

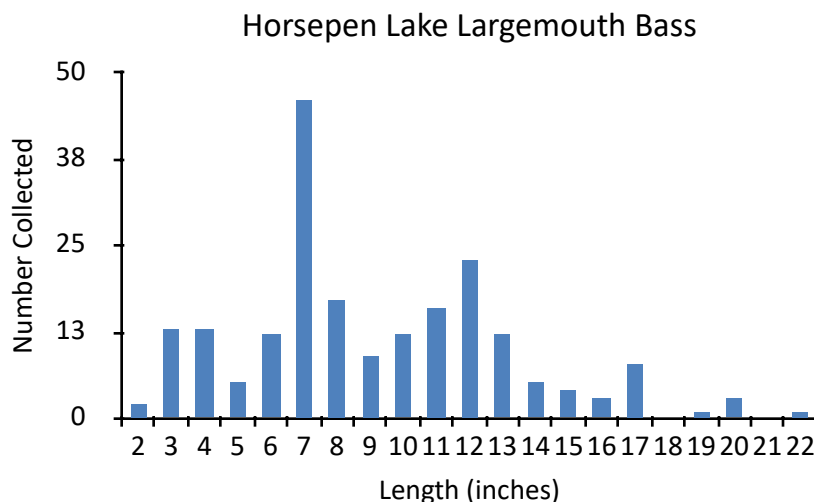


Horsepen Lake Report 2019

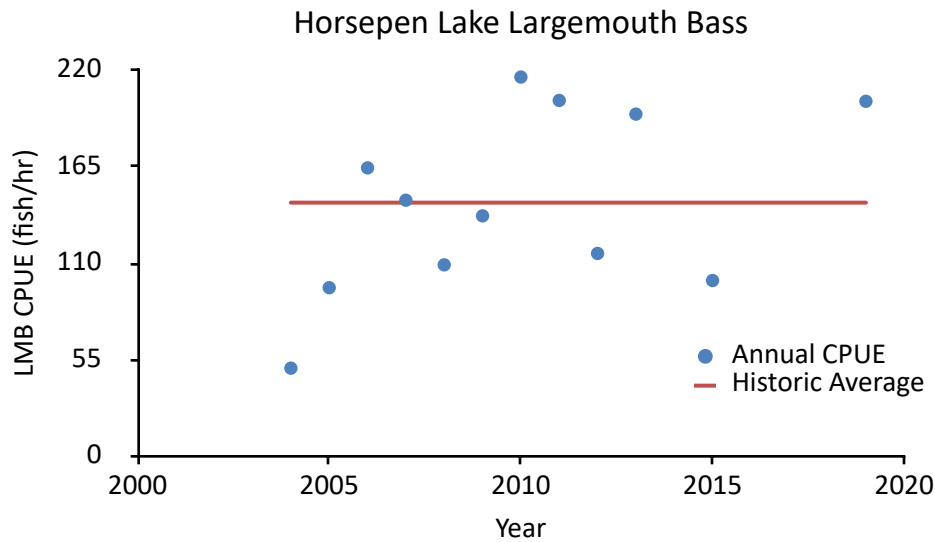
Hunter Hatcher
Fisheries Biologist
Farmville Field Office

Horsepen Lake is a 19 acre lake located in Buckingham County and owned by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The lake is an impoundment of the Slate River and is located within Horsepen Wildlife Management Area. Horsepen Lake was drained in the early 2000's and was restocked in 2002. The lake provides a warmwater fishery for Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, Redear Sunfish, Black Crappie, and Channel Catfish. Fishing regulations can be viewed online (<https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/waterbody/horsepen-lake/>) or at the kiosk near the boat ramp. . Biologists routinely sample the lake using boat electrofishing. Prior to sampling efforts in 2019 the lake had not been sampled since 2015. Below are results from the 2019 survey.

Largemouth Bass: Horsepen Lake electrofishing efforts in Spring of 2019 yielded high catch rates for Largemouth Bass. Size structure indicated a range of sizes present with some limited potential for Largemouth greater than 20 inches. Horsepen Lake is managed with a 22 inch minimum length with a one fish per day limit. The desire is to create a trophy bass fishery. Target submerged cover including fallen trees and brush piles near depth changes for Largemouth Bass.

