Ashley Creek.

Ozark Pool: Lakeside Food Mart (479-667-5155) said the water is muddy and high. Crappie are fair in the creeks on minnows and jigs. Bass are fair on jigs and spinnerbaits. Catfish are fair on nightcrawlers and shad.

Lake Ouachita: As of Tuesday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports the lake's elevation was 583.97 feet MSL.

[Dave Lindhag of Striped Bass Adventures](#) said with all the high water, debris throughout the lake has made boating very dangerous. Whole trees are being washed into the water and floating just under the surface, so watch your speed. Some points with picnic tables and other structures are underwater and could destroy a boat if you're even at cruising speed. Fishing for stripers has been up and down, with more downside than up. A lot of male stripers are starting to show some milt, so the spawn is not too far away. Some large fish are coming in, but it's sporadic. The fish have moved to brushy points, but are scattered here and there. Not many limits are being taken. Some decent catches of smaller stripers (9 to 10 pounds) are being caught by sinking down a large shad about 10 feet deep and slowly trolling points with brush.

Larry Hurley from [Poorman's Guide Service](#) said bass fishing is excellent, with the best results coming on Senkos and trick worms in 4 to 5 feet of water. If the water is stained, use dark colors. If the water is clear, watermelon seed and translucent colors will work best. The west end of the lake is muddy and the east end is stained. Tubes also are catching some better fish around 12 feet deep.

Mountain Harbor Resort said the water is high and stained. The surface water temperature is 53-58 degrees. Largemouth bass are spawning and are biting very well on Yum Dingers, floating worms and spinnerbaits. Walleye are biting well on jerkbaits fished over main lake points. Stripers are excellent on live brood minnows and gizzard shad. Top-water action has picked up on C-10 Redfins. Bream are fair on crickets and redworms fished in 18 to 25 feet of water. Crappie are biting very well around grass and brush in 6 to 15 feet of water.

Lake Catherine: Shane Goodner, owner of [Catch'em All Guide Service](#), reports that the recent storms caused heavy flooding in the surrounding areas which forced Entergy to open six of 10 flood gates at Carpenter Dam. This created a wall of water that roared downstream and rose high enough to cover the parking lots in Carpenter Dam Park. Boating and fishing have been impossible since the flooding, but the waters have lowered considerably to a much more manageable level. However, heavy generation is still present and will continue until Lake Ouachita is brought down out of flood pool. With the threat of more heavy rain this week, the extremely heavy flow could again repeat itself. Conditions are very unsafe and will not improve until the weather stabilizes and the flood waters are given a chance to run through the system.

Diamond Head Marina reported that the water is high and stained. Crappie are biting well on silver artificial baits as well as minnows and jigs. Bass are fair around the shoreline on white spinnerbaits. Stripers are biting on yellow curlytails. Walleye are good on silver baits.

Lake Hamilton: Larry Hurley from [Poorman's Guide Service](#) said the extra water flowing through the lake made the transition to shallow water a little late, but the bass are heading back in the pockets now. Carolina-rigged lizards and jighead worms are working well along ledges leading into the coves. White and bubble gum trick worms are working well on shallow fish near boat docks.

Lake Hinkle: Bill's Bait Shop (479-637-4719) said the water is stained and high. Crappie are biting well on minnows and jigs. Bass are being caught on plugs and plastic worms. Catfish are starting to pick up.

Lake Atkins: Lucky Landing (479-641-7615) said the water is stained and high. Crappie are fair in deep water on minnows. Catfish are biting well on worms, minnows, and nightcrawlers.

EAST ARKANSAS

Arkansas River (Pine Bluff): River City Sporting Goods (870-534-8303) said the water is murky and high. Bream are biting well on redworms, wax worms and crickets. Crappie are decent on minnows and jigs. Bass are biting well on top-water lures. Catfish are being caught on minnows, large worms and shad.

White River: Triangle Sports (870-793-7122) said water is dangerously high. No report.

Bear Creek Lake: Arkansas Outdoors (870-295-4240) said the water is stained and high. Bream are good on the bottom with redworms. Crappie are fair in 12 feet of water on jigs and trolled minnows.

Horseshoe Lake: No report.

