



Pickwick Lake 2023

REEL FACTS

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General Information: Covering 43,100 acres, Pickwick Lake, which borders Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi, is the 4th largest impoundment on the Tennessee River. It is owned and managed by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). The reservoir extends 52.7 miles from Wilson Dam (river mile 259.5) in Florence, Alabama to Pickwick Landing Dam (river mile 206.7). The lake is nationally recognized as one of the best bass fishing lakes in the country.

Location: Northeastern border of Tishomingo County roughly 10 miles north of Iuka on Hwy 25.

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

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

Amenities in MS

- 9 public boat ramps
- 3 marinas
- 3 campgrounds
- J.P. Coleman State Park
- Hotel
- Picnic Areas
- Restrooms

Regulations

- Black bass (largemouth, spotted, and smallmouth): 15 inch minimum length limit, 10 bass (combined) per day per angler.
- Crappie: 9 inch minimum length limit and 30 crappie per day per angler.
- Bream: 100 bream (combined) per day per angler.
- Catfish: only 1 fish allowed over 34 inches, otherwise no limit.
- Other creel limits can be found at <http://www.mdwfp.com>

Regulations

Yo-Yo's, Jugs, and Trotlines

- 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. Trotlines may have no more than 100 single hooks.

Handgrabbing

- Hand grabbing season for catfish is open May 1 to July 15 each year.

Licensing

- A Mississippi fishing license is valid from Pickwick Dam upriver to the Old Riverton Lock at mile marker 226.6 (see the map on page 5 below).
- Per a [reciprocal agreement](#), a Tennessee fishing license is valid in parts of Mississippi.
- An Alabama fishing license is valid from Pickwick Dam upriver to the Hwy 25 Bridge and Wilson Dam.

Sportfishing Notes

Black Bass

- Target main lake and creek ledges and humps with Carolina and/or Texas-rigged plastics, crankbaits, and jigs.
- In the spring, fish main lake flats and coves with spinnerbaits and swimbaits.

Crappie

- Try casting, trolling, and vertical jigging along drop-offs in primary creeks.
- Fish in Yellow and Bear creeks using jigs and minnows.
- Target deeper water in the creeks during winter.

Catfish

- Fish for cats in the main lake around the ledges and humps with cutbait or whole shad.
- During May and June, fish rock bluff walls with nightcrawlers

Right: Unfortunately, due to the recreational popularity and commercial importance of Pickwick Lake, several highly invasive aquatic species have expanded their range into the lake over the past two decades. Zebra mussels were the first to find their way into Pickwick and compete with native mussels for resources. They can also clog pipes and water intakes resulting in costly repairs.



Left: Bighead and Silver Carp started to appear over the last decade, and the latter have been increasing in abundance as they make their way up the Tennessee River. These fish feed on plankton, which is the foundation for native forage species as well as juvenile game fish, such as crappie and bass. A joint effort between universities, federal agencies, and state fisheries agencies is underway to tag and track Silver Carp as well as study the effectiveness of deterrents placed at lock and dams to hinder the spread of Asian carp throughout the Tennessee River and Tenn-Tom Waterway.

