



Lake Tom Bailey 2025

Reel Facts

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General Information: Tom Bailey is a 182-acre lake that was originally built and opened to the public in the early 1960's. The lake was closed in 2000 for repairs and was reopened in 2005. This lake is recognized for its large bream and holds the state record for Channel Catfish at 51 pounds and 12 ounces.

Location: Ten miles east of Meridian MS just off of Hwy 80 close to Toomsuba.

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

Purchase a Fishing License: https://www.ms.gov/mdwfp/hunting_fishing/

Amenities

- Boat ramp
- Fishing piers
- 22 Camping pads with water and electricity.

Creel Limits

- 30 crappie per day with no length restrictions.
- 10 Largemouth Bass per day.
- 100 bream per day.
- 10 catfish per day

Regulations

- Pole or rod and reel fishing only. No trot lines, limb lines, set hooks, jugs or yo-yo's are allowed.
- Carp, gar, buffalo and Bowfin may be taken by use of bow and arrow at night.
- Skiing is allowed on Sunday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day noon to sunset.

Permits

- Sport fishing licenses and fishing permits are required except on designated days during National Fishing and Boating Week.
- Camping is on a first come first serve basis. Daily and monthly permits are available.

Sportfishing Tips

Crappie

- In the spring, target brush piles in shallow shoreline areas with jigs or minnows in 2-4 ft. During the summer and fall fish tops or creek ledges in 8-10 ft of water.

Largemouth Bass

- Target submerged structure in coves and on points with soft plastic worms, spinner baits, or shallow diving crank baits.

Bream

- Use crickets or red worms in shallow water. Willow stumps should be holding bream from early spring until fall.

Catfish

- Use liver, worms or stink baits in 4-6 ft of water.

Fish Species	Weight	Angler	Date Caught
Largemouth Bass	10.06	Trey Tanner	August 2020
Crappie	Open	-	-
Redear Sunfish	Open	-	-
Bluegill	Open	-	-
Catfish	51.75 lbs.	Tom Edwards	May 1997

Above: Lake Tom Bailey record fish. Record fish must be weighed and verified by the lake manager, lake supervisor, or fisheries biologist. Anglers who catch a lake record fish will receive a certificate acknowledging their catch. There is no minimum weight for any open lake record.

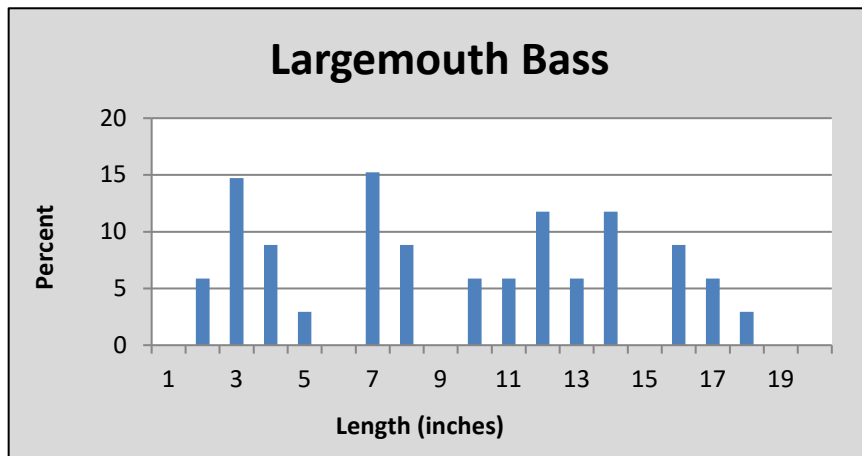
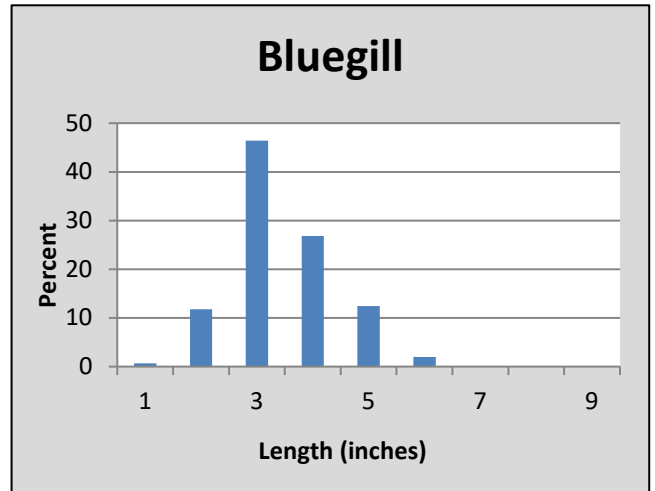
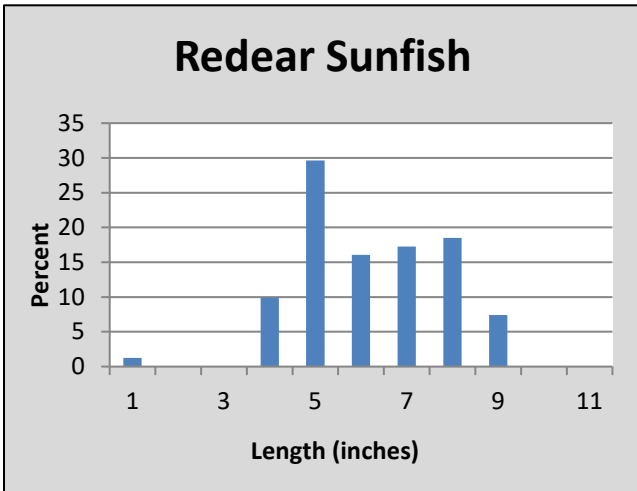
Below and right: MDWFP biologists added 34 natural brush shelters in shallow and medium depths to provide anglers with additional fish attractors. Lake Tom Bailey contains numerous stumps from willow trees that grew up during the renovation which also provide quality habitat.



Below: Results from the 2023 electrofishing survey. This sampling is conducted every two years in the fall and provides biologists with sport fish population metrics which are monitored over time.

Species	# of fish collected	% of sample	Average Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)	Average Weight (pounds)	Catch Rate – Adult fish (fish/hour)
Bluegill	153	38	4.0	6.3	< 0.1	83
Gizzard Shad	33	8	9.0	12.9	-	20
Redear Sunfish	81	20	5.7	8.9	0.1	49
Largemouth Bass	34	8	10.2	18.3	1.1	15
Threadfin Shad	98	24	2.8	4.7	-	65
Catfish	2	<1	16.9	17.8	1.4	1

Below: Length distributions for game fish collected during the electrofishing survey. Results indicate a healthy forage base which should allow for growth and recruitment of predators such as Largemouth Bass and White Crappie.



Below: Lake Tom Bailey offers plenty of bank fishing access along with two fishing piers that are handicap accessible.



Left: Along with quality Redear Sunfish and Largemouth Bass, Tom Bailey offers anglers an opportunity to harvest good sized catfish as well. Hybrid Blue/Channel Catfish were stocked in 2020.

Below: Depth contour map for Lake Tom Bailey

