



# Ross Barnett Reservoir 2018

## Reel Facts

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**General Information:** Ross Barnett Reservoir is a 33,000 acre impoundment of the Pearl River. It consists of approximately 24,000 acres of open-water lake habitat and 9,000 acres of riverine habitat north of Hwy 43. The reservoir is managed by the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District (PRVWSD).

**Location:** Ross Barnett Reservoir is located six miles northeast of Jackson, MS and extends through Hinds, Rankin, Madison, Scott, and, Leake counties

**Fishery Management:** crappie, black bass, hybrid striped bass, bream, and catfish.

**Purchase a Fishing License:** [https://www.ms.gov/mdwfp/hunting\\_fishing/](https://www.ms.gov/mdwfp/hunting_fishing/)

### Amenities

- 5 large campgrounds
- 5 marinas
- 16 parks
- 22 public boat launches
- 18 miles of walking trails
- Fishing piers
- Fish cleaning stations

### Creel Limits

- 30 crappie per day
- 7 black bass per day, must be over 14 inches long
- 6 Striped/Hybrid Striped Bass per day, must be over 15 inches long
- 100 bream per day.
- No limit on catfish.

### Regulations

*The following areas are closed to trotlines, throw lines, set hooks, limblines, free floating fishing devices, jugs, and Yo-yos:*

- Pelahatchie Bay and Pelahatchie Creek
- Area of the reservoir north of the main dam and south of a line between the point where Twin Harbors channel enters the main lake in Madison County and the Fannin Landing boat launch in Rankin County
- Within 100 yards of any sandbar or public boat launching facility within the main lake or river
- Marked navigational channel between State Highway 43 and Ratliff Ferry in Madison County.

### Sportfishing Tips

#### Crappie

- In the spring, fish shoreline vegetation with jigs or minnows. In the summer and winter, troll river channel ledges or jig deep stump fields on main lake.

#### Largemouth Bass

- Target vegetation with frogs and other weedless plastics from the spring through the summer. Creek and channel ledges with submerged structure should be targeted in summer and fall.

#### Bream

- Use crickets or red worms in water 2 – 4 feet in depth. Also, target holes in the vegetation for beds.

#### Catfish

- Easily caught throughout the reservoir by tightlining cutbait, worms, liver, or stinkbait.

## 2017 Electrofishing Summary

Species	# of fish collected	% of sample	Average Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)	Average Weight (pounds)	Catch Rate (fish/mile)
Bluegill	547	34.5	5.3	8.3	0.2	36
Largemouth bass	525	33.1	12.9	22.0	1.4	35
Gizzard shad	206	13.0	6.4	12.4	0.4	14
Redear sunfish	138	8.7	6.6	8.9	0.4	9
Threadfin shad	130	8.2	2.7	4.7	1.0	9
Black crappie	21	1.3	9.8	13.8	0.7	1
White crappie	13	0.8	10.7	14.0	0.8	1
Spotted bass	4	0.3	10.1	13.1	0.2	<1
Chain pickerel	1	0.1	10.0	10.0	0.2	<1

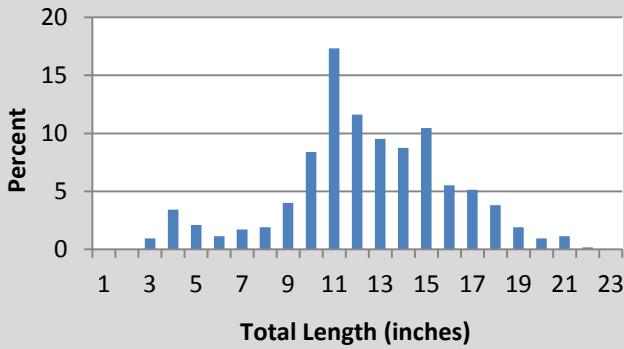
**Above:** Results from the 2017 electrofishing survey on Ross Barnett Reservoir. The reservoir is sampled by electrofishing every year during the fall. Catch rates of Threadfin Shad, Gizzard Shad, and Bluegill remain high providing a large forage base for black bass and crappie.

**Below:** Stump fields provide habitat for crappie in the Main Lake. These stumps were in the old Pearl River floodplain and oxbow lakes. Anglers often target crappie in the stump fields along channel ledges of the old river. Boaters should operate cautiously when under power outside the channel markers.

