

# Tennessee Striped Bass Association

Get Hooked !



October 2020



Ryan Beddinghaus social distancing from a Norris Lake striper!

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

Submit news items to [tsba.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:tsba.newsletter@gmail.com)

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

# November meeting cancelled

We have decided not to hold the in-person meeting that was scheduled for Monday, November 2nd. We hope to resume our meetings in 2021; stay tuned for more details. Hope everyone is in good health and enjoying their time on the water!

## TSBA Dues Notice

The TSBA Board of Directors has decided that, since our meetings and other activities have been so disrupted this year as a result of COVID, anyone who has or does pay 2020 dues will remain paid up through the end of December 2021. If you haven't paid yet for 2020, this is a great opportunity to do so and have next year covered, too. Send a check for \$20 to:

**TSBA**

**PO Box 7303**

**Knoxville, TN 37921**

## Seeking a Permanent Meeting Location

We are still seeking suggestions for a permanent meeting location. Please reply on our Facebook page or email Keith Shannon at [keith.shannon@gmail.com](mailto:keith.shannon@gmail.com) with your ideas.

Eric Rauch with a Norris  
Lake striper caught on an  
umbrella rig



# Asian Carp Update

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) -- Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee has signed an executive order establishing a commission that will provide advice on mitigating the invasion of Asian carp into the state's lakes and river systems, according to a news release.

Lee signed the new order on Wednesday and the new Asian Carp Advisory Commission will provide its first report in October.

Asian carp were first imported to the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s to help clean retention ponds, but they later escaped into the Mississippi River system during flooding and have been migrating south ever since. They now threaten to upend aquatic ecosystems, starve out native fish and wipe out endangered mussel and snail populations along the Mississippi River and dozens of tributaries.

Silver and bighead carp, two species of Asian carp threatening the Southeast, are capable of eating up to 40% of their body weight each day and are thought to spread through locks, water navigation systems used in rivers and canals.

Nationally, state and federal agencies have spent roughly \$607 million to stop them since 2004. Projects in the works are expected to push the price tag to about \$1.5 billion over the next decade.

In 2018 in Tennessee, the fish and wildlife commission had directed \$500,000 to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to aid in efforts to avoid the spread and had committed to providing \$250,000 in subsequent years.

In 2019, state officials were optimistic about current evasion efforts, but worried about the possibility of the destructive fish making its way further south in areas they had yet to reach.

In the past, the TWRA and partners have subsidized commercial fishermen to harvest the fish from waterways.

According to the TWRA website, those who locate a small, less than 9 inches, carp anywhere in the state other than the Mississippi River, or catch a carp of any size in East Tennessee or anywhere that the fish is not yet known to be established are asked to put the animal on ice or freeze it and contact the agency.

Pictures can also be submitted if one is not able to catch the fish.

The TWRA can be reached at [ans.twra@tn.gov](mailto:ans.twra@tn.gov) or by calling regional offices whose phone numbers can be located at [www.tn.gov/content/tn/twra.html](http://www.tn.gov/content/tn/twra.html).

# Fall and Early Winter Techniques for Striped Bass

East Tennessee is fortunate to have several lakes with good striped bass fishing. This article summarizes my experiences on Watts Bar in the late fall and early winter. I really enjoy fishing this time of year. After a scorching summer of sweating through my clothes, the cool weather is a welcome relief. The crowds of fishermen and pleasure boaters are gone, watchable wildlife is abundant, and fishing is good.

## When

In the summer and early fall, when the water temperature is in the mid-70s or higher, most striped bass are enjoying the cooler water in the Tennessee and Clinch River arms of the lake. As the water temperature cools and fall progresses, fish leave the river arms and return to the main lake to feed heavily. By the end of October, huge schools of shad move to the back of mid and lower lake feeder creeks and large coves. Shortly thereafter, flocks of seagulls show up to eat the shad and, fortunately for us, show us where the striped bass are.

## Where

Your best bet to find striped bass is to find seagulls. When striped bass feed, they push shad to the surface, making them easy prey for seagulls. Seek out creeks and coves that consistently have large numbers of gulls. A pair of binoculars helps. Unlike you and I, gulls fish all day every day. They know which creeks are frequented by feeding striped bass and spend most of their time there. They are essentially playing the odds, in gamblers' parlance. Every morning and evening, striped bass and gulls have feeding frenzies on Watts Bar. However, the frenzies don't occur in the same place every day. If you don't see fish breaking and birds diving shortly after sunrise or within an hour or so of sunset, move. You are in the wrong spot. If fish don't break by a certain time known only to the birds, they will leave a particular creek to find breaking fish. You should too.

## How

Shad on freelines, planer boards and down lines will all catch fish in late fall and early winter. In the early morning and late afternoon, when fish typically come up near the surface to feed, planer boards and freelines are most effective. When the sun is high, and especially so on sunny days, downlines work best. Watch your graph and note the depth at which you see fish and rig your rods accordingly. I always keep two rods rigged with artificial baits to target breaking fish. One is rigged with a topwater bait like a popper or wakebait, the other with a swimbait or similar soft plastic.

Striped bass can be very size-selective as the water gets colder. When striped bass are feeding on tiny baits, they will often not take larger baits. The solution is to downsize your bait and tackle. When the water is in the high 40s, a three-inch shad on ten-pound line and a #4 hook is often required to get bites. Don't overlook tiny artificials in cold water. They will frequently outfish live bait. In cold water, striped bass' strike zones get very small. Live bait is smart. It stays out of the strike zone. Artificial baits are dumb. Tiny artificials will generate a reaction bite when it gets in the strike zone.

*Keith Shannon*



30+ from Watts Bar! (See hand for scale)

# 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

## **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 be possible (and desirable). 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. 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 and lower Clinch Watts Bar have contamination warnings so should not be harvested.

— 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 4:** Open forum on late-summer striper tactics.

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

**Sept 19: CANCELLED** 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: CANCELLED** 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**

**Newsletter Printing:** Jim Blazier, Bill Ballou

**Distribution:** Jim Blazier [jblazier@comcast.net](mailto:jblazier@comcast.net)

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**Web Administrator:** Bob Biscay [tennstripedbass@gmail.com](mailto: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!



102 Cross Park Drive  
(Located on HWY 61, across from Anderson Co. High School.)  
Clinton, TN 37716  
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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 \_\_\_\_\_ -- \_\_\_\_\_  
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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

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