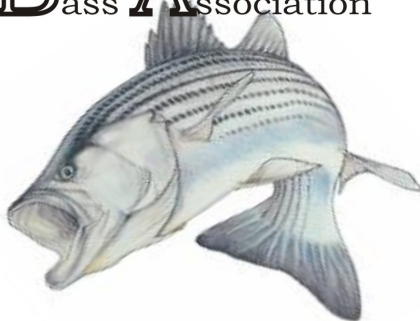


Tennessee Striped Bass Association

Get Hooked !



May/June 2020



Fishing in the time of coronavirus...

Semi-monthly meetings suspended at this time

Stay tuned for more info (and new meeting location?)

TSBA web site <http://tnstripedbass.com/> for the latest news.

Submit news items to tsba.newsletter@gmail.com

Join us on Facebook [Tennessee Striped Bass Association](#)

Special Announcement

We have just gotten confirmation that Puleo's Grille on Merchants is going to be closing their doors for good. We are seeking suggestions for a new meeting location. Please contact Keith at keith.shannon@gmail.com or post on the club Facebook page if you have any ideas.

June 2020 Meeting

We would like to have a club fishing day/picnic sometime in June. We are seeking suggestions for day and location. Please reply on our Facebook page or email Keith Shannon at keith.shannon@gmail.com with your ideas.

Ralph McCool with
a fat hybrid!



Update: Asian (Silver) Carp

TWRA has confirmed the presence of silver carp in Chickamauga Lake. In October 2019 a bass fisherman photographed a silver carp which had jumped into his boat when he deployed his trolling motor. This is the farthest upstream that silver carp have been reported on the Tennessee River. As of this writing, TWRA has not taken any action with regards to bait transport between lakes to prevent the accidental introduction of silver carp. We will keep club members apprised of any future updates.



Greg Osterbrock shows off a Norris striper!

Bucktails in the Spring

By Captain Clay Cunningham

Clay Cunningham operates a full time fishing guide service on Lake Lanier, Georgia. This article originally appeared on his website www.catchingnotfishing.com.

Casting bucktails in early spring can be one of the most effective techniques for catching striped bass. On some days, bucktails will out produce live bait. That is hard for some to believe, but it is very true. The biggest reason bucktails are so effective in the spring is the ability for you as a fisherman to really saturate the prime shallow water. The shallow water will most likely be warmer and as a result this is where the bait will be and the stripes will not be far behind. Furthermore, bucktails allow you to really keep the boat out of the shallow water and avoid spooking the fish. Bucktails also allow the fishermen to work the lure perpendicular to the fish. Most of the time they will be cruising the bank when they are actively feeding on the baitfish. If ten boats are pulling the bank with planer boards, a meal coming from a different direction might look a little more appealing to the fish. Stripers will eat bucktails all winter into the spring but the strongest part of the pattern will be when the water temperature reaches 55 degrees. At this time, the stripers will most likely commit to the shallow water unless you have some kind of severe weather pattern come through the area. Here are few things to keep in mind when casting bucktails in the spring:

Pay attention to line size. An important factor that is often overlooked is line size. Remember the lighter the line the deeper the bucktail will run. During the early part of the spring, smaller bucktails typically better “match the hatch” when it comes to threadfin shad which are most often the bait of choice just about anywhere you go during the last part of winter going into spring. Remember threads are slow swimmers and an easy meal without burning unnecessary energy. If you increase the size of the jig to get to the right depth, many times you will decrease your bites sometimes significantly. Stay with the smaller jig and go to a lighter line to get the appropriate depth.

Two jig colors rule the market. Next is the color of the jig. Two colors rule the market when it comes to bucktail colors. As you would expect, it is white and chartreuse. These two colors have worked since the beginning of time. In clear water use the white and in murky stained water go with a more chartreuse color. If the water color is just slightly stained go with a white bucktail with a chartreuse back or a white bucktail with some sort of chartreuse flash. Another consideration is the color of the head and the thread of the jig. Personally, I most often use red thread on my bucktails. If the bucktail uses white thread, which is also common, try getting a red permanent marker and make the bottom

part of the thread of the bucktail red. This is a trick many use during the hot summer months while trolling big bucktails on leadcore that works all year long. A bucktail that has a red head can also be very productive. At one time, this was one of the most popular jig head colors on the market. It has tapered off over the years in some areas but lures with a red head are as popular as ever especially on the salty side.

Keep several different shaped jigs on hand. Another factor that often gets overlooked is simply the shape and design of the jig. In different years, a slightly different shaped jig will many times get much more action. Different shaped jigs track differently through the water. A striper has a very finely tuned lateral line, which picks up on these slight variations in resistance coming through the water. Also, some head designs have a different rate of fall for the same giving weight. A slower fall in cold water typical of early spring can be a big plus.

