



Pearl River 2017

Middle Reach REEL FACTS

Ryan Jones – Fisheries Biologist

jerryb@mdwfp.state.ms.us

General Information: The Pearl River contains the third largest drainage basin in Mississippi. A variety of fish species can be found in the river, including some threatened species. At approximately 490 miles in length, the Pearl River runs through three MDWFP management regions. Fluctuations in water level can make navigation difficult at times.

Location: The middle reach begins below Ross Barnett Spillway and flows to Hwy 98

Fishery Management: Black bass, Striped Bass, bream, crappie, and catfish

Purchase a Fishing License: <http://www.mdwfp.com/license/fishing-license.aspx>

Amenities

- 6 boat ramps with parking lots
Ross Barnett Spillway
Lefleur's Bluff St. Park
Georgetown; Hwy 28
Vanilla Water Park
Atwood Water Park
Columbia Hwy; 98

Creel and Size Limits

- Bream: 100 per day
- Catfish: No limit
- Crappie: 30 per day
- Black Bass (Largemouth and Spotted): 10 bass (combined) per day
- Striped Bass: 15 - inch minimum length limit and 6 bass per day. From Ross Barnett dam to Jackson's water intake only 1 may be over 24 inches in length

Regulations

Yo-Yo's, Jugs, and Trotlines

- No more than 25 yo-yo's and no more than 25 jugs may be fished per person. No more than 2 hooks are allowed on each device. Trotlines may have no more than 100 single hooks.
- Bowfin, buffalo, carp, catfish, gar, and shad may be taken with a bow and arrow, crossbow, spear, or gig. However, catfish may not be taken with spear or gig from May 1 through July 15.

Forage Species

- Gizzard Shad
- Threadfin Shad
- Golden Shiners
- Brook Silversides
- Inland Silversides
- Crawfish

Fishing Tips

Bream

- Try crickets, red wigglers, and wax worms in slack water areas during late spring and summer.

Catfish

- Try tightlining liver and cut bait along the outside edge of deep river bends where rock or wood is present. Jugs and trotlines are popular methods.

Crappie

- Target cypress knees and laydowns near deep water with jigs and minnows.

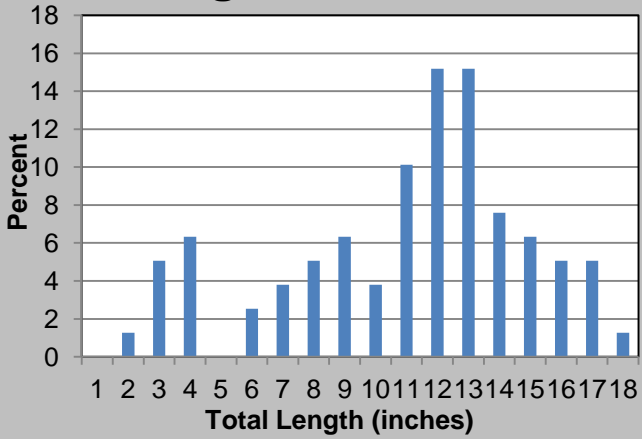
Bass

- Fish brush and trees with junebug colored soft plastics during the winter and summer. Shad colored crankbaits, spinnerbaits, and topwaters are good around rock and gravel in the spring and fall.

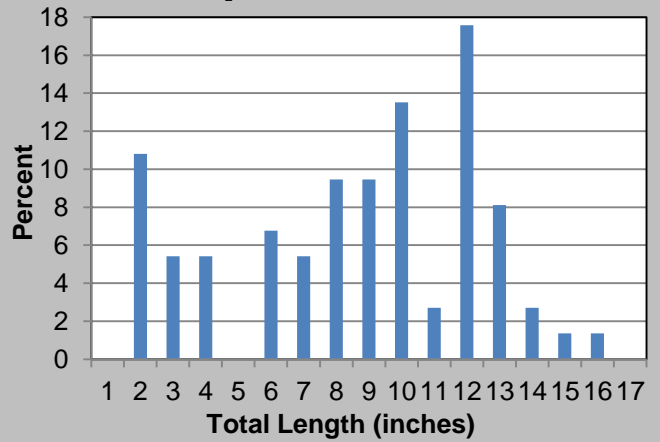
Below: Results from the 2015 summer electrofishing survey conducted on the Pearl River. Fluctuating water levels and a variety of habitat types allows the river to support a diverse fish assemblage.

