



Thrasher Lake 2010

Thrasher Lake is a 36-acre impoundment located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Amherst County. This is one of three public reservoirs owned by the County and offers a scenic view of the mountains while providing opportunities for fishing and family outings. The various facilities include picnic tables, restroom, play area, boat ramp, and associated parking. The lake is open year round but nighttime activities are prohibited except for fishing. Anglers are required to obtain a permit from the county to fish at night. Boats propelled by oar or electric motor are welcome but outboard motor use is prohibited.

In 2003, the bass population was starting to show signs of being bass crowded with a large increase in the number of small bass and a reduction of large bass. Additionally, growth of largemouth bass was very slow with bass ages 4-6 averaging 12 inches in length. Management in 2004 attempted to reduce the number of bass to improve growth and the number of larger fish in the population. Sampling in 2005 showed immediate improvements in the bass population with more fish in the protected slot limit and improved growth. These improvements have continued to produce a balanced bass population. Most bass are 12-13 inches in length but there is a fair number available up to 20 inches in length. The bass population is regulated with a 12-15 inch protective slot limit.

Crappie reproduction is generally poor most years with an occasional good reproduction year. Consequently, the crappie fishery produces some nice fish but is limited most years. Reproduction is not expected to get much better due to limited crappie habitat in the lake. However, Thrasher Lake crappie have maintained good growth rates and good fishing does occur several years after a good reproduction year. The outlook for 2010-2011 is poor since reproduction in recent years has been very low.

The panfish population is primarily bluegill with only a few redear sunfish available. The bluegill population is in good condition but is starting to decline in quality since the largemouth bass population has been improved. Excessive largemouth bass predation on sunfish results in reduced sunfish populations and improves growth for those remaining which typically provides very good sunfish fishing opportunities similar to what Thrasher Lake experienced in 2003-2004. Despite the reduction in the bluegill size structure, there are still plenty of sunfish in the seven inch range available.

To access this reservoir, turn northeast on Rt. 610 from Rt. 60 (approximately 9 miles west of Amherst), then turn left on Rt. 617, and the lake access road will be the first road on the left. Permits for night fishing are available through Amherst County at 434-946-9371.