Modify the bucktail tip. What you tip your bucktail with is also important. Be sure to take into consideration the movement of the trailer and the color. A good rule of thumb is the colder the water the less movement in the trailer. If the water is below fifty degrees a good trailer to begin with is the Zoom fluke trailer. The fluke trailer comes in many sizes to help match the size of the bait. Typically the fluke Jr. is a good starting point. If the water is clear and the fish are feeding on one inch threads do not be afraid to trim the bucktail with a pair of scissors and use a fluke size trailer or even the tiny fluke trailer if the hook is small enough. Paddle tail trailers have become the rage the last several years and look like they are here to stay. Paddle tail trailers have always been on the market but the recent success by bass fishermen have caused a multitude of companies to produce paddle tails of every shape and size. Many of the smaller paddle tails now being produced have proven deadly to stripers. As the water temperature rises in the spring, the trailers with more movement like standard curly tails tend to produce more bites. A good one to start with is the Zoom Fat Albert Grub. Another good curly tail grub is the six-inch grub by Capt. Mack. This six-inch grub is especially productive late in the spring as the fish move deeper and their metabolism increases with the increase in water temperature. As always in fishing, this is only a rule of thumb. Some years the fish do not know the rules.

Color selection for the trailer. Now for what color trailer to use while striper fishing. Basically the same rules for bass fishing applies for striped bass when it comes to color choice. For the most part, use trailers that help imitate the natural forage. The most reliable color is white in clear water. Most baitfish are white in color on the bottom side and stripers tend to strike from underneath which is expected since a stripers eyes are located toward the top of the head. White has always been the standby color but each year more and more colors are becoming more popular. More realistic colors like Albino, Green

Albino, Smokin Shad, and Baitfish by Zoom are all very good colors in clear water. These Zoom colors are especially popular during the dead of winter when fishermen are using the Fluke style baits. The more vibrant colors are more common in stained water or during periods of low light. This is when the good old color chartreuse shines. Another overlooked color that performs well in low light is a pink trailer. Also, don't be afraid to try different shades of pink and chartreuse. At times, clear chartreuse works better than a solid chartreuse.

This is just an overview of the many uses of bucktail jigs in the spring. Do not be afraid to try something a little different. Many strange or slightly different colors have come onto the market with surprising results like the Spro Magic Bus. Also do not be afraid to throw a simple jig head tipped with a Super Fluke. Sometimes the jig head with only the trailer (no bucktail) will perform the best, especially with the more realistic colors that are now on the market.

— Clay Cunningham



An assortment of bucktail jigs...



Above: Steve Nichols with a beautiful flathead catfish!

Below: Carson's first striper!





Keith Shannon with a Watts Bar striper.



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Creel and Size limits

CHEROKEE LAKE

Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass:

2 per day in combination, 15 inch minimum length limit

NORRIS LAKE

Striped Bass

April 1–October 31: 2 per day, 15 inch minimum length limit

November 1–March 31: 1 per day, 36 inch minimum length limit

WATTS BAR

Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass:

April 1–October 31: 2 per day in combination

November 1–March 31: 2 per day in combination, only one may be a striped bass.

Striped Bass:

April 1–October 31: 15 inch minimum length limit.

November 1–March 31: 36 inch minimum length limit

Hybrid Striped Bass:

15 inch minimum length limit

MELTON HILL

Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass:

2 per day in combination, including Clinch River upstream to Highway 61 bridge in Clinton. 15 inch minimum length limit

Striped Bass:

32–42 inch PLR; only one fish may be over 42 inches

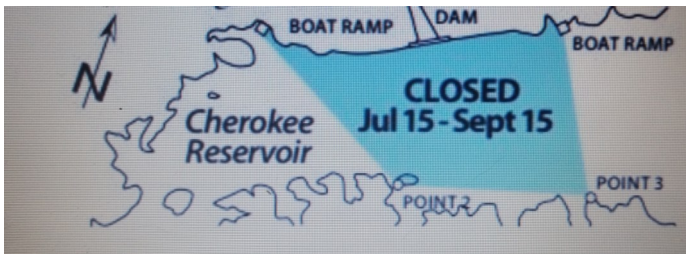
Outlook for current fishing spots

July Expectations

The migration downstream toward the dam has started in the reservoirs. The stripers will be a little easier to locate as the temperature in the coves and creeks pushes them into the deeper, cooler main channel. The thermocline will continue to get deeper with the fish staying just below it, and surface feeding in the reservoirs is over until October. A good topographical map now becomes a great fishing tool. The tailraces will continue to improve. They will be a good place to find some action while also still allowing successful catch and release in the hot summer. Working the "boils" will become very effective in July. It is your life and money, so remember to wear your life jacket at the dams. It is also the law.

