



Eagle Lake 2018 REEL FACTS

Ryan Jones – Fisheries Biologist

ryanj@mdwfp.state.ms.us

General Information: Eagle Lake is a 4,700 acre oxbow formed by the Mississippi River and is cutoff from the river by the mainline levee system. Water levels are controlled via the Muddy Bayou control structure operated by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Eagle Lake is one of the largest oxbows in Mississippi and is a popular destination for bream and crappie anglers.

Location: Approximately 20 miles north of Vicksburg off Hwy 465.

Fishery Management: Largemouth Bass, bream, crappie, and catfish.

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

Lake Depth Map: http://www.mdwfp.com/media/53260/eagle_lake.pdf

Amenities

- 1 public ramp with courtesy piers, parking lot, and public restroom
- Multiple pay-to-use ramps
- Bait shops and store with gas

Creel and Size Limits

The following apply to both sides of the lake, including the channel to the Muddy Bayou control structure.

- Crappie: 11-inch minimum length limit and 30 crappie per day per angler
- Largemouth Bass: 16- inch minimum length limit and 10 bass per day per angler
- Hybrid Striped Bass: 15- inch minimum length limit and 6 bass per day per angler
- No limit on bream or catfish

Regulations

Eagle Lake is a state boundary water and the following regulations apply to the Mississippi side of the lake.

Yo-Yo's and Jugs

- No more than 25 jugs and no more than 25 yo-yos may be fished per person. No more than 2 hooks are allowed on each device.
- Each jug or yo-yo must be tagged or marked with angler's name and address.
- Anglers must attend jugs and yo-yos when fished during daylight hours.

Handgrabbing

- Hand grabbing season for catfish is open May 1 to July 15 each year.
- Only wooden containers may be placed in the lake.

Fishing Tips

Crappie

- Target shallow areas along the shoreline or islands during spring. In fall and winter, target piers in deep water on the eastern side of the lake.

Largemouth Bass

- Target piers and rocks along the eastern shoreline. Also target Cypress trees around the islands.

Bream

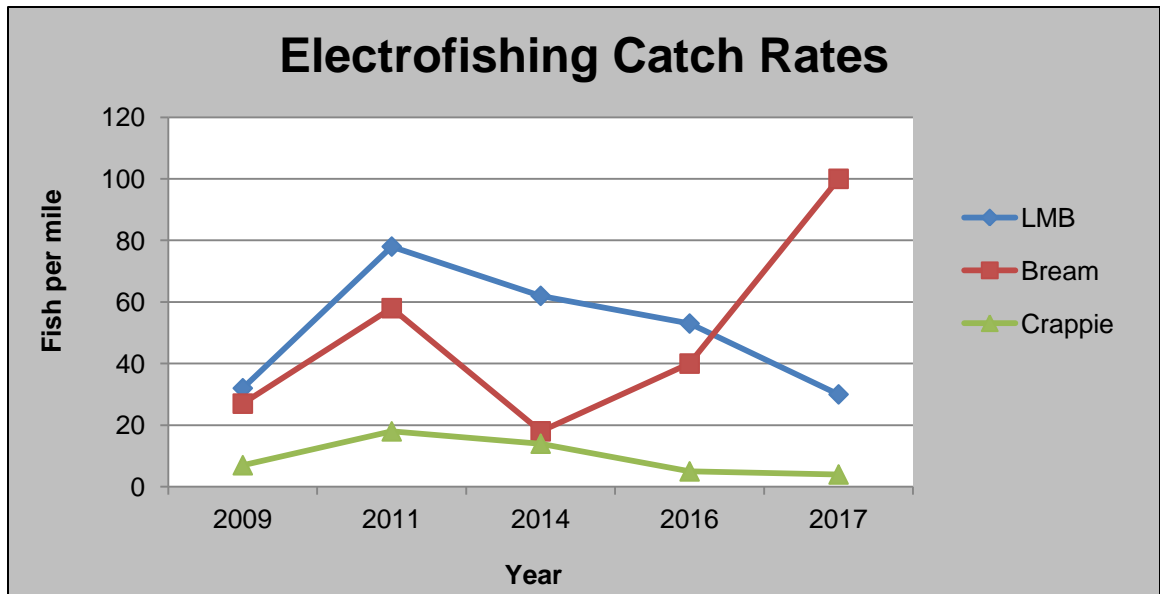
- Try crickets in shallow areas during late spring and summer. Big bluegill are often caught during winter around piers on the eastern side of the lake.

