Pickwick Lake 2026
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.





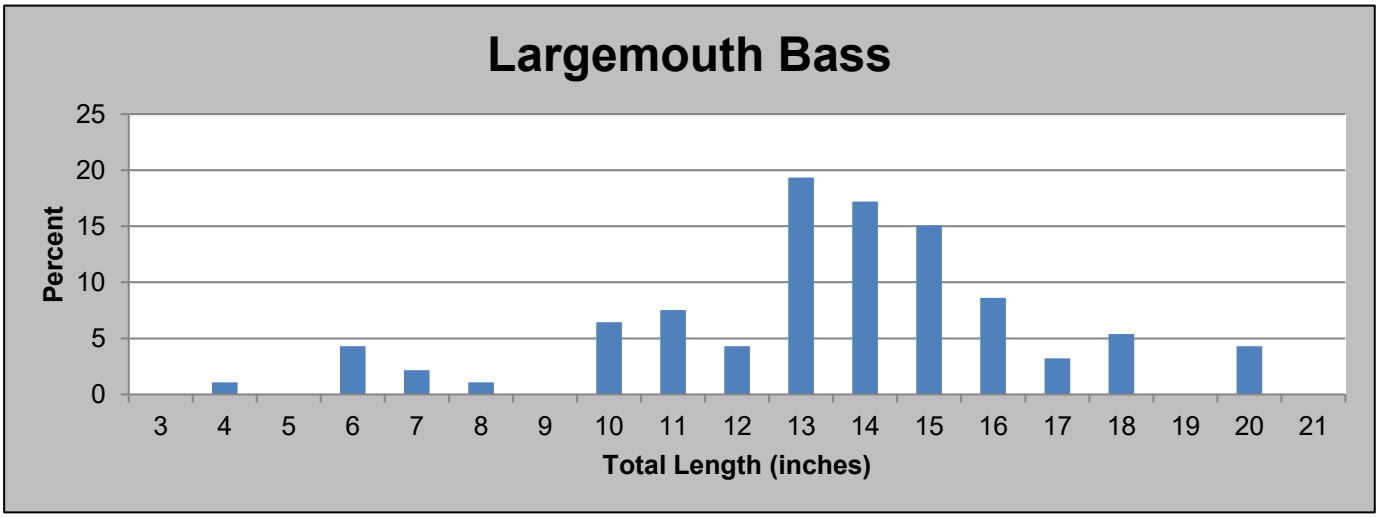


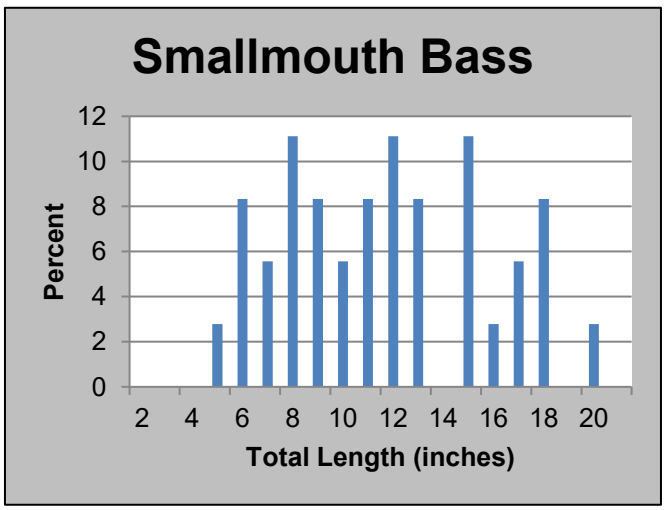
Left: Bighead and Silver Carp started to appear over the last decade, and the latter have been increasing in abundance as they make their way up the Tennessee River. These fish feed on plankton, which is the foundation for native forage species as well as juvenile game fish, such as crappie and bass. 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.

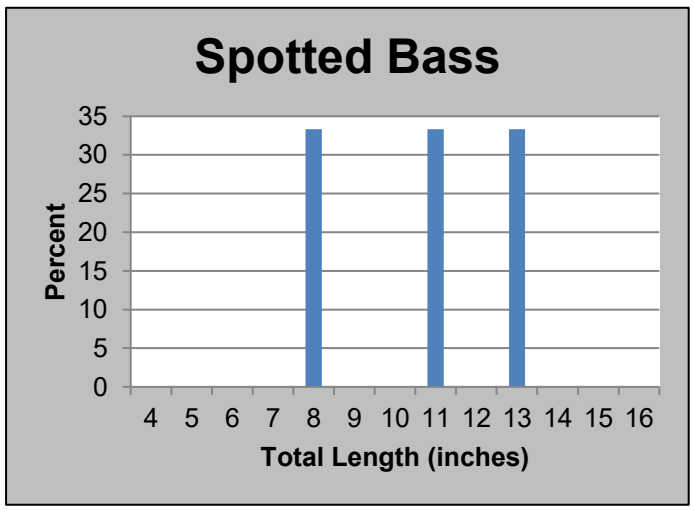
Giant Salvinia was documented for the first time in Pickwick in November 2017. It was documented in the Tenn-Tom Waterway in October 2017. This aggressive aquatic fern from South America can double in abundance within one week under suitable conditions. It is a floating plant that can choke out entire 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 a healthy and diverse bass population. A strong forage base, abundant and diverse habitat, and lake size make it possible.









