

Tennessee Striped Bass Association

Get Hooked !



November 2017



Monthly Meeting First Monday at Puleo's Grill,

110 Cedar Lane off Merchants Rd. at I - 75

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

Join our Facebook group [TN Striped Bass Association](#)

Members Photos



Jim Blazer fishing the river
with his friend.



Members Photos



Steve and his buddy Greg



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

Members Photos



Bob Fishing Norris Lake

The club is in need of a member to take over the position of **Newsletter Editor** starting January 2018. If interested please contact one of the board members.

Club Meeting: Speakers for 2017

February: James Everett and Michael Hick- TVA River Forecast Center

March: Jim Farmer- Cast Away Bait and Tackle

April: Keith Shannon, Alan Franklin and David Powell- discussion on finding, catching, and keeping live bait

May: Fuzzy Lambert- Humminbird/ Minn Kota Electronics and trolling motors

June: Captain Mack Farr

July: Captain Chadwick Ferrell- Fishing the boils and tailrace tips and tricks

August: TWRA Mike Smith- Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery discussion on striped stocking

September: Club Fish Fry (no regular club meeting) Fish Fry will be at Grainger County Park September 9th

October: Ken Cutsinger with TWRA- Water Safety, First Aid, and boating requirements

November: Open meeting- Year end review and recommendations for 2018

December: Board of Directors meeting (no regular club meeting)

The club is looking for a member in good standing to take over the position of : **Web Administrator:** Duties include: uploading new content, keeping the information on the website current and accurate by updating. If you are interested contact one of the board members.

Catching and keeping live bait

Ezell Cox gave a presentation on catching and keeping live bait. This is a topic that never grows old with TSBA members: this subject is of great interest to novice anglers trying to hone their craft as a striper fisherman while long-time anglers often find there is something new for them to learn as well.

Most all Tennessee rivers and reservoirs have abundant numbers of bait fish. The species targeted most frequently by striper fisherman are in the herring family (*genus Clupeid*). Examples of fish in this group include gizzard shad, threadfin shad, alewife, skipjack and moon eye.

Gizzard and threadfin shad

Gizzard and threadfin shad can often be found in warm, shallow water at the back of calm coves and creeks. They prefer stained water because it has an abundance of microscopic organisms like algae and plankton, which is their food source. All of the rivers that feed the tributary reservoirs, the reservoirs, and the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers have an abundance of these shad, where they can be caught legally with cast nets. Cast nets must be no more than 10 feet in radius with a mesh size no smaller than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, and no larger than 1 inch on the square. The most common nets used are ones with a 6 to 8 foot radius and a mesh size of $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch. Additional regulations on cast net uses may apply in some places and different times of the year. The preferred size for bait is 3 to 5 inches for the threadfin and up to 10 inches maximum length for the gizzard shad. These are the easiest to catch in shallow water by sneaking quietly in range with the cast net. Herons and other fish-eating birds are another clue that these bait fish are present and may require throwing the net blindly. The reason these two species make such excellent live bait is that they are extremely active and fast. Unfortunately, this characteristic makes them hard to close a cast net around in order to fill your bait tank!

Alewife

Capturing alewife requires a different strategy than the shad because these fish prefer cooler water and therefore remain at great depths during the warmer months. They are also much slimmer in build. You'll need a heavy, small mesh size ($\frac{3}{8}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$ inch) in order to capture them without having them get stuck in the net. The preferred size for alewife used as bait is 3 inch minimum to a maximum length of around 10 inches. The

reason these fish are so good at catching all game fish is that they are extremely active and fast. Again, this makes them hard to close a cast net around. Alewife are most commonly caught under lights at night. A favorite tactic used by experienced fishermen is to leave the lights on to attract the alewife and just before casting the net, turn off the light to disorient them. After each cast, let everything return to normal under the light for another cast. Alewife can also be caught during the spawn at night near the bank.

Skipjack

The skipjack herring is the live bait of choice for the trophy-hunting striper fishermen. Skipjacks are more common in tailrace systems, where the adults become predators feeding primarily on fish and insects. Catching them is the most challenging of all the members in the herring family. This species is most frequently caught on a rod and reel. To catch them, cast into a school of breaking jacks, letting your rig sink a little before retrieving quickly with a jerking motion. Lures to use include small flies, sabiki rigs, and spoons.

Skipjack are hard to keep alive, even for the most experienced fisherman. Special skills and experience are needed to keep these fish alive long enough to use successfully. Your bait tank must hold a large volume of water. It is also necessary to maintain high levels of dissolved oxygen in the holding water. Techniques anglers use to keep these fish alive include injecting pure oxygen into the holding water, treating holding water with a therapeutic dosage of salt, sedation, and cooling the temperature of the holding water.