Catfish

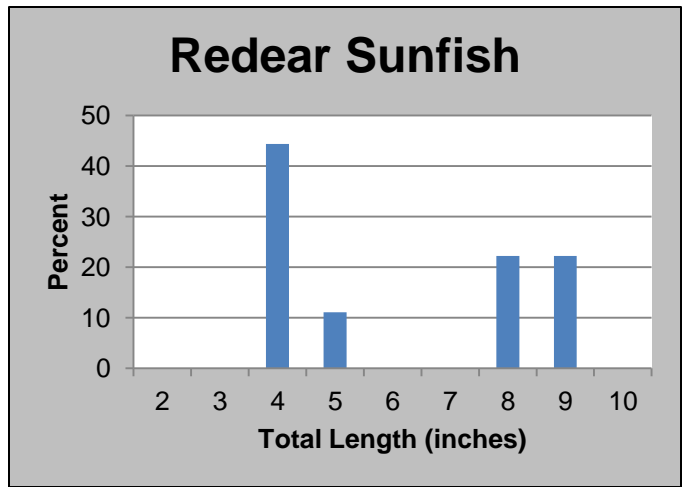
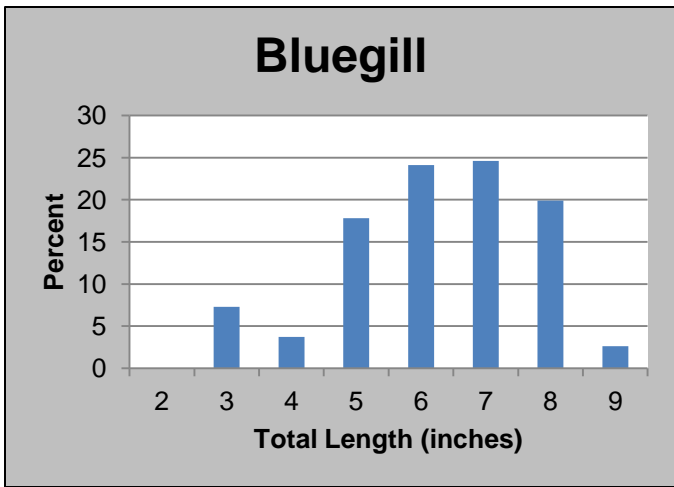
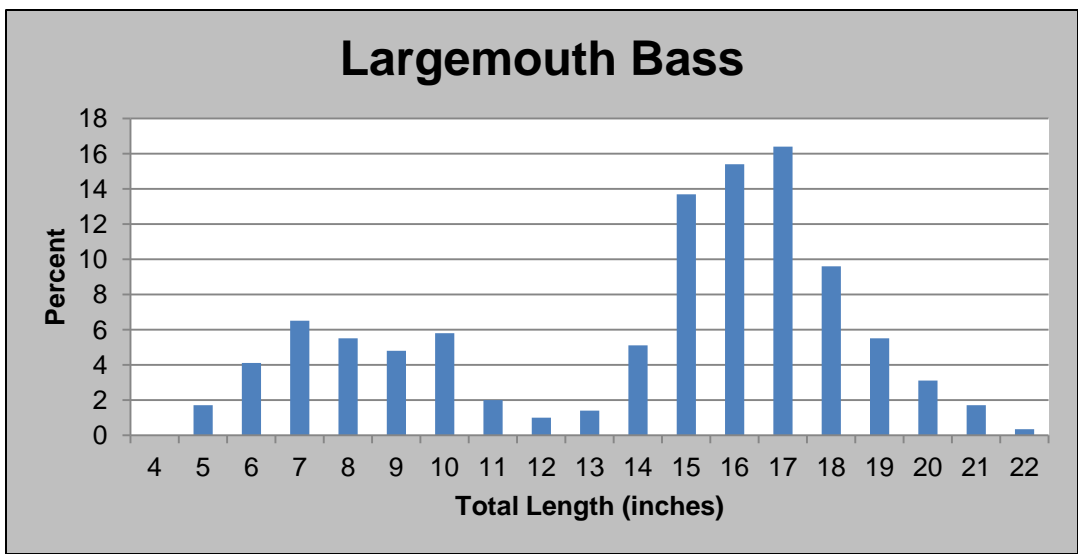
- Target flats and islands on the western side of the lake with liver, worms, or cutbait.