Species	# of fish collected	% of sample	Average Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)	Average Weight (pounds)	Catch Rate – Adult fish (fish/mile)
Gizzard Shad	766	37.0	5.3	11.8	-	9.1
Threadfin Shad	544	26.3	2.7	4.3	-	-
Longear Sunfish	241	11.6	3.7	6.4	0.1	16.1
Bluegill	218	10.5	4.4	9.4	0.1	17.5
Largemouth Bass	79	3.8	11.5	18.2	1.2	6.2
Spotted Bass	74	3.6	9.1	16.7	0.7	5.2
Channel Catfish	51	2.5	10.3	17.6	0.3	1.9
Flathead Catfish	40	1.9	9.7	31.9	1.1	0.6
White Crappie	20	1.0	9.8	13.4	0.5	1.7
Blue Catfish	16	0.8	10.1	27.6	1.2	0.5
Bowfin	6	0.3	23.6	25.9	4.3	0.6
Inland Silverside	5	0.2	2.6	3.1	-	0.5
Black Crappie	4	0.2	10.1	12.7	0.6	0.4
Redear Sunfish	2	0.1	3.3	3.5	-	-
American Eel	2	0.1	24.8	28.0	2.2	0.2
Shadow Bass	1	< 0.1	5.6	5.6	0.1	0.1
Green Sunfish	1	< 0.1	3.5	3.5	-	0.1
Warmouth	1	< 0.1	3.3	3.3	-	0.1
Gulf Logperch	1	< 0.1	4.3	4.3	-	0.1

