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Lake Texoma stripers

By Mike Giles / outdoors writer

A group of local anglers recently made a trip to the famed Lake Texoma, located on the Texas and Oklahoma border in search of striped bass. For years the 88,000 acre Lake Texoma has been known as one of the premier striped bass fishing destinations in the country.

Robert Smith, Johnny Cumberland, Darren Graham and Mitchell Moffett, Rob Smith and Joe Heiden joined Hattiesburg resident Jim "Gris" Griswold along with his nephew Brian Hair of Oklahoma for a couple days of action-packed fishing fun and excitement.

Griswold takes a couple weeks off every year and returns to Texoma to guide friends and clients on striped bass fishing trips. During those two weeks each year he averages cleaning between 900 to 1,000 stripers!

The local group got in on the start of the annual striper run while fishing out of the Lighthouse Marina. And they weren't disappointed in the results brought by Griswold's top-notch guiding efforts. With water depths averaging between 40 to 100 feet, the lake provides prime habitat for the ravenous stripers.

Ideal Cover

Stripers feed about three quarters of the time and have voracious appetites for shad, threadfin shad in particular. The many humps, shelves, rocky points and big boulders in the lake make for some fantastic fishing. However, with the fish relating to the humps and underwater structure, it was imperative for this group that someone know the lay of the lake in order for the anglers to be successful.

On the first morning it took only about thirty minutes before they started catching the stripers in all sizes. Griswold and other guides would locate fish on the humps and bumps with the use of top-notch sonar equipment that would let them actually spot fish on the graph.

"When we pulled up onto one of those spots the guides would tell us before we started fishing if we were going to catch them there," commented Johnny Cumberland. "Sometimes they would tell us, that we were going to work on them here, and we usually did! They were so good at reading the bottom and the graphs that they actually knew how many fish were on a spot and if they would bite or not!"

While stripers were the fish of choice on this trip, the group also caught a variety of bass and catfish. About twenty smallmouth bass were caught on the two-day trip with Darren Graham catching a prized four-pound lunker smallmouth as a bonus. Johnny Cumberland caught the lunker striped bass of the trip, a large 9-pound striper that was ferocious in his attack on the helpless threadfin shad.

Big Ones

The stripers in the lake ranged in sizes up to 20 pounds with occasional 15 to 20 pounders being caught. Each person could keep up to ten fish a day with two of those being over 20 inches.

The anglers continued to work underwater humps while the action was fast and furious. The group

split up into two boats of three anglers apiece and the action was almost more than they could stand. On several occasions five of the anglers would have on stripers at the same time, and that made for bedlam. On one occasion, Moffett fought three fish at a time. He had one rod under his arm, one rod between his legs, while the other arm was used to fight yet another striped bass!

The action was so fast and furious that the group actually limited out by 11 a.m. each day. On day two of the trip the anglers had their limit by 8 a.m.! It was evident that they had the best guides on the lake as the other boats came in with far fewer stripers. All told, the group caught approximately 120 to 150 fish a day both days. And that's not a bad fishing trip in anybody's book!