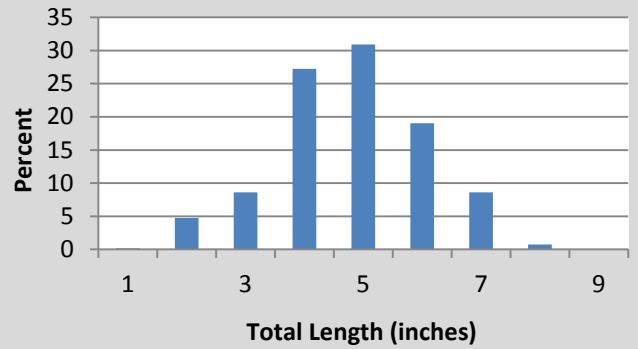


**Below:** Length distributions for sport fish from the 2017 electrofishing survey at Ross Barnett Reservoir. These figures indicate a wide size distribution of each species, high numbers of catchable sized fish, and successful reproduction, all of which are signs of healthy fish populations.

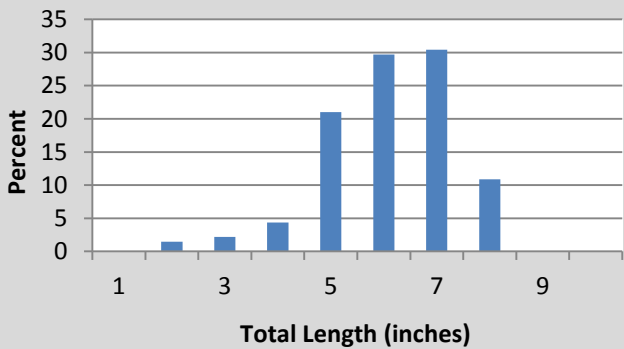
### Largemouth Bass



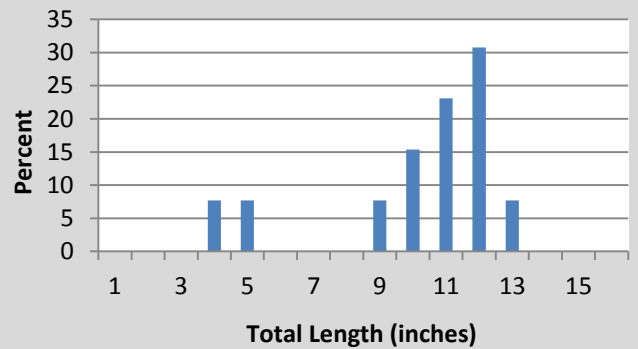
### Bluegill



### Redear Sunfish

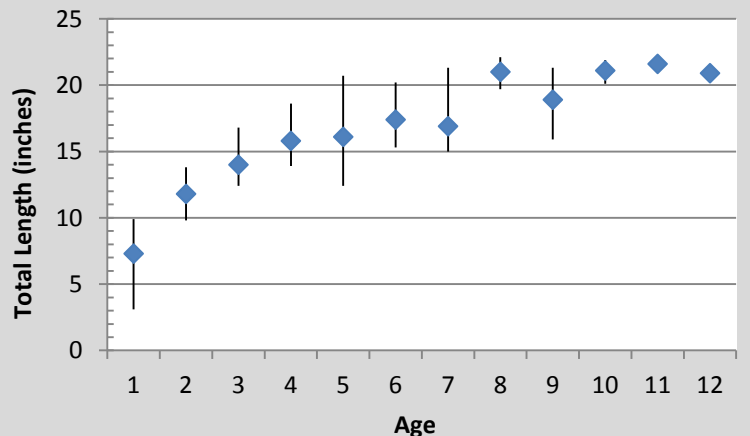


### White Crappie

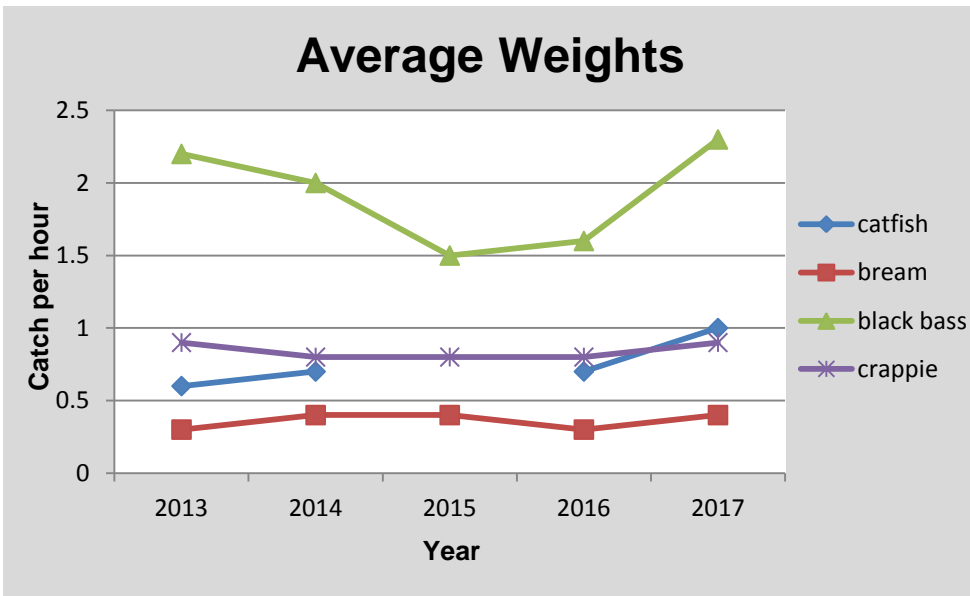
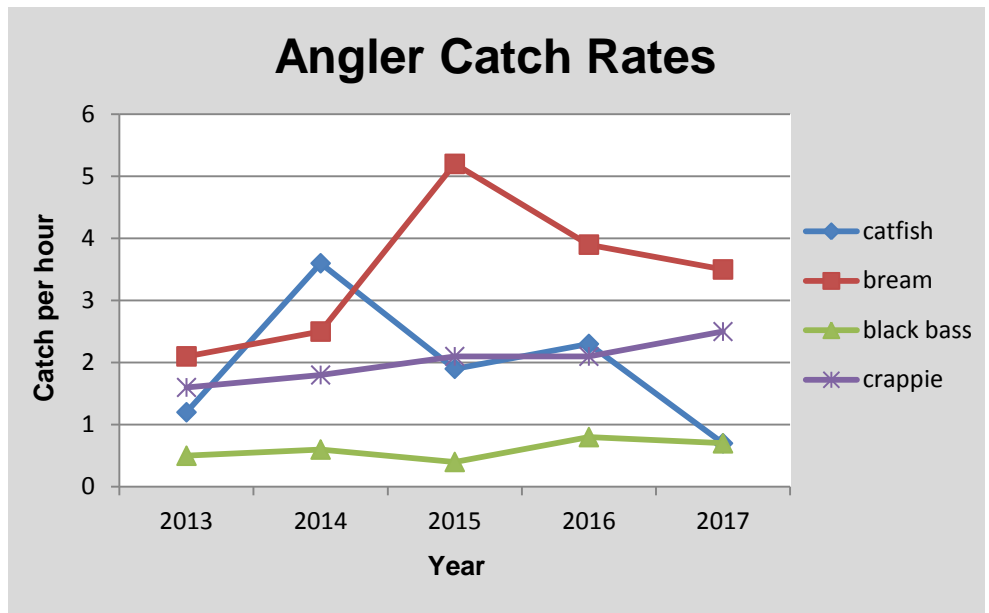


**Right:** Growth rates for Largemouth Bass in Ross Barnett Reservoir. The mean length at age values are indicated by the blue diamonds. The line through each diamond represents the range of lengths for each age group. For example, the average length of age 3 bass is 14 inches, and they range in size from 12.5 inches to 17 inches. Differences in growth rates for individual fish are due to genetic and environmental factors.

### Largemouth Bass Growth Rates



**Below and Right:**  
 Results from spring angler creel surveys for the last five years. Crappie weights average over 3/4 pound and catch rates have been slowly increasing. Black bass catch rates are consistent while average weight was up over two pounds.