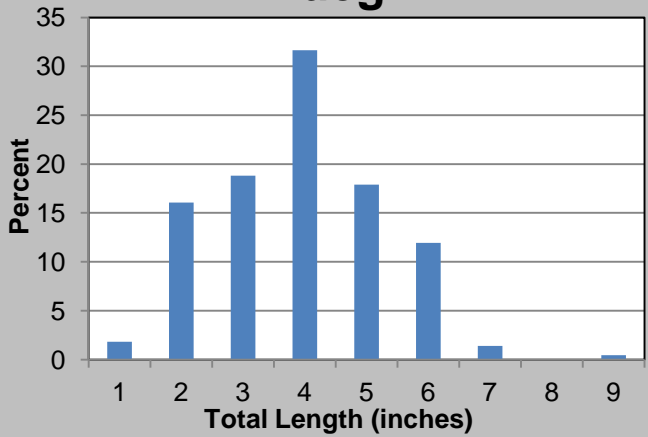
Largemouth Bass



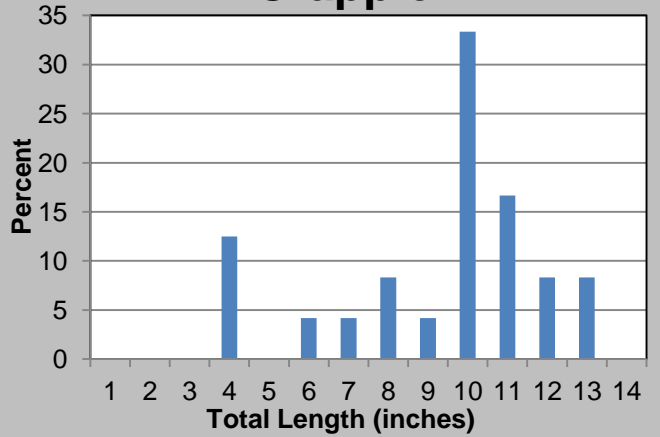
Spotted Bass



Bluegill



Crappie

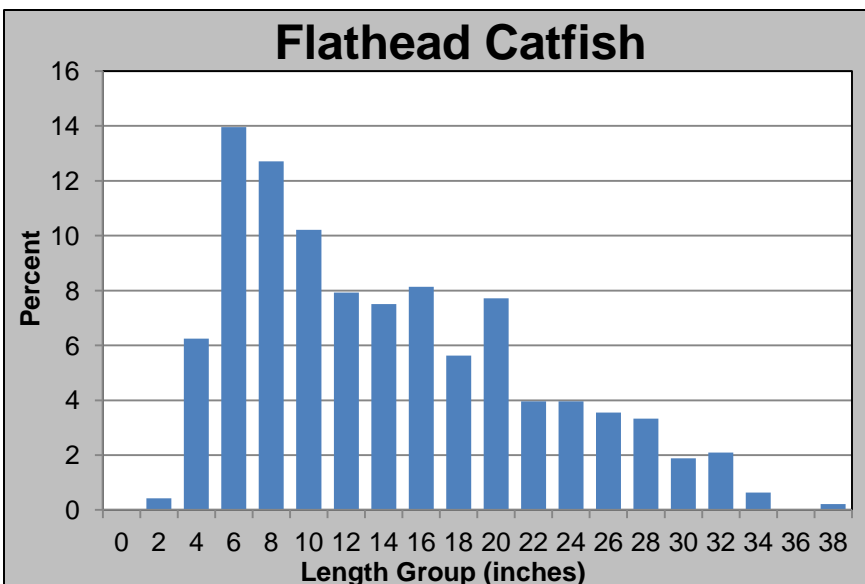
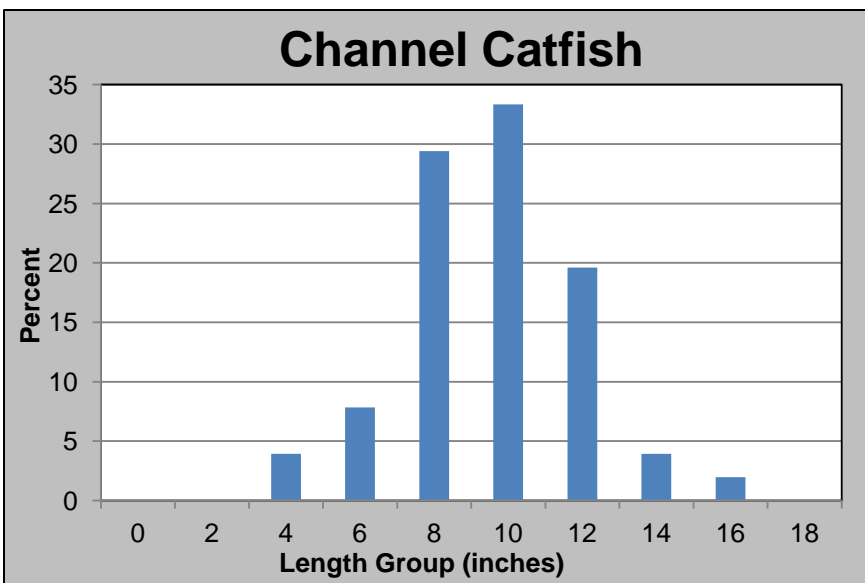
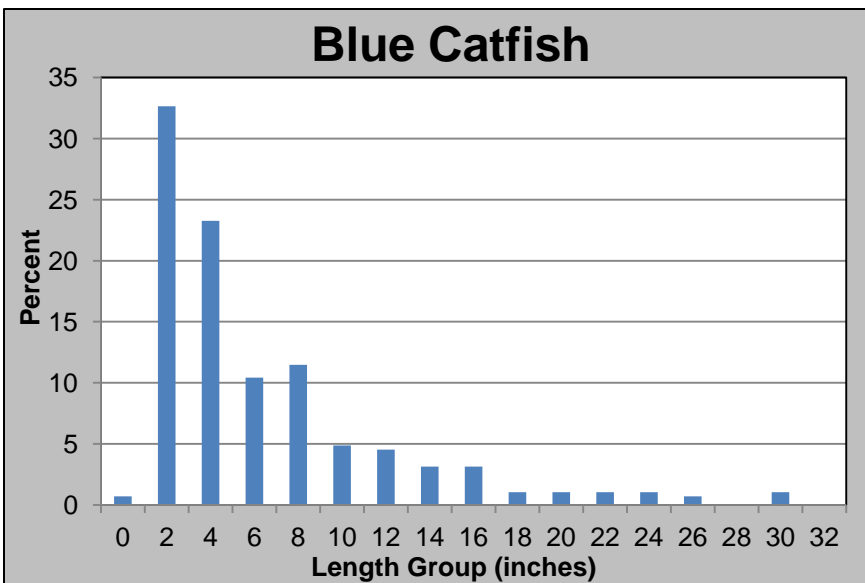