Below: Results from 2017 fall electrofishing surveys conducted at Eagle Lake. Largemouth Bass, White Crappie, and Redear Sunfish are stocked periodically by MDWFP to help maintain a quality fishery.

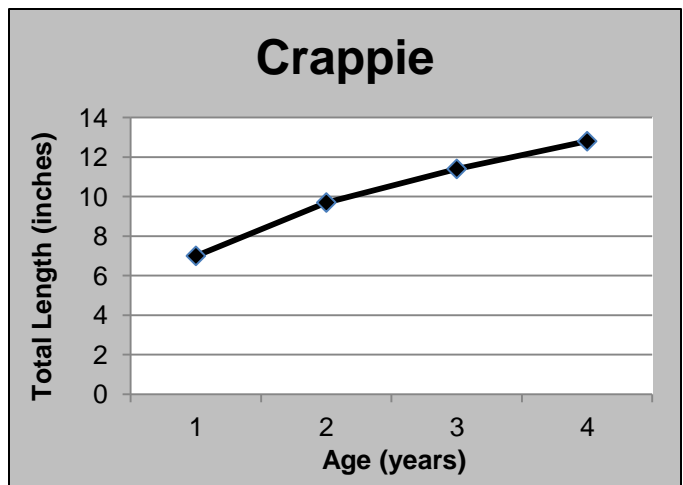
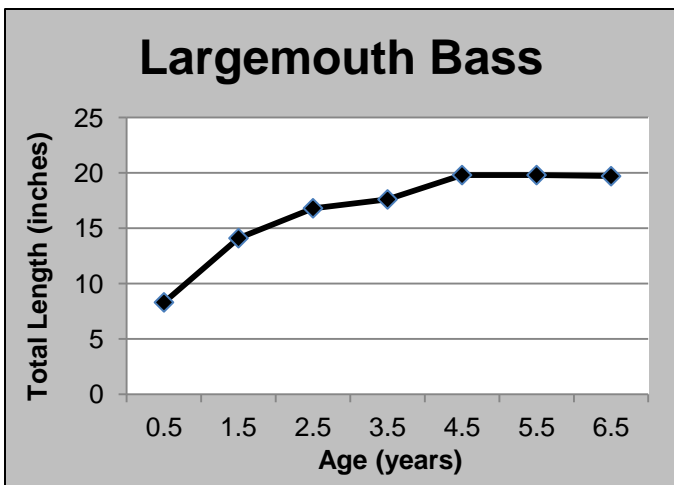
Species	# of fish collected	% of sample	Average Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)	Average Weight (pounds)	Catch Rate – Adult fish (fish/mile)
Threadfin Shad	192	20	-	-	-	21
Largemouth Bass	303	32	14.6	22	2.5	30
Bluegill	193	20	6.7	9.5	0.3	21
Gizzard Shad	115	12	-	-	-	13
Yellow Bass	53	6	7	11.5	0.2	6
White Bass	44	5	15.9	17.3	2.2	5
Black Crappie	31	3	13	14.9	1.5	3
Longear Sufish	3	<1	4.8	5.8	0.1	<1
Redear Sunfish	9	1	6.7	9.8	0.3	1
Channel Catfish	9	1	21.1	22.8	3.8	1
White Crappie	7	<1	14.1	14.5	1.8	<1
Warmouth	3	<1	6.1	8.1	0.3	<1



Above: Changes in catch rates during fall electrofishing from 2009 through 2017 at Eagle Lake. The number of sport fish collected was high following the high water of 2011. Bream numbers declined in 2014, but have since increased. MDWFP stocked Bluegill during 2015 to improve the fishery.

