



Lake Gordonsville (Bowler's Mill) 2023



Lake Gordonsville, also known as Bowler's Mill Lake, is a 75-acre lake that was constructed in 1970 as a water supply source for the Town of Gordonsville. The Louisa County Parks and Recreation Department administers the lake, which currently contains self-sustaining populations of Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, Redear Sunfish, Black Crappie, and Chain Pickerel. To provide additional angling opportunities, the reservoir is annually stocked with Channel Catfish. In the spring of 2022, the fish community of Lake Gordonsville was sampled by boat electrofishing. This report summarizes the results of this survey and what anglers can expect to catch in Lake Gordonsville.

Lake Gordonsville contains a typical fish community for a small impoundment with a combined total of six fish species collected (Table 1). Bluegill and Largemouth Bass were the most abundant species collected in the electrofishing survey (Table 1). Lake Gordonsville continues to produce a quality Largemouth Bass fishery based on numbers and sizes of fish collected. The 2022 bass electrofishing catch rate (65 fish/hour) was slightly lower than the historical average of 86 fish/hour for the lake. The lake contains good numbers of bass in the 8 to 15 inch range but was low in numbers of fish in the 15 to 24 inch range (Figure 1). Previous surveys indicate that there are more fish in this larger size class. Sampling variability was likely the reason for the lower numbers. There is trophy bass potential in the lake as exhibited by multiple bass collected that measured over 20 inches. The largest bass collected measured 23 inches and weighed approximately 8.9 pounds. Although the overall bass population appears in good shape, there is some concern for overcrowding of the small abundant bass. The average condition of bass collected in the 8 to 15 inch range was poor (average Wrs between 85 and 88, 90-100 is ideal for Virginia). Bass are starting to stockpile in Lake Gordonsville and angler harvest of bass below 13 inches is encouraged to prevent future stunting of the population. Anglers fishing for bass should concentrate around the edge of the water shield lily-pads and drop offs around the main channel.

Lake Gordonsville offers a decent panfish fishery which include Bluegill, Redear Sunfish, and Black Crappie. These species are not extremely abundant but there are numerous harvestable-sized fish (> 8 inches) and even some larger crappie (11+ inches) available to anglers. The majority of sunfish collected were between 4 and 10 inches (Figure 4). Catches of Bluegill > 8 inches were rare but there were a fair number of the larger-sized Redear collected. Anglers searching for panfish should concentrate efforts around the sandy flats and brush piles in the spring and the deeper timber structure during the summer.

Channel Catfish are stocked annually, but none were captured in our electrofishing survey. The low capture rate of catfish was due to our sampling gear rather than a lack of fish. Catfish anglers should try night crawlers or chicken livers around channel drop-offs or structure.

Anglers looking for a scenic experience close to the Richmond and Charlottesville areas should visit Lake Gordonsville. There is ample parking and a gravel ramp that accommodates most boats. Lake Gordonsville can be reached by taking Rt. 623 west from Rt. 15, several miles south of the Town of Gordonsville. The reservoir is open 0.5 hour before sunrise till 0.5 hour after sunset, and gas powered motors are prohibited. If you plan to make a day on the lake, be

aware that a fishing permit, issued by Louisa County Parks and Recreation, is required to fish the lake. Permits are \$2.50 annually for Louisa residents, \$4 annually for Gordonsville residents and \$5.50 annually for all other anglers. Permits are obtained by contacting the Louisa County Treasurer's office (540.967.3435).

For more information on Lake Gordonsville, please contact:

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Table 1. Species account and catch rates for fish collected throughout Lake Gordonsville in 2022.

