

## Electrofishing Assessment



**Lake Ramsey**

**May 27, 2015**

June 10, 2015

Lake Ramsey Homeowner's Association  
Mr. Joe Urick  
Covington, La

Dear Mr. Urick,

We conducted an electrofishing balance check of your lake on May 27, 2015. The lake was still devoid of weeds and several grass carp were sighted during our electrofishing sample. The carp are not causing any significant problems with the fish population, however it will be several years before we anticipate seeing any return of the previous vegetation. We think it will be another four or five years before you can expect their numbers to significantly decrease and some vegetation to reappear.

The large catfish population is more of a concern than the grass carp. The lake may be supporting a hundred pounds or more of mature catfish per acre that are competing with your bass for food. Once a catfish exceeds two pounds their primary diet is small fish, just like the bass and crappie. Our suggestion would be to remove as many of these catfish as possible through any methods that would be available. We suggest you contact a commercial catfish fisherman to remove as many catfish as he can.

The condition of the bass has remained constant since our 2013 sample, with an average Relative Weight (Wr) in the mid 80s. There is adequate reproduction and good distribution of lengths.

As we have discussed in previous reports, developing a long-term plan to add structure each year in the deeper areas of the lake would increase the catch rate for the residents and anglers of your lake. We would be glad to assist you with this project.

The details of our study are included in the report.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with you on this lake.

Sincerely,

Barry W. Smith  
Certified Fisheries Scientist  
American Sport Fish

### **Site Description**

The 350-acre lake contains bass, crappie, bluegill, redear and an assortment of other fish including threadfin and gizzard shad for forage.

### **Management Goals**

The goal for this lake is to improve quality fishing for bass, bluegill, and redear and crappie, with some emphasis on larger bass production.

### **Aquatic Vegetation**

The grass carp stocking has eliminated the aquatic weeds of the lake. The carp do not appear to be causing a problem with the game fish production.



Grass carp from the most recent stocking.

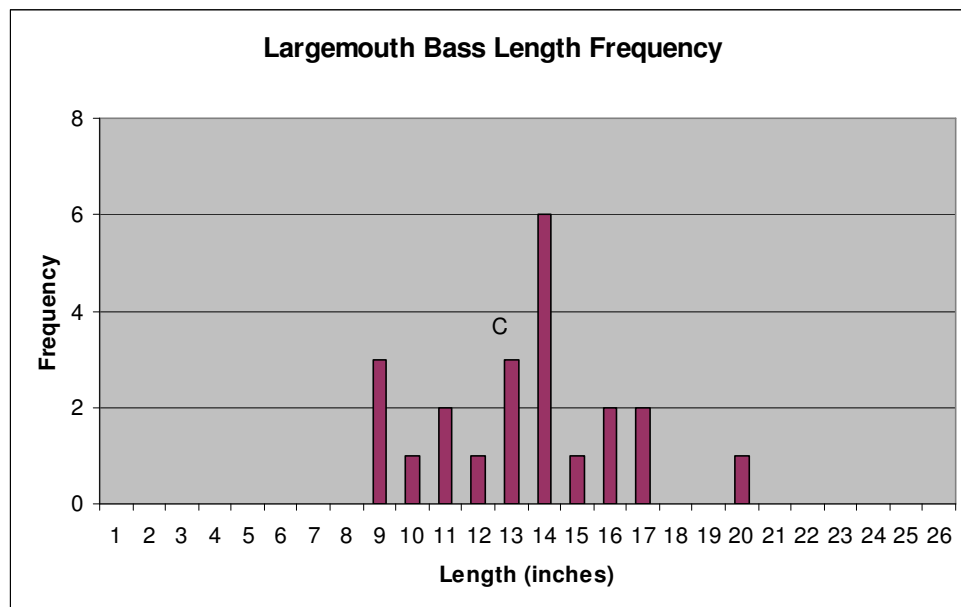
### **Fish Population**

During our visit, we collected largemouth bass, bluegill, shellcracker, crappie, channel catfish, gizzard and threadfin shad.