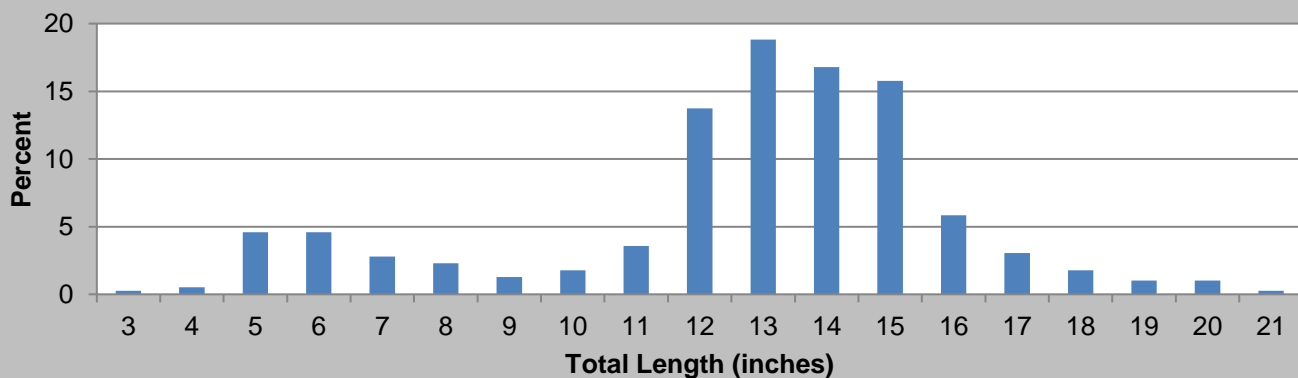


Giant Salvinia was documented for the first time in Pickwick in November 2017. It was documented in the Tenn-Tom Waterway in October 2017. This aggressive aquatic fern from South America can double in abundance within one week under suitable conditions. It is a floating plant that can choke out entire coves and canals causing oxygen depletion. It is very important that boaters conduct a thorough inspection of their boats, motors, and trailers before launching and loading at any waterbody to prevent the spread of invasive species. Remember to always clean, drain, and dry.

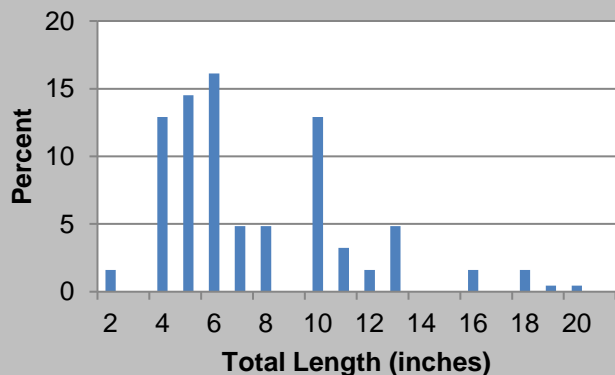
Below: Pickwick Lake supports one of the healthiest and most diverse bass populations in the southeast. A strong forage base, abundant and diverse habitat, and lake size make it possible.



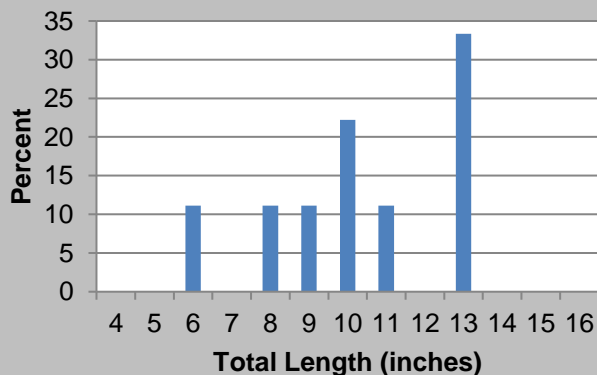
Largemouth Bass



Smallmouth Bass



Spotted Bass



Above: Length distributions for Largemouth, Smallmouth, and Spotted Bass collected during spring electrofishing in 2021.

Below: Results from the 2021 spring electrofishing survey on Pickwick Lake. Boat electrofishing was completed along 9 miles of shoreline in April. Healthy bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted), Threadfin Shad, and Bluegill populations were observed during the survey.