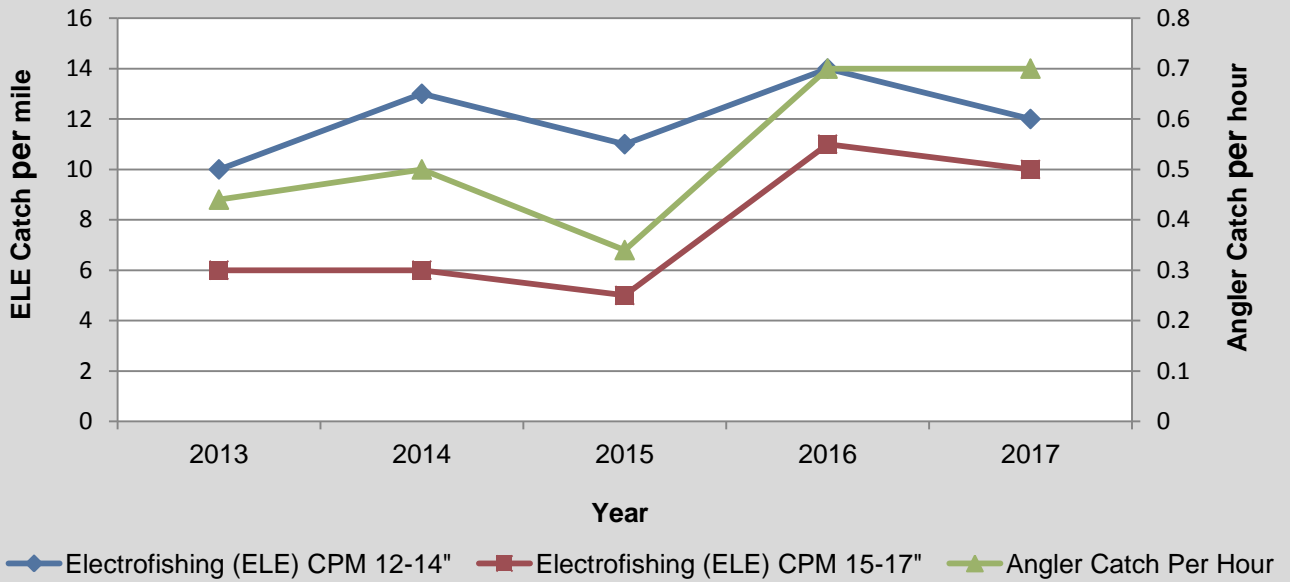


**Below:** Ross Barnett Reservoir contains many native aquatic vegetation species. Large stands of American lotus can be found in Pelahatchie Bay, the northeastern main lake, and upriver. These areas provide abundant fish habitat which are targeted by anglers year round.



