



Germantown Reservoir Management Report

Popular Format

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Germantown Reservoir is located in central Fauquier County near Midland and owned by Fauquier County. Built as reserve “emergency” potable water supply decades

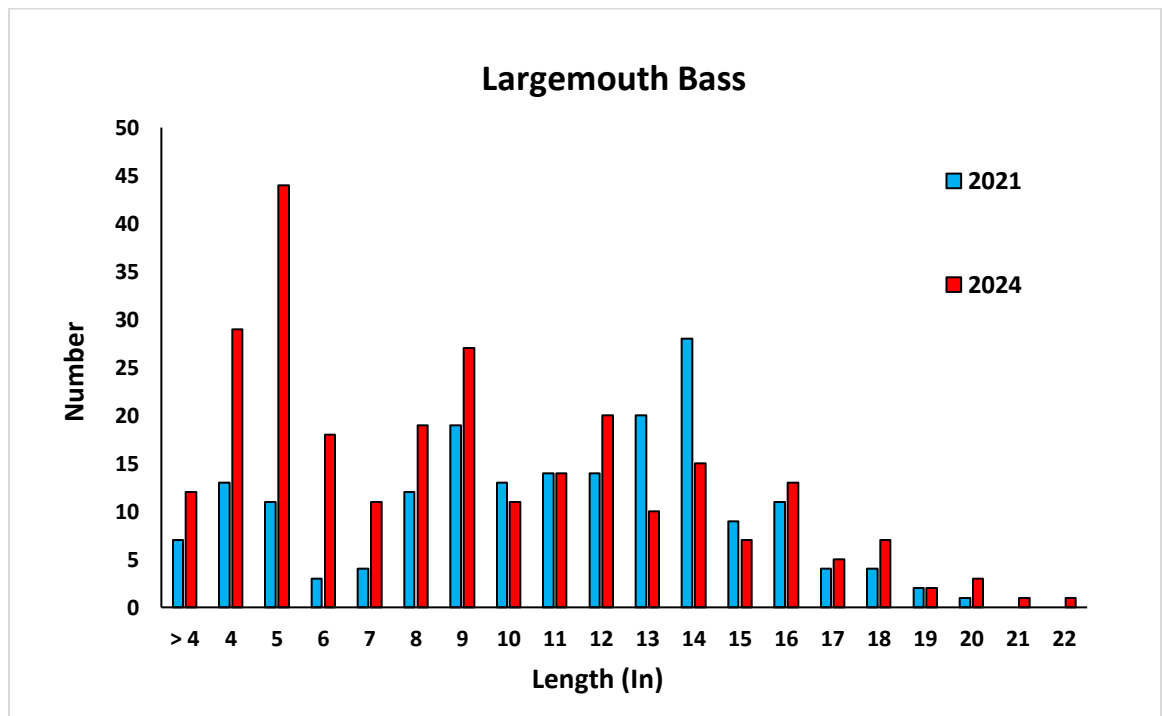
ago, the lake and surrounding land have been used as a county park. Infrastructure for water withdrawals and/or treatment has not been developed. Fauquier County Parks and Recreation manages C.M. Crockett Park which lies adjacent to the reservoir and includes a boat ramp, boat rentals, plenty of shoreline access, parking, restrooms, and a concession. Crockett Park is generally open daily from dawn to dusk, but concession hours vary seasonally and can be checked by contacting C.M. Crockett Park located at 10066 Rouges Road, Midland.

DWR fisheries biologists sample the fishery approximately every 3-5 years. Most recently, a boat electrofishing survey was conducted in April 2024. Biologists use shoreline electrofishing to obtain estimates of population size structure and relative abundance. Abundance is usually described as a catch rate in number of fish per hour (CPUE, or Catch per Unit Effort). Biologists employ numerical descriptors of length-frequency data such as Proportional Stock Density (PSD) and Relative Stock Density (RSD) now known as PSD-P when evaluating fish populations. PSD is calculated by dividing the number of fish \geq minimum quality length by the number of fish \geq minimum stock length x 100. Quality length is defined as the minimum size of fish most anglers like to catch (these are by national standards -for example, 12" for Largemouth Bass). Stock length is the minimum length at which a fish provides recreational value and/or is recruited to the fishery (8" for Largemouth Bass). PSD-P is the percentage of any designated length group found within a population. PSD-P is calculated by dividing the number of fish \geq specified length by the number of fish \geq minimum stock length x 100. Preferred bass are those 15" or larger, while memorable fish are those 20" or larger. Abundance is usually quantified using catch rate or number of fish captured per hour of electrofishing time (also known as CPUE or catch per unit effort). These indices and size groups are nationally accepted standards.

Primary fish species available include Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, Redear Sunfish, and Channel Catfish. Northern Snakehead were illegally stocked into the lake and are now established. Fish populations were sampled in 2024 by electrofishing the littoral (shoreline) zone. Christmas trees have been added to the lake for many years to provide habitat.