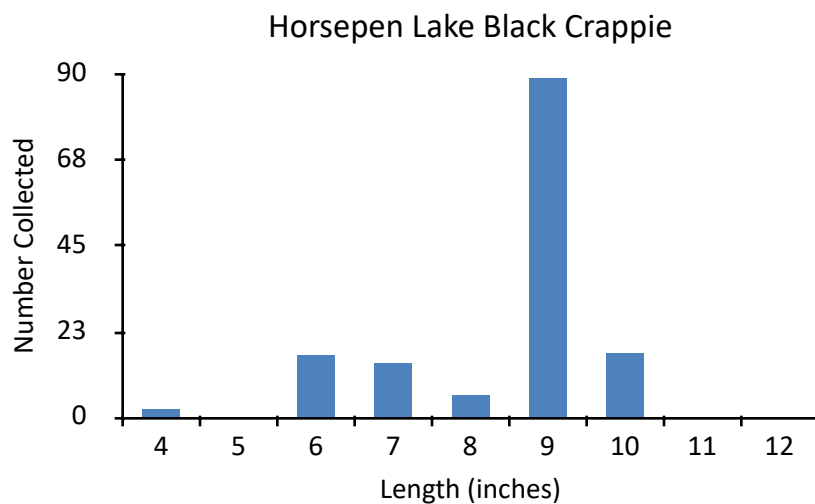


Largemouth bass size distribution at Horsepen Lake from 2019 electrofishing surveys.



Catch rate (fish/hour) for Largemouth Bass in Horsepen Lake from historic electrofishing samples.

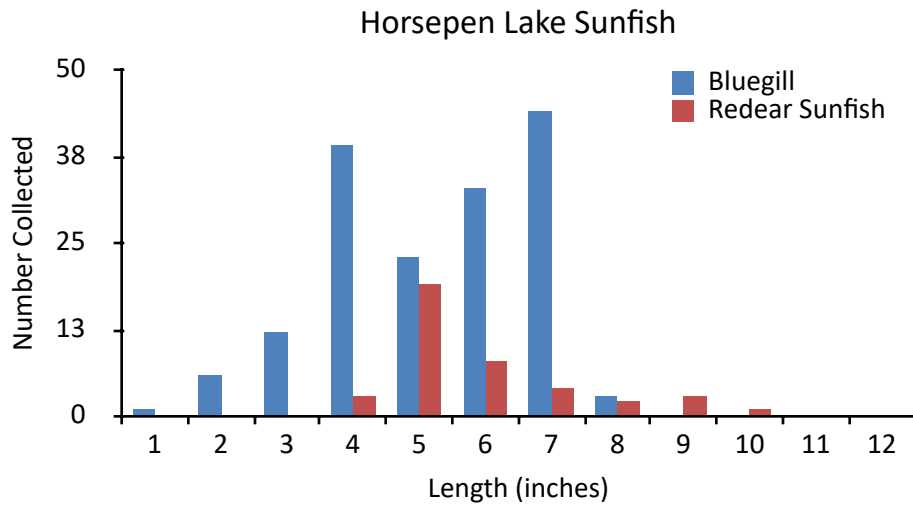
Crappie: Generally speaking Crappie are an undesirable species in small impoundments like Horsepen Lake. These fish have a tendency to become over populated and exhibit decreased growth. Horsepen Lake has an abundance of Black Crappie of catchable size and anglers are encouraged to harvest any Black Crappie they catch, not to exceed the statewide 25 fish per day limit. The average length of crappie is around 9 inches, but the potential for larger individuals does exist. Crappie tend to occupy brush piles, fallen trees, and beaver lodges during the spring and fall months. In the summer however, they typically move offshore to deeper water and can be tough to find.



Black crappie size distribution at Horsepen Lake from 2019 electrofishing survey.

Sunfish: Horsepen Lake offers modest populations of catchable size sunfish. Bluegill in particular are present in good numbers. Average size is approximately 6 inches for both Bluegill

and Redear Sunfish. Any structure along the shoreline is good for sunfish, but try to target fallen trees and beaver lodges.



Sunfish (Bluegill and Redbreast Sunfish) size distribution at Horsepen Lake from 2019 electrofishing surveys.

Catfish: Electrofishing does not target channel catfish well during surveys, but catfish are still very popular among the anglers at Horsepen. Channel catfish numbers at Horsepen are supplemented annually by stocking. Try cut bait or other natural baits fished on the bottom near creek channels on Horsepen for catfish.

Area Attractions:

[Holliday Lake](#)

[Slate River Reservoir](#)

For more information please contact Hunter Hatcher, Fisheries Biologist, at 434-392-4369