Above: Length distributions for Largemouth, Smallmouth, and Spotted Bass collected during spring electrofishing in 2023. Only 3 Spotted Bass were collected, hence the odd-looking graph.

Below: Results from the 2023 spring electrofishing survey on Pickwick Lake. Boat electrofishing was completed along 9.3 miles of shoreline in April. Healthy black bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted), Threadfin Shad, and Bluegill populations were observed during the survey.

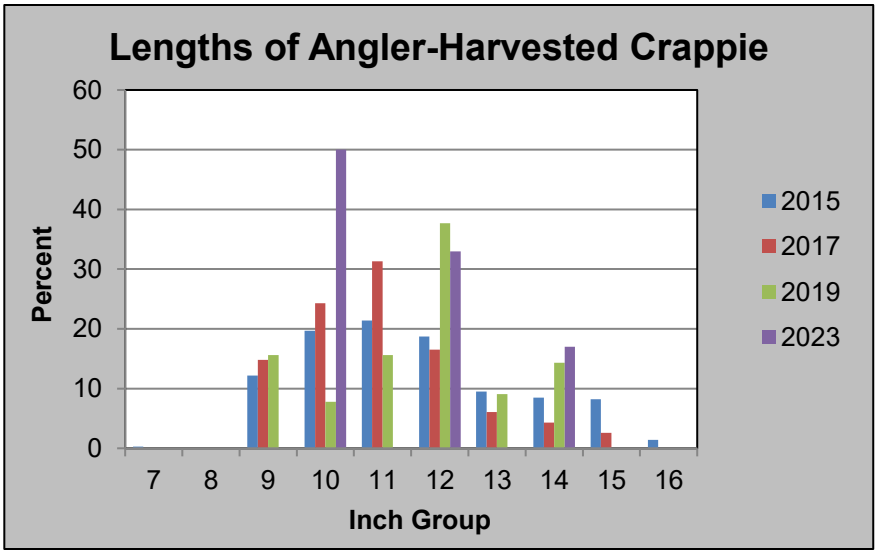
Species	# of Fish Sampled	% of Sample	Minimum Length (Inches)	Average Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)	Catch Rate Adult fish (fish/mile)
Chestnut Lamprey	1	<1	6.5	6.5	6.5	0
Spotted Gar	21	2	12.0	23.1	29.6	2
Bowfin	1	<1	20.1	20.1	20.1	-
Skipjack Herring	1	<1	6.2	6.2	6.2	-
Gizzard Shad	135	11	1.2	11.4	14.2	14
Threadfin Shad	298	25	2.0	5.0	6.3	-
Chain Pickerel	1	<1	12.2	12.2	12.2	<1
Common Carp	10	<1	14.3	22.7	30.6	1
Golden Shiner	3	<1	5.2	6.7	7.8	<1
Blacktail Shiner	6	<1	3.5	3.6	3.9	1
Northern Hogsucker	5	<1	4.8	7.2	10.8	1
Smallmouth Buffalo	10	<1	14.9	24.0	29.1	1
Spotted Sucker	58	5	6.1	12.7	16.7	6
Golden Redhorse	4	<1	8.7	12.7	18.9	<1
Channel Catfish	14	1	12.7	16.7	20.1	2
Flathead Catfish	1	<1	13.2	13.2	13.2	<1
Silversides	56	5	3.2	3.5	4.3	6
Green Sunfish	3	<1	3.9	5.2	6.0	<1
Warmouth	2	<1	6.8	7.3	7.8	<1
Bluegill	242	20	1.6	5.3	7.9	26
Longear Sunfish	91	8	2.0	4.5	6.4	10
Redear Sunfish	52	4	3.9	8.3	10.6	6
Smallmouth Bass	36	3	5.2	12.2	20.9	4
Spotted Bass	3	<1	8.5	11.2	13.9	3
Largemouth Bass	93	8	4.3	14.0	20.8	10
Black Crappie	17	1	8.4	11.4	14.7	2
Yellow Perch	8	<1	4.4	8.1	11.3	1
Logperch	13	1	3.9	4.5	5.4	1
Freshwater Drum	14	1	10.8	14.6	23.1	2

Species targeted	Percentage (%)
Bass	73
Bream	4
Crappie	13
Catfish	8
Have you been interviewed on Pickwick in 2023 ?	
Yes	3
No	97
Do you read and/or use fishing Reports?	
Yes	37
No	63
Do you use a Livescope or other forward facing sonar?	
Yes	51
No	49
Fishing satisfaction for the day	
Very Satisfied	19
Satisfied	33
Neutral/No Opinion	21
Dissatisfied	22
Very Dissatisfied	5



Above: Creel surveys provide a good opportunity to collect information and opinions from anglers. Ninety-seven percent of the anglers were interviewed only one time during the spring of 2023, which shows that many different anglers fish at Pickwick. Anglers from 17 Mississippi counties and 13 different states were interviewed. Approximately 37% use MDWFP fishing reports to plan their fishing trips. Just over half (51%) of anglers used a forward-facing sonar while fishing. Fifty-two percent of the anglers were satisfied or very satisfied with their fishing trip at Pickwick Lake, while 27% were dissatisfied with their experience.

Right: Length distributions of crappie harvested by anglers at Pickwick Lake during spring creels. The average length of crappie harvested in 2015 was 11.6 inches, 11.2 inches in 2017, 11.6 inches in 2019, and 11.3 inches in 2023.



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