Keeping baitfish alive

The best live bait is the type you can catch and put on the hook as quickly as possible. With that being said, there are many techniques and types of equipment available to help you in your efforts to keep bait alive for the next fishing trip. Where and when you catch your live bait does make a difference in how good it is, and how well it will keep in captivity until you feed it to the stripers. Baitfish caught in cooler water are going to survive longer and catch fish better than baitfish caught in warm water. This is especially true after long-term warm water stress has begun. **The temperature of your holding water is a critical factor in keeping live bait healthy.** This is due primarily to the fact that cooler water holds a high concentration of dissolved oxygen. Fish also have slower metabolic rates in cooler water, which allows them to cope better with the stress of captivity. This is the reason you can stock more bait per gallon in a tank of relatively cooler water. Remember - it is extremely stressful for freshwater fish to experience temperature fluctuations in excess of 7 to 10 degrees from where they were captured.

Bait tanks have to be capable of allowing for an adequate exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between the holding water and the air. This is accomplished by creating as much water surface area as possible, which will naturally allow for carbon dioxide produced by the fish to escape the water while oxygen from the air enters the water. You can take things a step further and greatly enhance the exchange of gases by breaking the surface tension of the water with a battery operated air stone. You could also use a small submersible water pump that re-circulates tank water to help break the water surface tension as a means to improve the natural exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide in your holding water.

Filtration is another important component of keeping fish in captivity. This can easily be accomplished by pumping the holding water through filter material at a rate of four water changes per hour or more. Filtration is important because it removes the build up of metabolic waste (ammonia) from the tank water. If ammonia levels build up too high, it will essentially "burn" the gills on the fish, impairing gill function. A slow circular motion of the water in the bait tank is also desirable.

The holding water in your tank can be treated with chemicals to improve the survival rate of your bait fish. The most common additive is just plain non-iodized salt at about one cup per 20 gallons of water. The number of bait fish in the tank is always a question asked that is hard to answer without knowing all the conditions and circumstances listed above. My best answer is to always stay within a safe measure to prevent stress. Small quantities of good bait that will catch fish are better than any larger number of bait that won't. The number of bait the tank will keep in good condition depends on the size of bait. If all the conditions in the tank are favorable, the shad per gallon could go as high as ¼ pound (approximately a 7 inch gizzard shad) per gallon of water. When bait is occasionally easy to catch, there is a great temptation to overload your holding tank. It is very hard for the angler to resist this temptation, so go ahead: overload the tank and learn this lesson once and for all.

The best live bait fishermen enjoy the art and science of catching and keeping of bait fish, because this is what makes them successful at catching striper and hybrid. The learning curve can only be accomplished with experience and shortened a small amount by talking to someone else that has already "been there and done that."

—— **Ezell Cox**

Some Advice on Fall Striper Movements

Fishing in East Tennessee lakes can be a challenge in the fall season. A month ago, the mature stripers were mostly down the lakes in the deeper, cool, oxygen-rich waters near the dam. Then the waters began to flow through the dams and the temperatures began to cool, releasing the fish from the confines of their late summer refuge. Within days these fish are on a major move; many of them are stressed from low oxygen, a lack of food and a slow metabolism from the deep cold waters. Their instincts are to feed and seek the huge schools of bait which have formed in the upper waters of the feeder rivers and large creeks of the lakes. We believe that current flow, forage scent and shallow-water bait concentrations draw the striper great distances to these areas.

These fall bait concentrations can be found in the nutrient rich, warm, shallower areas of your lake, with flows. This concentration can move daily or even hourly, based on water temp. Fishing the upper-most concentrations and being close to the occasional feeding packs will catch fish. Artificial baits trolled through schools can work, but frisky live bait seems to work the best. A spread of different size baits will help determine the best size for the fish in the area, but a larger size usually works the best. Presenting down lines near the bottom of the bait balls or close to the bottom can attract the fish to your bait over the school of small forage. Planer boards pulled with long, lightly weighted lines or shorter un-weighted lines will help cover wider areas.

As the rivers and creeks get colder, the bait concentrations move down the lake, following the warmer deeper water. When the surface waters cool to the 40's and below we then transition into the winter striper pattern, when artificial baits will start to work better than live bait. Good luck with finding the BAIT concentrations and fish!

