



Spring Lake 2022

REEL FACTS

Keith Meals – Fisheries Biologist

kmeals@wfp.ms.gov

General Information: Spring Lake is a clear, shallow 60 acre spring-fed impoundment in Wall Doxey State Park. Nearly half the lake is filled with large cypress trees.

Location: Approximately 7 miles south of Holly Springs.

Fishery Management: Largemouth Bass, bream, crappie, catfish, and Gulf Coast strain Walleye.

Park/Lake information: <http://www.mdwfp.com/parks-destinations/state-parks/wall-doxey/>

Lake Depth Map: <http://www.mdwfp.com/media/5447/wall-doxey-park-lake.pdf>

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

Amenities

- 1 public boat ramp.
- 2 wooden fishing piers, 1 courtesy pier by ramp.

Creel and Size Limits

- Largemouth Bass: 10 bass per day per angler.
- Crappie: 30 crappie per day per angler.
- Bream: 100 bream per day per angler.
- Catfish: no limit.
- Walleye: No harvest allowed.
- No size limits on any species.

Regulations

- Rod and reel or pole fishing is allowed. No trotlines, FFFD's, jugs, yo-yo's, limblines, throwlines, or set hooks are allowed.
- MS sportfishing licenses and fishing permits are required except by individuals otherwise exempt or on designated days during National Fishing and Boating Week.
- No water skiing allowed.
- Boating is no wake only.

Stocking

- 2021, 2,000 hybrid catfish

Fishing Tips

Largemouth Bass

- Very clear water means fish with light line and smaller lures. Spinnerbaits and weedless soft plastics are less likely to get lost fishing around cypresses and piers.

Bream

- Try crickets and worms for bream around cypresses. Bream bed over sand or gravel bottoms.

Catfish

- Channel Catfish can be caught with cut bait, liver, worms, etc.

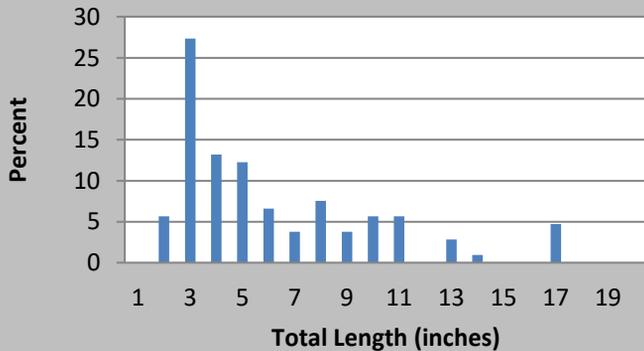
Crappie

- Crappie can be caught with jigs and/or minnows around cypresses or fallen trees.

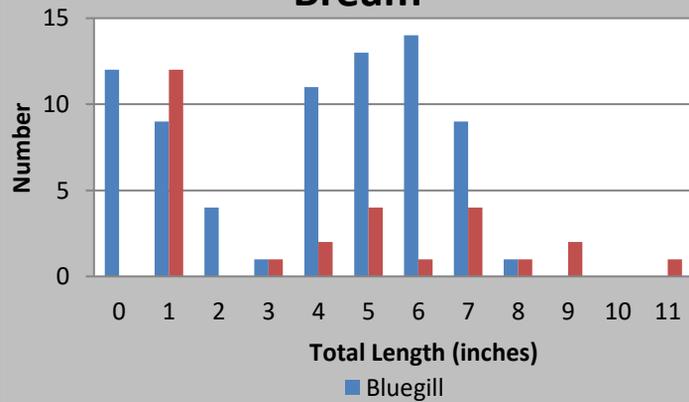
Below: Results from 2021 fall electrofishing surveys conducted at Spring Lake. The sport fishery is dominated by Largemouth Bass and bream (Bluegill and Redear Sunfish). Spring Lake has other species (Warmouth Sunfish, Spotted Gar, Bowfin, Pirate Perch, Spotted Suckers, Brook Silversides, etc.) in small numbers. Lake Chubsuckers are collected as an indicator of vegetation abundance; they become more numerous as submerged vegetation increases. Only four were captured in 2018 before vegetation became abundant in 2020.