The first graph, which is Bass Length Frequency, illustrates the distribution of the various sizes of bass that we collected. We captured bass ranging from 9 to 20 inches in length. The peak of the bass length distribution was at 14 inches. Although we would prefer to see the peak at 16 inches, we believe the catfish are competing with the bass for food items and this has slowed their growth.

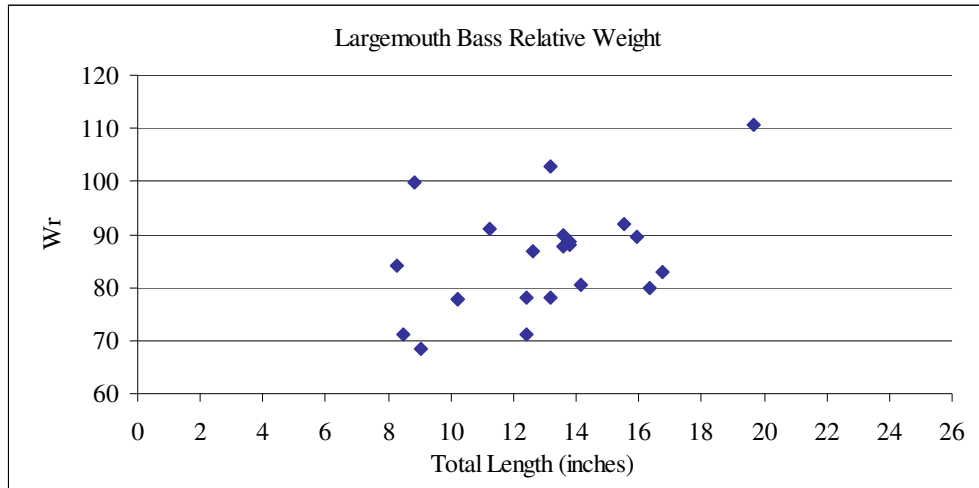


Some of the larger bass in our sample were in excellent condition, such as this one.



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The Relative Weight ( $W_r$ ) of the bass averaged 86; this has remained relatively constant over the past few years. Larger bass appear to be in better condition, but bass less than 16 inches are thin.



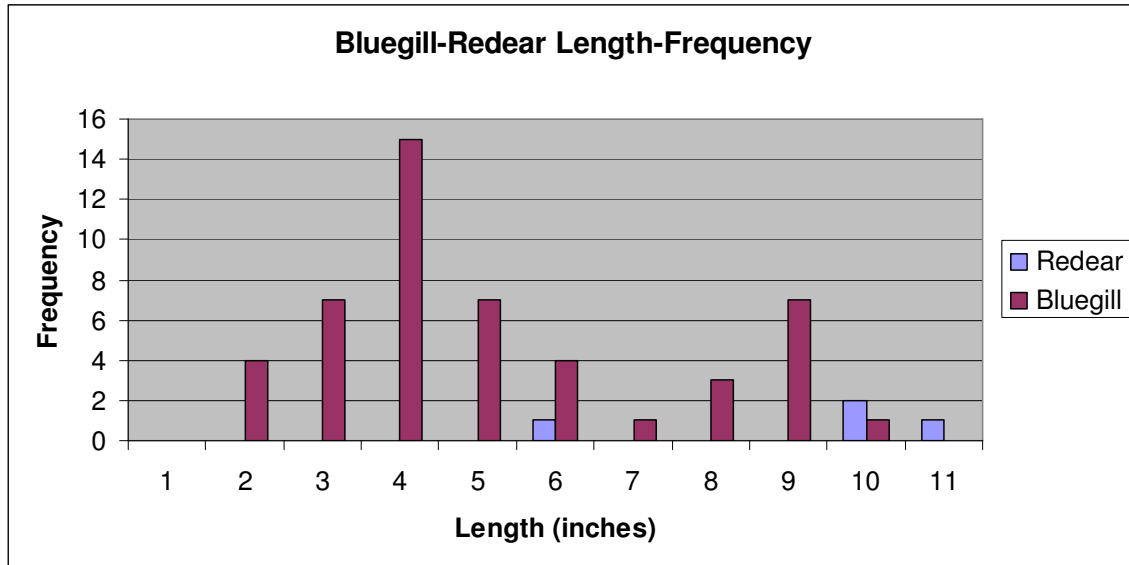
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There are good numbers of 3- to 5-inch bluegill, that are ideal forage for bass two pounds or larger.