— **Doug Steffe,**

New Members List: Welcome to the club guys

Robert Metz - Harrison, Oh	Clay Haselton, Kingsport, Tn
Frank Zimmerman - Stow, Oh	Jim Wallace, Knoxville, Tn
James Rigney - LaFollette, Tn	John Vincenzo, Knoxville, Tn
Michael Carter - Knoxville, Tn	Tommy White, Sevierville, Tn
Michael High - Knoxville, Tn	Sam Lanning, Rogersville, Tn
Lawrence Douglass - Crossville, Tn	Jacob Lanning, Rogersville, Tn
Joseph Campbell - Russell Springs, Ky	David Maurer, Guilford IN
Jason (Chris) Stansberry - Seymour, Tn	Gary Conley, Chapmanville WV
Stuart Bilbrey - Jacksboro, Tn	Tracy Templeton - Dandridge, Tn
Melvin Brook - Lily, Ky	Brian Oaks - Maynardville, Tn
Robert Fuller - Charleston, Wv	Darrell Owen from Mooresburg, TN
Tob Trenkamp - Hamilton, Oh	Harvey Perricone from LaFollette, TN
Jacob (Jake) Plasters - Gallipolis, Oh	Dan Hall from Loudon, TN
Josh Treadway - Rockford Tn	Larry Owens, Tazewell, Tn.
Columbus Whaley - Sevierville, Tn	Richard Brogan, Loveland, Oh.
John Galliher - Norwood, NC	Kenny Witt, Maryville, Tn.
Dale Zimmerman—Talbot, Tn.	Jamey Loy, Knoxville, Tn.
	Christopher Owens, Tablott, Tn.

How to Contribute to the Newsletter:

Please send in any pictures or news that you think would interest club members – we are always glad to hear from you. You can e-mail photos and reports to: bcbusy@att.net We usually put the newsletter together around the end of the month, but send your information any time and we will work it in.

Hot Spots

CHEROKEE LAKE

The seasonal migration away from the thermal trap that the larger fish have been surviving in during the late summer months has begun as the lake turnover & mixing is underway. The water quality remained good enough this summer for great survival of the larger stripers. Good dissolved oxygen & temperatures can be found anywhere so the striper / hybrid will head for the most abundant bait. Catch and Release will also be optional. Top water activity can be noticed on the calm mornings. The largest concentration of bait happens in the upper end of the reservoir and the back of major coves & creeks. The gulls will start to arrive by the end of October & other bait-eating birds will help find the game fish until then.

NORRIS LAKE

Water quality remained great all summer, so survival was excellent. Lake turnover & mixing is well underway, so migration of the stripers from deep water around the lower portion (dam end) of the lake has begun. Bait can be seen on the surface along with breaking game fish feeding in it. Stripers can be found around the most abundant bait in the headwaters of major creeks, coves, and rivers. The low water and flow has allowed the stripers to remain scattered much farther upstream than normal this summer. Good Catch and Release practice now becomes optional. The gulls are expected back to help find the fish at the same time the size and creel limits change on November 1.

WATTS BAR & MELTON HILL

Look for the stripers in front of the major coves or where you find the most bait fish and bait-eating birds. Catch and Release works good in the cool water months. The fish in Watts Bar & lower Clinch Watts Bar have contamination warnings so should not be harvested.

— *Ezell Cox*

YOUR 2017 TSBA OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND STAFF

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Vice President: Cory Malabey

Treasurer: Art Muchow

Secretary: Keith Shannon

Board Chairman: Eric Rauch

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Bill Ballou, Jim Blazier, Steve Nichols, Cory Malabey, David Powell, Eric Rauch, Allan Franklin, Bob Biscay, Hal Basdekis

TSBA STAFF

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Advisors: Ezell Cox 423-626-9547

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TSBA. Appreciates all the support we get from our sponsors. If you would like to see your business listed in our newsletter please consider renewing for 2017. TSBA can provide newsletters for our sponsors to distribute. Thanks!



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As a member:

- *You'll receive a monthly newsletter.
- * 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 web page.

Your Name_____

Spouse's Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(____)_____ # of minor children in family _____

Referred By: _____

Please provide an e-mail address to receive the monthly newsletter:

E-Mail address _____

I have read and agree to abide by and be bound by the Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc. (TSBA) Bylaws. A copy of the Bylaws can be found on the TSBA website at www.tnstripedbass.com or at the offices of the corporation.

(Signature)

(Date)

Enclose a check for \$20.00

Mail to: TSBA

2954 Lake Forest Circle

Talbott, TN. 37877

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 that sign up in Oct., Nov., or Dec. will get credit for the remainder of that year and the following year.

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2954 Lake Forest Circle
Talbot, Tn. 37877

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GET HOOKED!