Species	# of fish collected	% of sample	Average Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)	Average Weight (pounds)	Catch Rate – Adult fish (fish/mile)
Largemouth Bass	106	44	6.7	18.0	0.3	21
Bluegill	74	30	4.3	8.4	0.1	29
Lake Chubsucker	29	12	6.9	12.9	0.3	18
Redear Sunfish	28	12	4.6	11.3	0.1	9
Black Crappie	2	1	11.6	12.6	0.8	1
White Crappie	1	<1	13.6	13.6	1.3	<1
Magnolia Crappie	1	<1	13.9	13.9	1.2	<1
Yellow Bullhead	1	<1	10.7	10.7	0.5	<1
Blue X Channel Catfish	1	<1	13.9	13.9	1.7	<1

Largemouth Bass

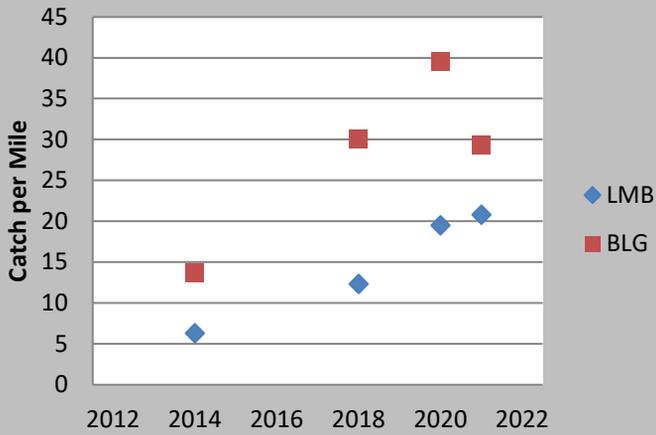


Bream



Above: Length distributions of Largemouth Bass and Bluegill collected during 2021 fall electrofishing. The size of 2021's bass (about 3 - 6 inches) returned to normal. Less weedy conditions allowed bass to forage more efficiently on bream. Redear Sunfish were less numerous, but larger, than Bluegill. Redear Sunfish normally average larger than Bluegill in Spring Lake with some "shellcrackers" weighing over a pound.

Electrofishing Catch Rates



Above: Electrofishing catch rate trends for Largemouth Bass (LMB) and Bluegill (BLG), left. Catch rates vary year-to-year based on vegetative cover, spawning success, angler harvest, etc. Bluegill numbers declined from 2020 as weed control measures let bass feed on them more efficiently. Bass and bream numbers have increased recently with less angler harvest due to abundant weeds. Fishing (and electrofishing) in this very clear lake is difficult since fish can see the boat coming (right).



Above: Gulf Coast strain Walleye are native to the Tombigbee River system and are found in the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. MDWFP North Mississippi Fish Hatchery (NMFH) personnel have stocked Gulf Coast strain Walleye in Spring Lake; Walleye are cool water fish and the lake rarely exceeds 80° F. Some of these fish are recaptured for brood stock for the NMFH at Enid. Walleye harvest is prohibited in Spring Lake.



Above: Parrotfeather, a South American invasive aquatic rooted plant, expanded explosively over the 2019/2020 winter due to several causes. Although aquatic vegetation provides habitat for small fish and their insect prey, too much vegetation prevents bass and other predators from controlling the numbers of bream and other small fish. Thick weeds not only make fishing challenging (right), but they could be spread to other waters on boats and trailers. Triploid (sterile) Grass Carp (right) eat aquatic vegetation; they were stocked in 2019 and 2020.



Left: A winter 2020/2021 drawdown was conducted to reduce weeds as dewatered areas dried out and froze. Over the winter, Triploid Grass Carp ate parrotfeather while bass fed on abundant small fish in the remaining pool. During the drawdown, MDWFP extended the boat ramp and replaced the courtesy pier (top). A winter 2021/2022 drawdown is planned. Spring Lake is expected to refill in March 2022.



In 2020 and 2021, MDWFP fisheries biologists treated high use areas around the boat ramp and fishing piers (bottom) with a granular aquatic herbicide. Liquid herbicides were used in open areas of the lake in 2021 to suppress weeds while minimizing damage to scenic cypress trees that provide habitat and shade for fish (and people). MDWFP and Marshall County personnel cooperated to mow brush along the dam.