Above: Length distributions for Largemouth Bass, Spotted Bass, Bluegill, and crappie collected during 2015 summer electrofishing.



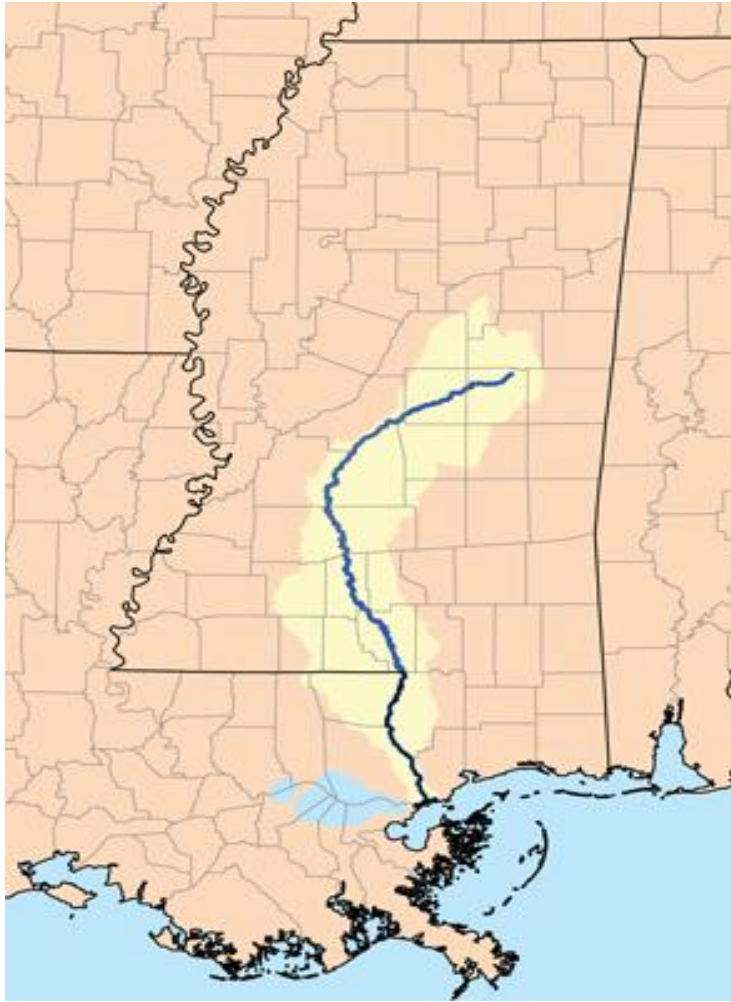
Above: Hard fighting Spotted Bass provide enjoyable river fishing experiences for anglers. The Pearl River is also home to the more elusive American Eel, which spends daylight hours hidden in log jams and crevices.

Below: Length distributions for Blue, Channel, and Flathead Catfish collected during 2015 summer electrofishing.



Above: Quality size Flathead and Blue Catfish can be found throughout this section of the Pearl River.

Below: Map of the Pearl River drainage basin.



Below: The boat ramp off Highway 28 is one of six access points in the middle reach of the Pearl River.

