



Amelia Lake 2010



Amelia Lake is a 100-acre impoundment located entirely within the Amelia Wildlife Management Area in Amelia County, Virginia. With its close proximity to Richmond, the wildlife management area provides easy access for folks to enjoy a variety of recreational activities including boating and fishing. Amelia Lake provides a warmwater fishery for largemouth bass, channel catfish, black crappie, bluegill and redear sunfish. Channel catfish are stocked annually at a rate of 15 fish/acre to maintain a fishable population.

The largemouth bass fishery at Amelia Lake has long been dominated by high numbers of fish less than 12 inches. Attempts have been made by DGIF biologists and the angling public to reduce the numbers of these small bass. The largemouth bass population is managed with a five fish creel but no length limit to encourage anglers to keep a few fish to eat. Some progress has been made in reducing density of bass in the past decade. In our spring samples we have detected a reduction in the density of bass from over 500 fish sampled in a one hour period to just fewer than 200. Normal sample sizes for reservoirs in this part of Virginia are about 120-140 fish collected in one hour of sample time. While we have made progress, there are still plenty of bass in Amelia Lake. One promising factor though, is the presence of more big bass in these spring samples. More fish over 12 inches were collected recently than in the past several years. We are hopeful that by reducing numbers of largemouth bass at Amelia, competition for prey will be reduced and growth rates will improve for the remaining bass. There are signs of some slight improvements in growth rates but Amelia bass are still a slow growing fish. Bass at Amelia do have potential to reach sizes greater than 20 inches but these fish are pretty rare in this 100-acre impoundment.

One benefit of having bass crowded situations in ponds and lakes is often a bream population that is dominated by larger fish. Numerous small bass will quickly eat small bream but those remaining larger bream have little competition for food and can grow quickly. This phenomena can be present at Amelia with bluegill and redear sunfish ("shellcracker") reaching 8-10 inches on a regular basis. Unfortunately the redear population has shown a steady decline in the past nine years possibly due to angler pressure. These species are excellent table fare and often easy to catch compared to other species. With pressure from largemouth bass and anglers, bluegill and redear populations can vary widely from one year to the next. Amelia is still a great place to come in the spring to target the bream species.

Brush habitat structures and standing timber provide ample habitat and offer locations for anglers to target their fishing effort. Surrounded by 2200+ acres of state owned property, Amelia provides a wonderful escape from the busy life of central Virginia. With good bream and bass fishing this might be a place to try your luck one fine spring day. While Amelia Lake may not produce a lot of trophy largemouth bass, it does offer a great opportunity for an adult to introduce a kid to fishing.

Amelia Lake is open to anglers 24 hours a day. Gas motors are prohibited, although electric motors are allowed. A handicap fishing pier is available. Amelia Lake can be reached from Route 360 by taking State Route 604 North. Follow the signs to the lake.