



## Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries 2015 Dorey Park Pond Management Report

Dorey Park Pond, located on Darbytown Road in eastern Henrico, is owned and operated by Henrico County. The 5-acre impoundment is managed under the Department's Urban Lake Program and is stocked with harvestable-sized trout and channel catfish. The lake was built in old borrow pits and traditionally has had problems with water quality (low pH and dissolved oxygen). Periodic lime applications and an aeration system have helped to alleviate the issues. A major fish kill occurred in the summer of 2008 which eliminated the majority of the fishery. Bluegill and largemouth bass were restocked in 2008 along with trout and channel catfish.

On October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014, the fish community of Dorey Park Pond was sampled by boat electrofishing. A complete shoreline circuit of the pond was conducted with the total electrofishing effort of 750 seconds (0.21 hr). All encountered fish were collected by dip nets and placed in a live well tank. Length and weight measurements were taken on all fish to assess their overall health and the health of the current fishery. The fishery revealed limited species diversity with the collection of 4 fish species. These fish species in order of overall abundance were bluegill, largemouth bass, American eel and golden shiner. The fishery within Dorey Park Pond may have some potential, but the survey yielded very little to write home about. The survey is just a snapshot photo of the fish assemblage collected along the shoreline. The deeper holes within Dorey Park Pond may have harbored some larger fish that stayed clear of the shallow shelves of the shoreline. Anglers that frequently fish the pond have been able to catch a few respectable fish over the years.

### **Largemouth Bass**

The survey provided limited insight into the strength of the largemouth bass population with the collection of 10 bass. The CPUE (Catch Per Unit of Effort) of 48 bass/hr is rather low, but still showed a great improvement from the 2009 survey that was unsuccessful at catching any bass. The collected bass ranged in size from 3 to 14 inches with the majority of the fish less than 12 inches in length. The average size bass measured in at 6.84 inches. The largest bass measured 14.4 inches and weighed 1.43 pounds. Only 2 bass were greater than 12 inches in length. Taking into account the presence of 5 juvenile bass in the 7 to 9 cm range (2.75 – 3.7 inch range), reproduction appears to be rather limited. To protect the adult bass within the pond, the bass regulation has been set at a minimum size limit of 18 inches with a harvest limit of one bass per day. Anglers should carefully release all bass and practice catch and release if they would like to see improvements in the bass population. The more brood stock bass that are present will increase the chance that recruitment of juvenile fish will occur. Increased bass abundance will hopefully step up to the opportunity to forage upon the abundant bluegill population.

Weights were taken on largemouth bass to calculate relative weight values. Relative weight values are an indication of body condition. A value from 95 to 100 represents a fish that is in the healthy range and finding a decent amount of food. A higher relative weight value indicates fish

with a better body condition. The relative weight data of the largemouth bass revealed the 4 stock-sized bass to have a value of 99. The two quality-sized bass had a relative weight value of 93. These relative weight values reveal that the bass are finding sufficient forage in the size range that they can properly utilize for growth. The juvenile bluegill in the 2 to 3 inch range will provide bass plenty of nourishment.

### Bluegill

The survey collection was dominated by the abundance of small bluegill. A total of 625 bluegill were collected. The catch rate of 3,000 bluegill/hr was the highest bluegill catch rate of any water sampled in Region 1, District 1 during 2014. The collected bluegills ranged in size from 2 to 14 centimeters (1 to 5 inches). Taking into account the abundance of juvenile fish, the average size bluegill measured 2.62 inches. The largest bluegill measured 5.6 inches in length. The relative weight data of the 94 stock-sized bluegills came back extremely favorable with a value of 120. This value showed that the larger sunfish are finding plenty of available food resources. Anglers should not expect to catch too many large bluegill from Dorey Park Pond.

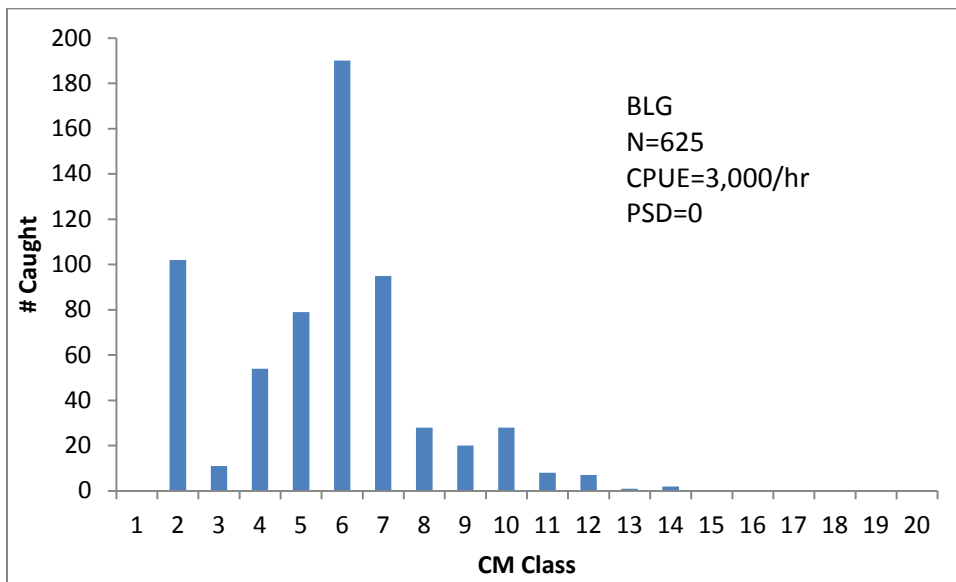


Figure 1. Length frequency distribution for bluegill collected from Dorey Park Pond on October 21, 2014

### Additional Species

The survey yielded some additional diversity in the form of American eels and golden shiners. A total of 6 American eels were collected. These eels ranged in size from 9 to 13 inches. Two juvenile golden shiners were also collected. These shiners were most likely from a bait bucket introduction. The survey did not provide any channel catfish. Dorey Park Pond is stocked with channel catfish every year at a rate of 350/acre. The total number of 1,750 channel catfish provides a great opportunity for anglers to try their luck. Anglers must follow the posted regulations of harvesting only 4 catfish/per person/day. It is quite possible that the majority of stocked channel catfish had been harvested by the time of the sample. Catfish species can be hard to sample if they are holding in the deeper regions of any waterbody. Dorey Park Pond receives 5 stockings of rainbow and brown trout each winter. A trout fishing license is required from November 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup> to legally fish for trout. Anglers must also have a valid Virginia fishing license if they are over the age of 16. A trout license is not needed to fish the pond from May 1<sup>st</sup>

to October 31<sup>st</sup>. Anglers that may catch trout in the early part of May must still abide by the 4 trout/person/day regulation.

No boats are allowed in Dorey Park Pond, but all of the pond can be accessed along the shoreline. The park has many amenities including picnic shelters, a children's play area, a Frisbee range, soccer fields, lighted baseball fields, tennis courts, a horse ring and numerous riding trails. Dorey Park Lake can be reached by traveling south on Laburnum Avenue and then turning left on Darbytown Road. The entrance to the park will be on the right, and the official visiting hours for the park are sunrise to sunset.