

FALL 75 TO 55 DEGREE WATER

Begin fishing a fall pattern when the water has cooled 10 degrees below its hottest point of the summer this can vary but around 80 degrees is good. A rapid temperature drop is best, for this can really put bass on the move from deep main lake structure to shallow water. Bass react to cooling water by moving shallower to big flats, long points with a gradual taper, and tributary arms.

Bass are more baitfish oriented now than in any other season. Look for large schools of shad on your graph. In Keowee, cooling water causes vast numbers of shad to migrate into tributary arms, and bass are close behind. Follow this migration by fishing the first third of creek arms in early fall, then gradually pressing farther back into the tributary as the surface temperature drops. Idle your boat up a creek arm, watching the graph for suspended shad schools or looking for bait flipping on the surface. Creek channel or boat docks in the back of creek arms are dependable fall bass patterns.

It's important now to keep your lure off the bottom, because most baitfish are suspended in the water column. Match lure size to bait fish size. Fall lure preferences included Eye Shad, spinnerbaits with willowleaf blades (they match the profile of baitfish), and shallow to medium running crankbaits in natural shad patterns.

Their aggressive pursuit of baitfish means bass often school on the surface in fall. Always keep a topwater lure, especially a noisy chugger, tied on now. As the water cools to the lower end of the autumn range, a suspending jerkbait will catch fish.