

Lake Murray Country May 1 Fishing Report

The Largemouth Bass on Lake Murray are finishing up Spawn on the lower end of the lake, and have begun to feed on the shad spawn mid lake and up the river. Over the coming weeks look for the Bass to continue to feed more heavily on the shad spawn mid lake and up the river, with the shad spawn starting on the lower lake in the coming weeks. Fishing techniques for Largemouth Bass will differ depending on which end of the lake you are fishing. Look for Largemouth lake-wide staging on secondary points or deeper banks outside of spawning areas.

On the upper reaches (from Dreher Island up river), where the water has more color, look for fish to be shallower. Techniques of choice are crankbaits that dive to the 2-4 foot range, such as an IMA square bill; Greenfish 1/2oz spinnerbait in Chartreuse and White; Greenfish 1/2 Jigs in Green Pumpkin or Murphy's Magic; soft plastics flipping baits, such as the Reins Punchin' Predator, Craw Tube, Ring Claw Daddy, or C-Pod rigged on a Juka rig with a Reins 1/8oz or 3/16oz Slim Drop Shot Sinker; Finesse worms in a natural or green pumpkin color, or a merthiolate or white colored Trick worm. Look for areas with a hard bottom and visible cover in the form of laydowns or docks. Look for Bass chasing topwaters, such as a Greenfish Tackle buzzbait, frog, prop bait, like the Ima Helips, or poppers, like the IMA Finesse Popper 65, as fish are still guarding fry and shellcrackers are starting to spawn.

On the lower end of the lake (from Dreher Island to the Dam), focus on wakebaits such as an IMA Bone Floating Flit, the IMA Floating Glide Fluke or Swimbaits like the Optimum Boom Boom Swimbait and Reins 4" Fat Rockvibe Shad to cover water and find areas of the most activity with cruisers or post-spawners that will track or follow these lures, slowing down in areas where fish are located with a 1/2oz Greenfish tackle jig, shakey head, dropshot or trick worm in a Watermelon or Green Pumpkin color. Look for fish to continue to congregate on secondary points around rock or a hard bottom, where the shad spawn will become more prominent in the coming weeks. As the shad spawn becomes stronger, look for fish to turn on subsurface baits like the New IMA Glide fluke walked like a soft jerkbait, and days with an increased activity, walking baits, such as the Ima Skimmer. As the day progresses, these same fish can be caught with a drop-shot, finesse worm or a Reins 4" Axe Craw, Carolina Rigged with a 1/2 oz Reins Sliding Football Sinker and an 18" leader.

Over the next month as bass start to chase shad and herring, it is a great time to pick up your favorite shallow water lure and just go fishing. Bass will be holding on secondary points or deeper banks outside of spawning areas. In the river and in the backs of creeks and coves, where resident fish are more prevalent, fish could be as shallow as a couple feet targeting Shell Cracker and Bluegill staging for their spawn, or spawning. On the Lower end of the lake, where Bass are set up slightly deeper, look for them to be positioned on secondary points adjacent to spawning coves and feeding on the Shad and Herring spawn.

A great way to get out, enjoy the outdoors, and do a little fishing is to book a trip with one of the Lake Murray area guides. I am a certified Fisheries Biologist, Coast Guard Approved, full-time Largemouth Bass guide, have fished full-time and competitively for the past 13 years across the country on both the BASS and FLW trails, and have a lifetime of fishing experience. I offer a learning experience

on multiple techniques of your choice, tournament preparation, and/or electronics education. I would love to share my knowledge with you on the water and enjoy a day of fishing.

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