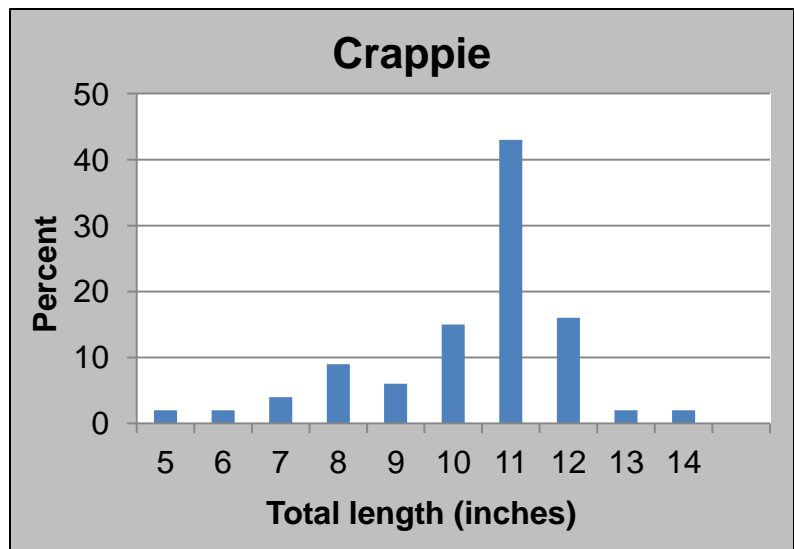


Above: Length distributions for Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, and Redear Sunfish collected during 2017 fall electrofishing at Eagle Lake. **Below:** Growth rates for Largemouth Bass and crappie at Eagle Lake. This lake promotes some of the fastest growing fish in the state due to high fertility and an abundance of forage, primarily shad. Ages are shown in half year or whole year increments due to the time of year that sampling occurred.



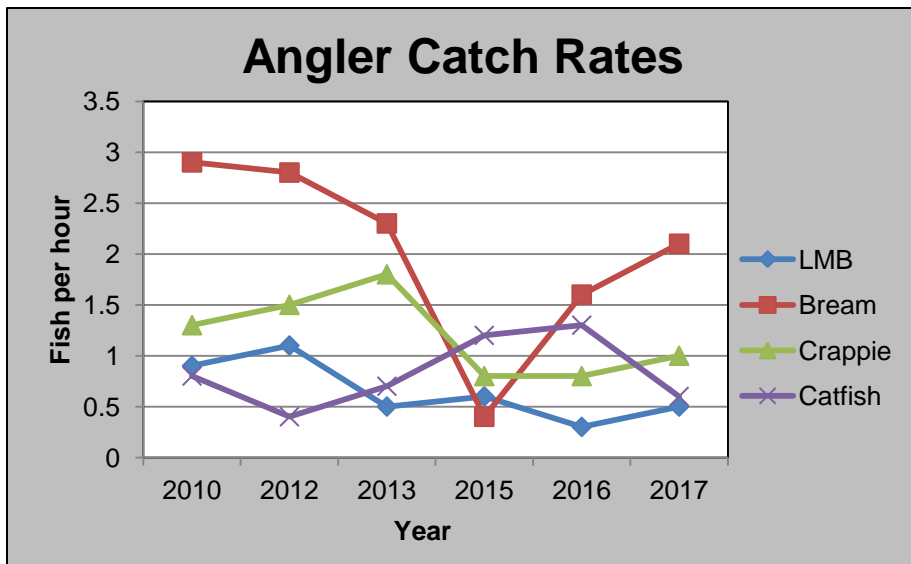
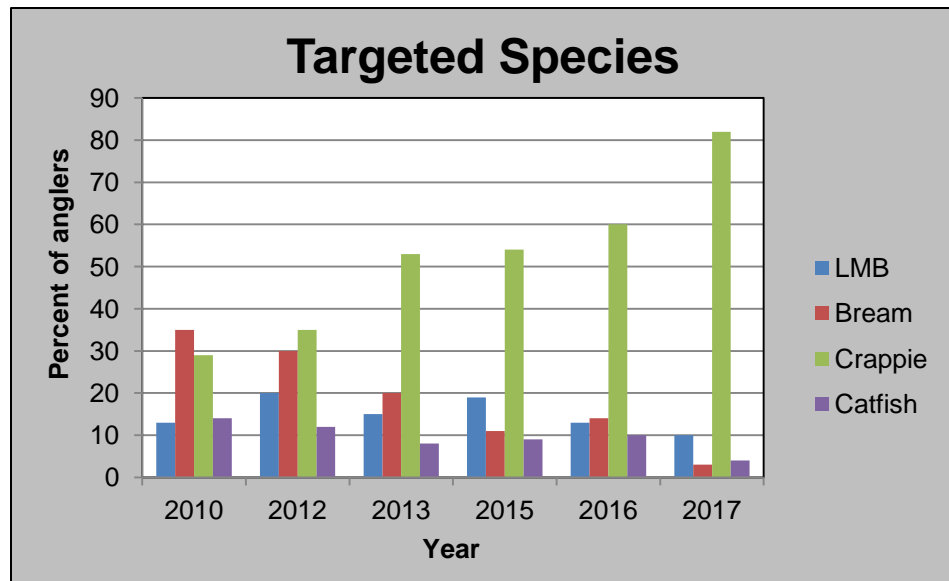
Below: Results from January 2016 lead net sampling at Eagle Lake. These nets are primarily used for sampling panfish, such as crappie and bream. Yellow Bass and White Bass dominated our catch, and anglers are encouraged to harvest as many as they want. The overall number of crappie collected was less than previous years; however, most of the fish were at or above the 11-inch minimum length limit. Anglers should expect to catch fewer, but larger crappie.