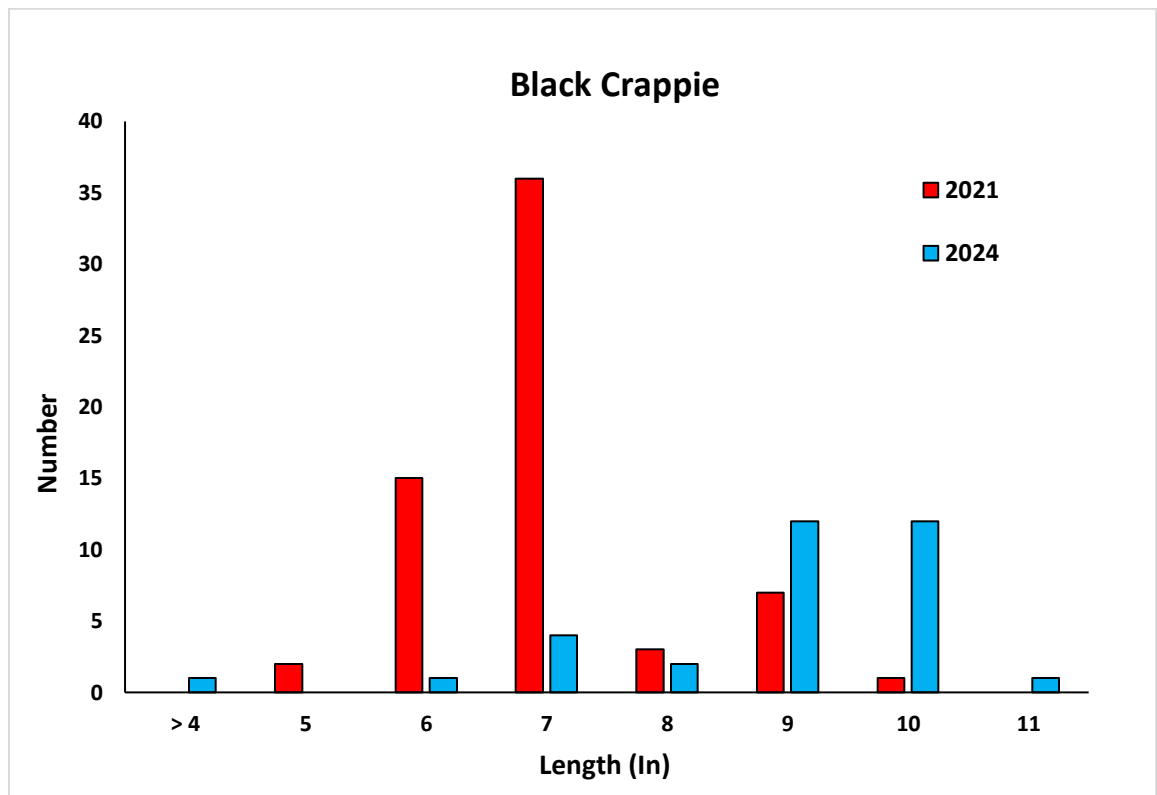
Largemouth Bass

Largemouth Bass were extremely abundant as CPUE was 323/hr, nearly the same as 2021's sample of 316/hr, and population size structure was balanced (PSD=55; bass PSD between 40 and 60 suggests balance within a predator/prey context). The PSD was greater in 2021 at 64. Additionally, large fish were common in both 2021 (CPE-P= 69; PSD-P=27) and in 2024 (CPE-P= 50; PSD-P=26); in this case, "P" is preferred fish, or those bass at least 15" total length. These structural indices were slightly below those observed in 2021, and likely within normal limits of statistical variability suggesting the population has changed little, if any. This fishery ranked 6th for impoundments managed in the NOVA district based on catch of 15"+ bass and is classified as "bass heavy", although the potential for trophy bass exists. Germantown Reservoir has been a consistent producer of "preferred" size bass with minimal variation observed long term, but even more impressive was the CPUE of 6 "memorable" bass per hour (those over 20"). Germantown is one of a select few reservoirs in northern Virginia where anglers can catch an 8-pound plus fish, and 10 pounders are not beyond reach. Anglers are encouraged to harvest bass up to 12" but release fish over this size, as this will help alleviate current stockpiling and allow remaining fish to grow out of the bottleneck.