Cherokee Lake - Good

Stripers will not go back well in July. Catch your limit and quit. Released fish will not survive for the most part. Hybrids are more tolerant of the warm water and can often be caught in schools in shallow water. They can also be released normally without mortality. The no fishing zone is in effect again starting July 15. The humps and islands near the dam up to Point #21 normally become excellent.



Norris Lake - Fair

Best fishing is from Point #26 on the Clinch and Point #14 on the Powell to the dam. Most of the stripers will move into the main channel out of the shallow warm coves. Down lines and downriggers work well over marked fish.

Below Ft Loudon & Melton Hill Dams - Good & Improving

The law is you must wear your life jacket in these dangerous waters. Put your sinker and hook close to the bottom with plans to lose a few for the most catches. Pulling side planer boards down the banks can also catch fish for miles downstream.

— Ezell Cox



Mark your calendars for the first Mondays & make a point to join us for our semi monthly meetings.

Other events may be added if interest is shown. Get involved and participate in TSBA to make sure it reflects what is important to you!

Feb 3: How to use planer boards.

April 6: **CANCELLED** Live Bait – catching and keeping; bait nets.

June CANCELLED (Saturday event): Kids Day at Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery followed by lunch at Shoney's (I-75/Hwy 61 location). Topic will be fishing in dam tail waters/summer fishing. Date TBA.

Aug 3: **PENDING** Mike Smith of TWRA regarding stocking levels achieved for 2020.

Aug 29: **PENDING** Club Tourney on Cherokee Lake

Sept 19: **PENDING** The annual fish fry will be held on Sept. 19 at Anderson County Park. Eric will reserve the pavilion for the fish fry.

Nov 2: **PENDING** Umbrella rigs and winter fishing techniques

Don't Forget to Renew for 2020

Renewing is easy! New address is below:

Enclose a check for \$20.00

Mail to: TSBA

P.O. Box 7303

Knoxville, TN 37921

YOUR 2020 TSBA OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND STAFF

President: Keith Shannon

Vice President: Steve Nichols

Treasurer: Eric Rauch

Secretary: Keith Shannon

Board Chairman: Allan Franklin

TSBA DIRECTORS

Bill Ballou, Jim Blazier, Steve Nichols, Cory Malabey, James Pierce, Eric Rauch, Bob Biscay, Hal Basdekis

TSBA STAFF

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Web Administrator: Bob Biscay tennstripedbass@gmail.com

Facebook Coordinator: Allan Franklin/Steve Nichols/Eric Rauch

Sponsor Coordinator: Justin Rose

Public Relations: Ezell Cox

Simplified Renewal Note: Returning members with no changes to their contact information are not required to fill out the application. Just send a \$20 check to the address above. Be sure to include the member's name on the check. When you send in your check, please provide TSBA with an email address where we can send your club newsletter. Yearly dues are due in January each year. New members who sign up in Oct., Nov., or Dec. will get credit for the remainder of that year and the following year.

TSBA Sponsors

TSBA appreciates all the support we get from our sponsors. If you would like to see your business listed in our newsletter please consider adding or renewing for 2020. TSBA can provide newsletters for our sponsors to distribute. Thanks!



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As a member:

- * You'll receive a newsletter periodically.
- * You'll help support striped bass fisheries & wildlife agencies.
- * You'll be informed of new regulations & information that affect striper fishing.
- * You'll develop a network of "striper friends."
- * You'll learn new methods to improve your striped bass fishing effectiveness.
- * You'll be able to call officers for fishing reports.
- * You'll be able to attend monthly meetings with informative programs.
- * You'll have access to all areas of the TSBA, Inc. web page.

Is this a renewal ___ or a new membership ___

Your name _____ -- _____
Spouse's name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone(_____) _____
E-Mail address _____

I have read and agree to abide by and be bound by the Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc. (TSBA, Inc.) Bylaws*

* A copy of the Bylaws can be found on the TSBA, Inc. website at <http://tnstripedbass.com/> or at the offices of the corporation.

(Signature)

(Date)

Enclose a check for \$20.00
Mail to: Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc
P.O. Box 7303
Knoxville, TN 37921

Simplified Renewal Note: Returning members with no changes to their contact information are not required to fill out the application. Just send a \$20 check to the address above. Be sure to include the member's name on the check. When you send in your check, please provide TSBA with an email address where we can send your club newsletter. Yearly dues are due in January each year. New members who sign up in Oct., Nov., or Dec. will get credit for the remainder of that year and the following year.

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GET HOOKED!