Species	# of fish collected	% of sample	Average Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)	Average Weight (pounds)	Catch Rate – Adult fish (fish/night)
Yellow Bass	413	40	9.1	15.2	0.5	17.3
White Bass	235	23	14.3	17.3	1.7	9.8
White Crappie	145	14	10.8	12.6	0.7	6.0
Bluegill	92	9	7.5	9.5	0.4	3.7
Channel Catfish	52	5	19.2	25.9	3.0	2.2
Black Crappie	40	4	10.1	12.6	0.7	1.5
Redear Sunfish	5	<1	6.5	8.9	0.3	0.2

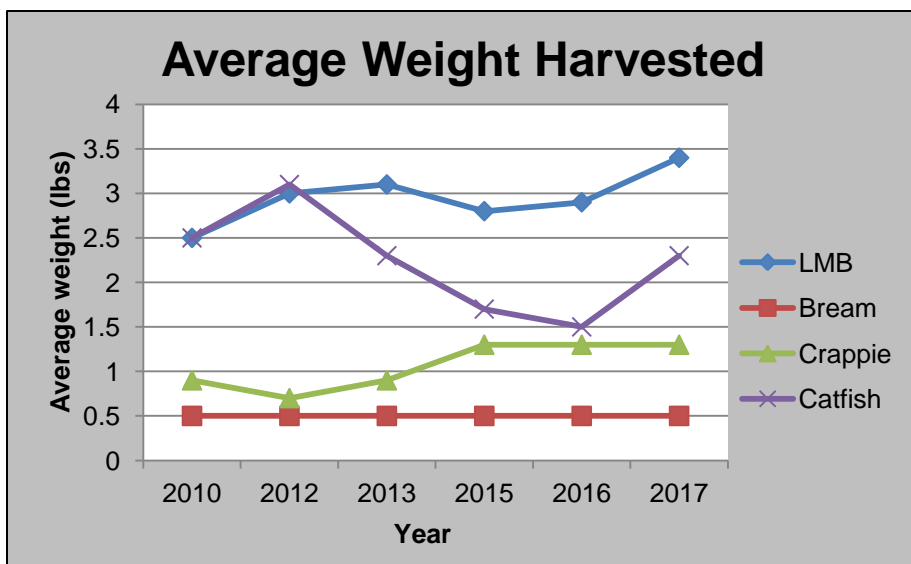


Above: Lengths of crappie collected during 2016 lead net sampling at Eagle Lake. The majority of crappie ranged from 10 to 12 inches, which are the result of a strong year class during 2013. Above average lake levels during the spring of 2016, combined with crappie being stocked during December 2016, should increase the number of young fish in the population.

Right: Percentage of anglers targeting Largemouth Bass (LMB), bream, crappie, and catfish at Eagle Lake. The percentage of crappie anglers has increased significantly over the past few years based on spring creel surveys.



Left top: Angler catch rates for Largemouth Bass (LMB), bream, crappie, and catfish at Eagle Lake based on spring creel surveys. Bream catch rates have rebounded since 2015. MDWFP stocked over 225,000 Bluegill during the fall of 2015 which may have helped the bream fishery.



Left bottom: Average weight of harvested fish at Eagle Lake. The average weight of catfish decreased until 2017. The average weight of bream is high and crappie weights average above a one-pound since the 11-inch minimum length limit was put into effect.