Black Crappie

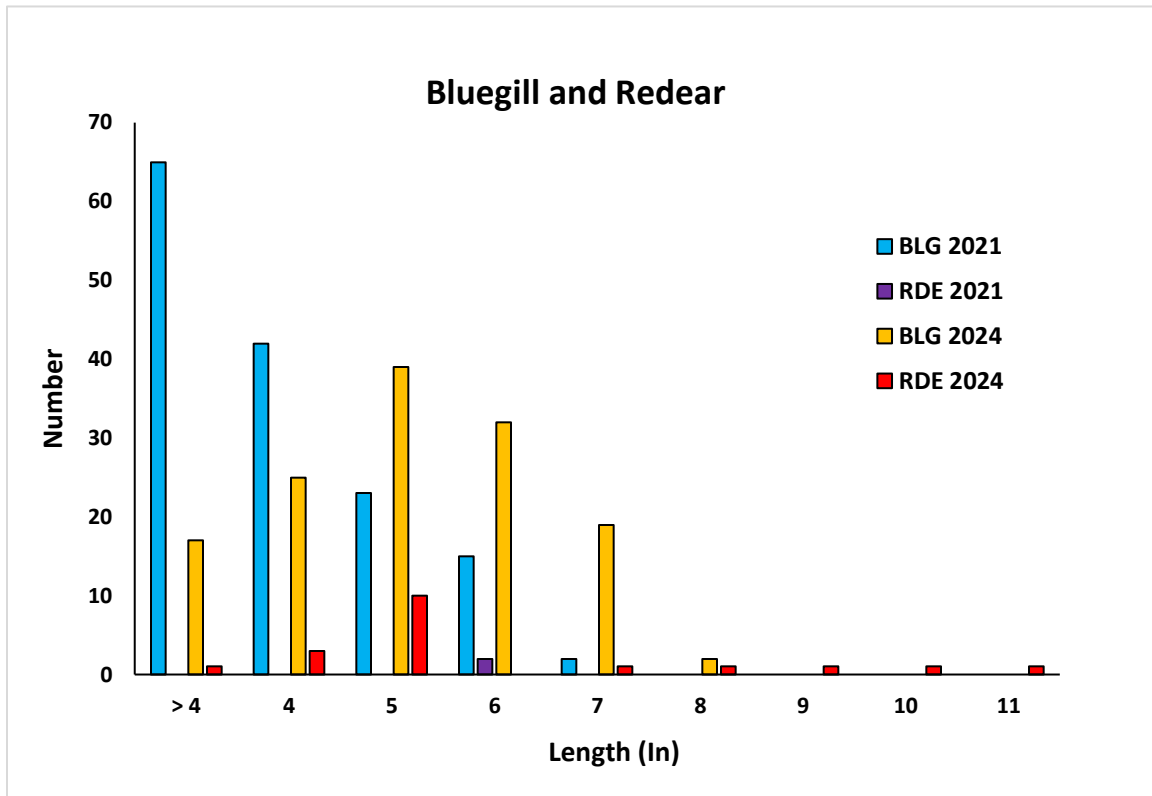
Black Crappie (BLC) electrofishing CPUE was lower in 2024 (40 fish/hr) than those of 2021 (25?? and 108 fish/hr). Germantown Lake provides an average Black Crappie fishery with numerous fish in the 6-9 inch range and up to 11 inches. Proportional Stock Density (PSD) increased significantly in 2024 to 91 from the previous sample of 31. A PSD of value of 30-60 is indication of a balanced population. The PSD values suggest the population shifted to larger fish. Crappie populations are known for fluctuating due to high annual variation in spawning success. Black Crappie are generally considered undesirable in small impoundments due to their ability to quickly overpopulate and stunt. Anglers are encouraged to harvest their limit no matter the size (25 per day) since this species exacerbates the predator-heavy scenario already in place due to bass stockpiling.



Panfish

Panfish were abundant with Bluegill dominating this group. Bluegill size structure improved from the 2021 sample, as stock density (PSD=48) was indicative of a balanced population (balanced PSD=20-40) offering anglers (and bass) adequate opportunities. Only two Redear Sunfish were observed in the 2021 sample, but in 2024

19 were collected and these fish ranged across all size categories – from very small to 11” suggesting consistent albeit low reproduction and/or recruitment.



Channel Catfish are stocked annually at a rate of 10 fish/acre – this is the only species needing stocking, since they do not successfully spawn in small impoundments (all others are naturally self-sustaining). Anglers pursuing Channel Catfish can expect fish to average about 2 pounds with larger fish occasionally landed. Eight Channel Catfish were collected (up to 22”) during the survey despite their low vulnerability to the gear. Access is only permitted during daylight hours so catfish harvest may be limited, since they are generally most active at night.

Other fish species collected during the survey included White Sucker, Green Sunfish, Yellow Bullhead and Northern Snakehead which were illegally introduced into the lake around 2023. Biologists will continue to monitor the fish community very closely to see if impacts are occurring to the aquatic community. All nine Northern Snakehead caught were removed from the lake, aged, and evaluated for food habits. Northern Snakehead are excellent table fare with numerous ways to prepare it. Anglers are strongly encouraged to harvest them, and it is illegal to possess a live snakehead (the

fish must be dead before leaving the lake). Effective methods to kill the fish are removal of the head, gills arches or internal organs.

For more information, contact Crockett Park 540-422-8873 or VDWR, Fisheries in Fredericksburg 540-899-4169.