

FISHING

Many people ask about fishing. For your first trip in this area, a local guide is the way to go. Eric Crowley, Lake and Stream Guide for the North Georgia Mountains, sent the following information regarding the special he offers to our guests:

option 1 - for 1 person ,early morning trip from 6 am to 9:00- live bait for striper-- 100.00

option 2 for 2 people half day trip from 6 am to 10:30- live bait fishing for striper--125.00

option 3 for 3 people half day trip from 6 am to 11:00- live bait fishing for striper- 150.00

These are total prices, not per person. If you wish to contact him for more information or a flyer, email him at lakeandstreamguideservice@gmail.com or call 706-669-4973. Also be sure to check out his ad/listing in the 2008 ETC phonebook under fishing guides.

For people that don't want to get a fishing license, or just want to take the kids fishing, try Beaver Lake. You drove by it on the way to the cabin. You'll catch brim (sunfish) and you are sure to meet some very nice people. Also, there is access to the river from the parking area just west of the lake before you take the left over the bridge. For deeper water, fish near the villas at the Fife Bridge (in the direction of the Rec Center).

For licensed anglers, a Georgia wildlife website has the following information that might be helpful:

<http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/> **Coosawattee River**

A number of **breem** species call the Coosawattee home, but **bluegill and redbreasts** are most numerous. Both are found in good numbers throughout the river, but they are most abundant in the three-mile river stretch below Carters Dam. The average fish will be 5-6 inches, but plenty of 7-9 inch fish are swimming these waters. Crickets, worms, and small artificials fished in areas of deep slack water behind river obstacles, root wads, and tree-falls are all potential hangouts for these species. **Three species of black bass** patrol the Coosawattee River, with spotted bass dominating more than 50 percent of the group, followed by redeye and largemouth bass. The spot fishery is better than most large rivers in the immediate area, affording anglers the opportunity to catch a fair number of spots in an outing. Coupled with good numbers, spotted bass up to 6 lb. may stretch lines in and around the numerous log-jams and deep pools found in the river. Redeye bass are smaller than spots, but what they lack in size they more than account for in aggressiveness and power. Anglers hooking into large redeye with light spinning tackle will have their hands full. Largemouth are generally rare in the river as would be expected given habitat more suited for the previously discussed bass species. Nevertheless, a few bucket-mouths can nicely round out an anglers day on the water. Striped bass inhabit the Coosawattee River, especially during the summer and early fall months when they are seeking cool water to beat the summer heat. Stripers will generally range in size from 1 to 30 lb., with the average lineside tipping scales in the 5 to 6 pound range. Most striper fishing is done in the river below Carters Dam. However, fish can be found in deep holes or in the mouths of feeder creeks throughout the river. Since striped bass feed heavily on shad, live or cut shad is key, though artificials have their place on the river. The Coosawattee is once again home to a sportfish species that disappeared from the river nearly 40 years ago. Since 2002, 10,000 plus **lake sturgeon** have been re-introduced to the Coosawattee and surrounding rivers in the greater Coosa River basin. Through long-term annual stocking it is hoped the species will reclaim much of its historic inhabitation within the river. The species grows slowly and does not mature for 12-15 years so it is important to protect them from harvest until they can reproduce and once again support some angler harvest. Anglers accidentally catching a lake sturgeon should immediately release the fish unharmed. Fish hooked deep will often survive if anglers will cut the line near the hook and release the fish with the hook. If you catch a sturgeon, contact the Calhoun (706-624-1161)WRD to report the location from which the sturgeon was caught. Such sightings help biologists assess the status of these magnificent fish. Rounding out the Coosawattee fishing

experience is a host of fish species often overlooked by anglers. **Suckers, redhorse, carp, and freshwater drum** are found throughout the river in large numbers. These silver, hump-backed fish range in size from just a few inches to over 20 inches in length, (avg 11 inches). While abundant throughout the river, the hundred-yard stretch below Carters Dam is a hot bed for drum. The species prefers moderately deep flowing river sections in which to feed. Small jigs bumped along these areas, live crawfish, cut mussels, worms, and shrimp fished on the bottom are an anglers best approach to catching one of these unique fishes.

CARTERS LAKE

Located between Calhoun and Ellijay on the Coosawattee River, this 3,220-acre reservoir is accessed off Hwy 382 (just outside the Coosawattee main and Eagle Mountain gates), with many steep bluff banks and a **completely undeveloped shoreline**. A map showing contours and other features of the reservoir, as well as access information, is available from the COE Resource Manager's office (706-334-2248).

Carters' striped and hybrid striped bass keep the shad population in check. By consuming the larger shad most other game fish cannot, a healthy shad population is maintained. A healthy shad population is one with few large individuals and large numbers of smaller shad that are more readily eaten by other species like black bass, walleye and crappie. Consequently, these species grow faster, bigger and have better survival, providing anglers with a higher quality fishery.

Spotted bass numbers will continue to remain high in 2008. Anglers should expect to boat good numbers of nice spots in as growth continues to be excellent and survival of large spots remains high. The average spot will be better than 10 inches and weigh around : lb. But, there will be plenty of Carters famous "magnum" spots lurking the depths. Five and maybe even six pound plus lunkers will stretch lines this year. In addition to spotted bass, which account for 90 percent of the black bass population, there are largemouth bass up to 9 lb. Bass fishing can be difficult for the inexperienced due to the deep water, steep banks, and the lack of visible cover. Finesse and subtle presentation are the rule at Carters; however, **this is a trophy bass lake and persistence has its rewards**. A fish finder or word of mouth should put new anglers in areas of submerged brush found throughout the lake. More reliably, anglers should find fish holding on the 25+ fish attractors WRD and COE personnel have placed within the lake. Attractor locations can be obtained by contacting biologists at the Summerville WRD office (706-857-3394). White bass and yellow bass populations will be down this year. Regardless, vertically jigging spoons or small jigs in areas where shad are present can take these game fish. Anglers are encouraged to harvest non-native yellow bass, as they attain smaller average size and directly compete with the more desirable white bass. Though often overlooked, crappie populations have responded well to the striper stockings and the good food base. The average crappie will be 8 inches. Anglers should focus their effort around standing timber and under boat docks. Crappie will suspend in these areas year round. Other offerings include channel catfish, flathead catfish and bluegill. Channel catfish will average around 1 lb., and the less abundant flatheads will average a bit over 7 lb. Rocky banks and points upriver are likely spots to find these cats. Bluegill are abundant, although most fish will be less than 6 inches. Worms or crickets are all one needs to sample the bluegill action.

Though boat access is limited to small jon boats, the lower (re-regulation) pool at Carters offers anglers a change of scenery. Species found in this 1,030 acre impoundment include largemouth bass, bream, white bass, striped bass, suckers, and catfish. There are many areas around the lower pool where bank anglers can gain access. Those who do venture out in a boat are reminded to use extreme caution since the water level in this pool can change rapidly and there are numerous shallow stumps and rocks. Fishing opportunities in the tailwaters below the dam include walleye, white bass, sunfish, crappie, and a number of summer stripers. Fishing jetties are located on both banks downstream of the lower pool dam with picnic, restroom, and playground facilities nearby.