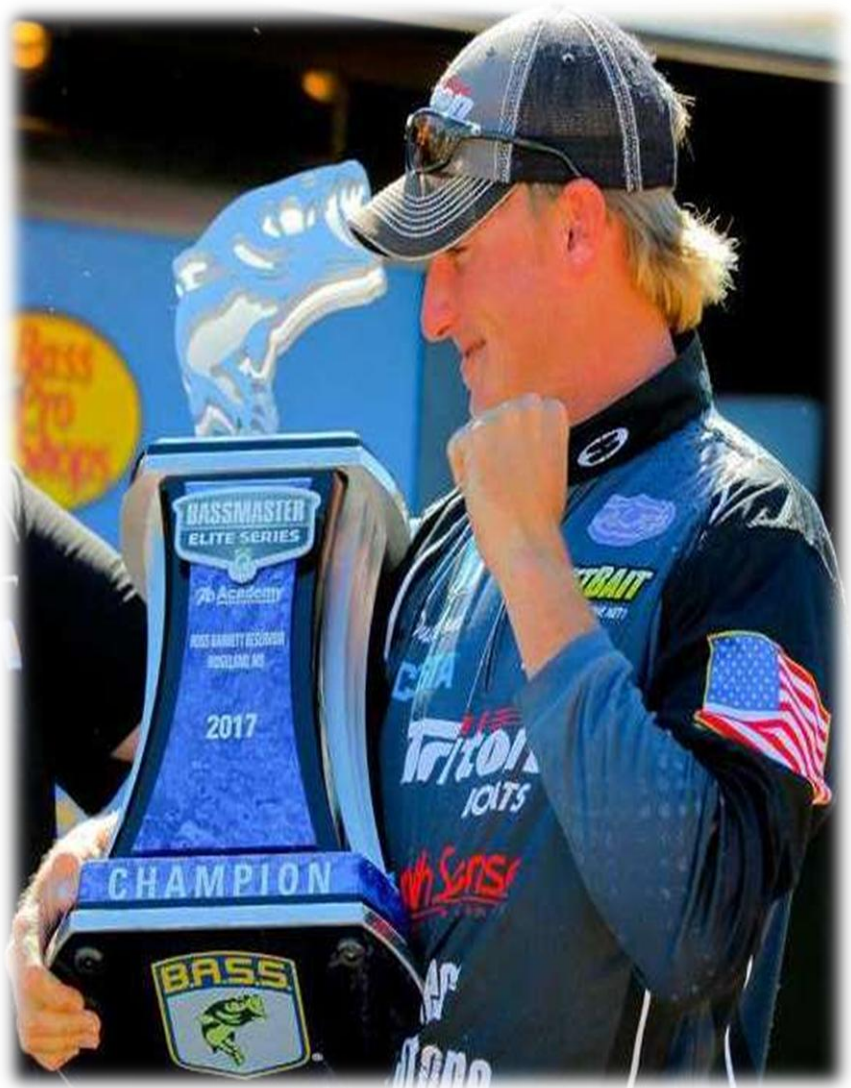


# Black Bass Catch per Unit Effort

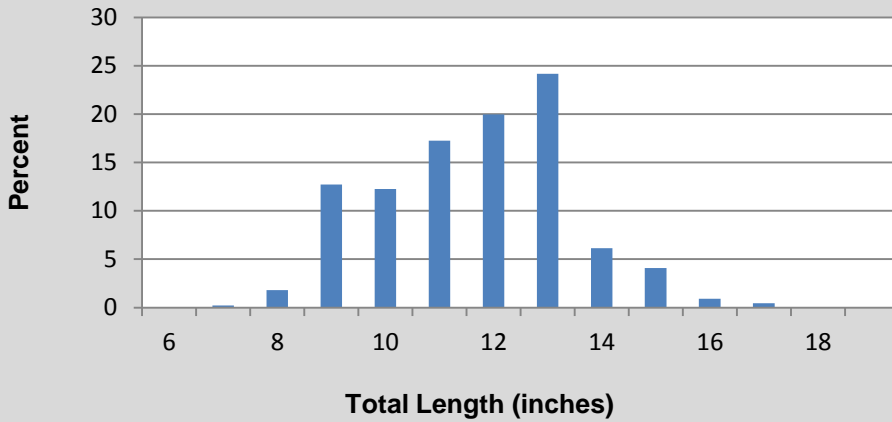


**Above:** Catch rate trends of Largemouth Bass from electrofishing samples and angler surveys on Ross Barnett Reservoir. Catch rates remained steady in 2017. Angler catch rates have followed a similar trend to electrofishing catch rates over the last five years.

**Right:** Dustin Connell won his first professional tournament with the Bassmaster elite series on Ross Barnett Reservoir. Dustin finished with a four day, 64 pounds 13 ounces total weight. Data from 23 bass tournaments held in 2016 included information from 2,057 anglers who weighed-in 4,343 black bass. Winning weights have averaged 16.6 pounds over the last five years.



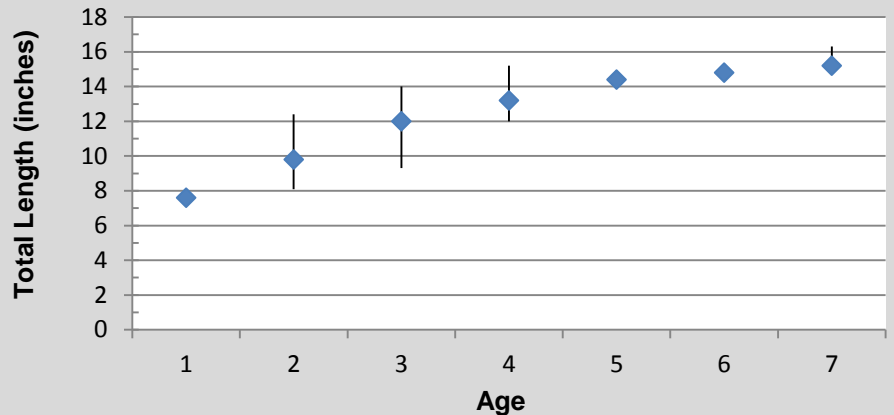
## Angler-Caught White Crappie



**Left:** Length frequency of angler harvested White Crappie. A total of 881 White Crappie were measured during the 2017 spring access creel survey. 13 inch crappie represented the highest percentage harvested (24.2%) in 2017.

**Right:** Growth rates for White Crappie in Ross Barnett Reservoir. One, two, and three year old fish average 7.6, 9.8, and 12 inches respectively.

## White Crappie Growth Rates



**Below:** Anglers enjoy high catch rates during the spawning season on Ross Barnett Reservoir. Male White Crappie can be identified with dusky coloration during this time of the year.