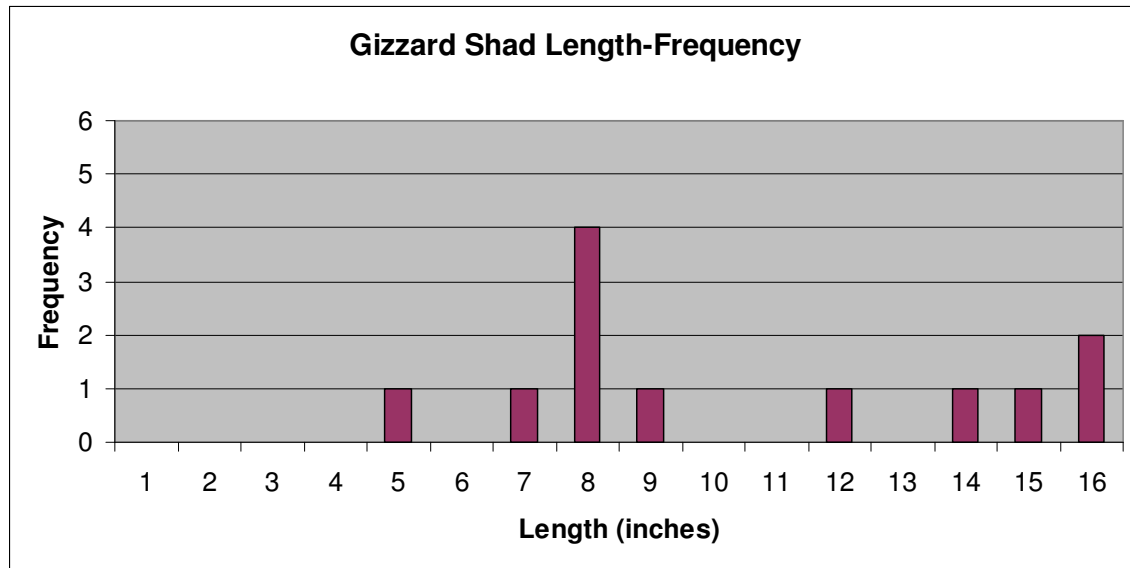
The size distribution of the bluegill and shellcracker is shown in the attached Bluegill-Shellcracker Length Frequency graph. Although there are redear present, we did not find many in our sample. There were a few large adult redear and some large, harvestable bluegill. The relative numbers of bluegill in the 3- to 5-inh range is desirable and provides forage for bass greater than two pounds.



There were some large redear in our sample.

**Crappie:** The crappie were post spawn and deeper than we could successfully sample. Mike Urban and others described their fishing success for crappie this spring.

Gizzard Shad: There were some 14- to 16-inch gizzard shad in our sample. The good news is there was a successful spawn and shad had grown to an average length of eight inches, a perfect size for most of the bass in Lake Ramsey.



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### **Recommendations**

The fish population of the lake can benefit from several management options. The following are the ones we recommend:

- 1- There needs to be an effort to reduce the population of catfish in Lake Ramsey. The lake is carrying a tremendous poundage of channel catfish that are competing with both the crappie and bass for food. Consider bringing in a commercial fisherman to reduce the population.
- 2- Develop a long-range plan of adding fish attractors to Lake Ramsey to concentrate the bass and crappie and increase the catch rate for your anglers. Budget money each year for this activity and over a five or ten year period you will significantly improve fishing for all of your anglers.
- 3- Continue to remove bass smaller than 15 inches.
- 4- Encourage the removal of all crappie.