Species	# of Fish Sampled	% of Sample	Minimum Length (Inches)	Average Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)	Catch Rate Adult fish (fish/mile)
Gizzard Shad	94	5	6.7	10.9	13.8	11
Threadfin Shad	63	4	3.2	4.9	5.9	-
Chain Pickerel	2	<1	20.7	22.2	23.6	<1
Golden Shiner	5	<1	4.7	6.7	8.3	-
Channel Catfish	23	1	9.5	14.4	21.6	2
Brook Silverside	33	2	2.8	3.4	3.9	-
White Bass	2	<1	10.4	13	15.7	<1
Yellow Bass	25	1	5.2	7.5	9.9	3
Bluegill	634	36	1.2	4.5	8.2	64
Redear Sunfish	41	2	2.8	6.6	10.3	4
Smallmouth Bass	62	4	3	9.1	21.3	4
Spotted Bass	9	<1	6.7	10.7	13.2	1
Largemouth Bass	393	22	3.5	13.2	30.7	38
White Crappie	24	1	9.8	12.3	15	3
Black Crappie	80	5	7.9	11.3	13.9	9
Yellow Perch	8	<1	7.4	8.5	10.6	1
Logperch	3	<1	3.7	4	4.1	-



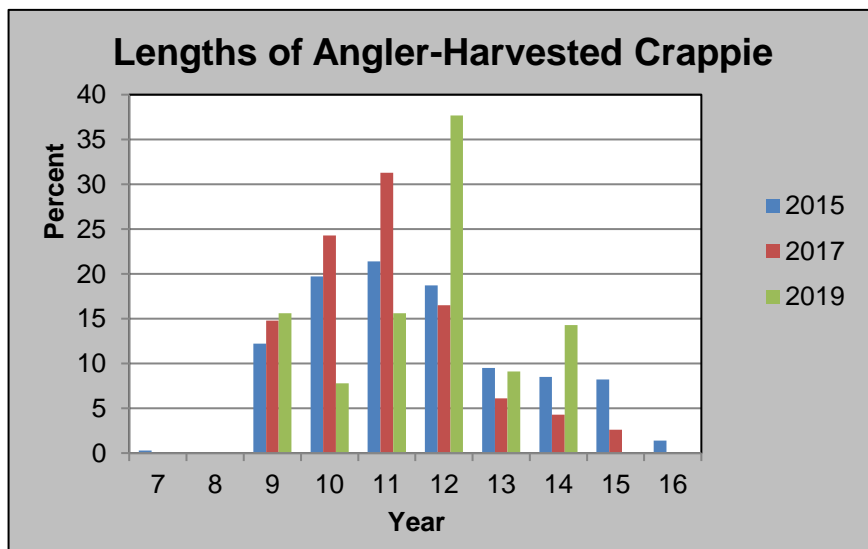
Left: Pickwick boasts a healthy crappie population that attracts anglers from North Mississippi, Western Tennessee, and Northwest Alabama.

Species targeted	Percentage (%)
Bass	64
Bream	7
Crappie	20
Catfish	8
Have you been interviewed on Pickwick in 2019?	
Yes	12
No	88
Do you read and/or use fishing Reports?	
Yes	49
No	51
Opinion on 15" MLL for bass	
Help	71
Hurt	7
No Change	22
Fishing satisfaction for the day	
Very Satisfied	44
Satisfied	48
Neutral/No Opinion	4
Dissatisfied	4
Very Dissatisfied	0



Above: Creel surveys provide a good opportunity to collect information and opinions from anglers. The percentage of anglers fishing for bass or crappie was similar to the previous creel survey in 2015. Eighty-eight percent of the anglers were interviewed only one time during the spring of 2019, which shows that many different anglers fish at Pickwick. Approximately 49% use MDWFP fishing reports to plan their fishing trips. The 15 inch minimum length limit on black bass was adopted in 2013. Almost three-quarters of the anglers (71%) thought the regulation had a positive impact on the bass fishery, and 22% thought it had no affect on the population. Only seven percent of the anglers responded that the rule had a negative impact on the population. Eighty-eight percent of the anglers were satisfied or very satisfied with their fishing trip at Pickwick Lake, which is consistent with the previous creel survey in 2015.

Right: Length distributions of crappie harvested by anglers at Pickwick Lake during spring 2015, 2017, and 2019. The average length of crappie harvested in 2015 was 11.6 inches, 11.2 inches in 2017, and back to 11.6 inches in 2019.



Below: A Mississippi fishing license is valid in the areas shaded in red .