Species	Electrofishing		
	Number Collected	Catch Rate (fish/hour electrofishing)	Percentage of Catch
Black Crappie	28	26	12
Bluegill	82	76	35
Golden Shiner	1	1	< 1
Largemouth Bass	70	65	30
Redear Sunfish	51	47	22
White Sucker	3	3	1

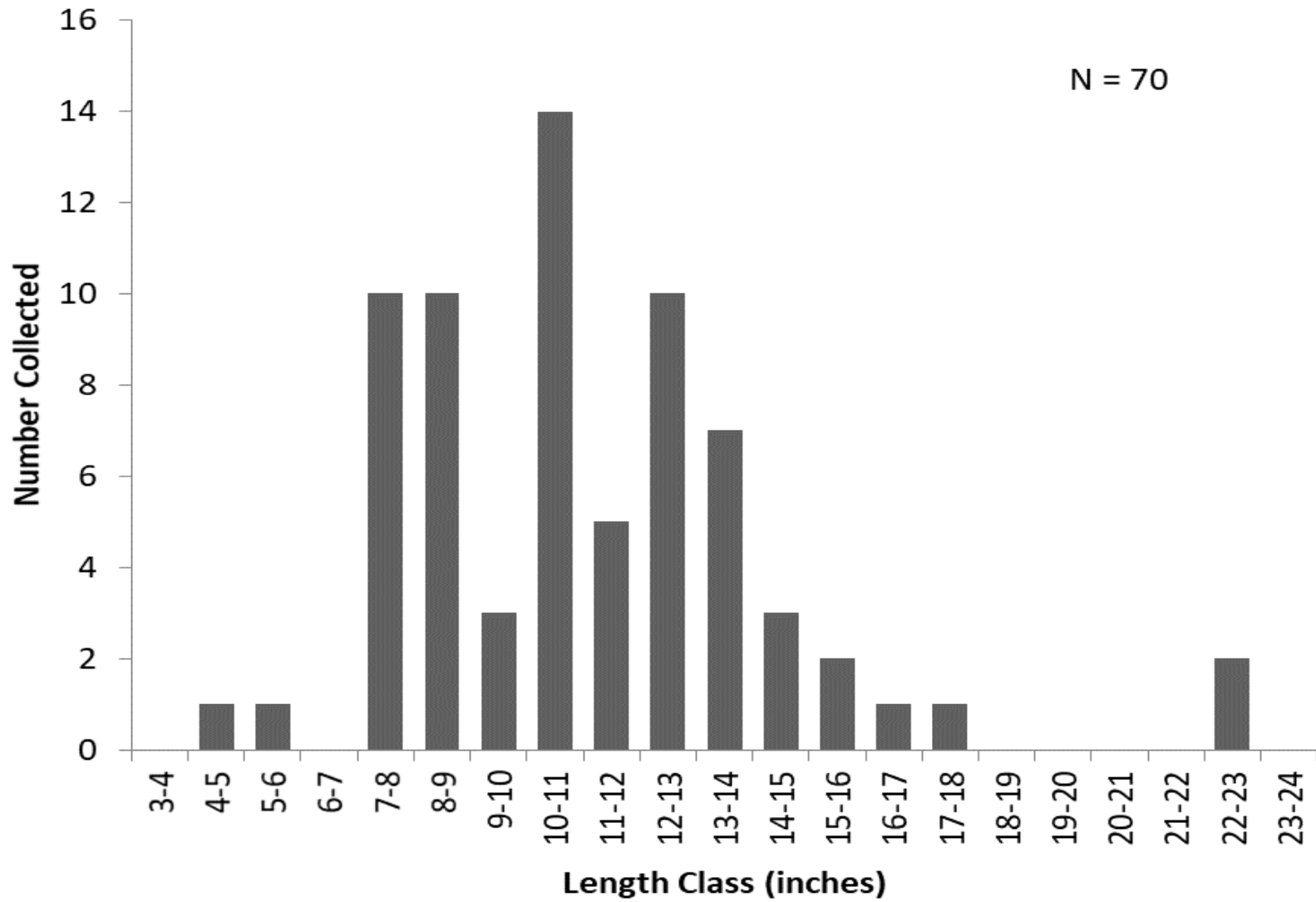


Figure 1. Length distribution of Largemouth Bass collected throughout Lake Gordonsville Reservoir in 2022.

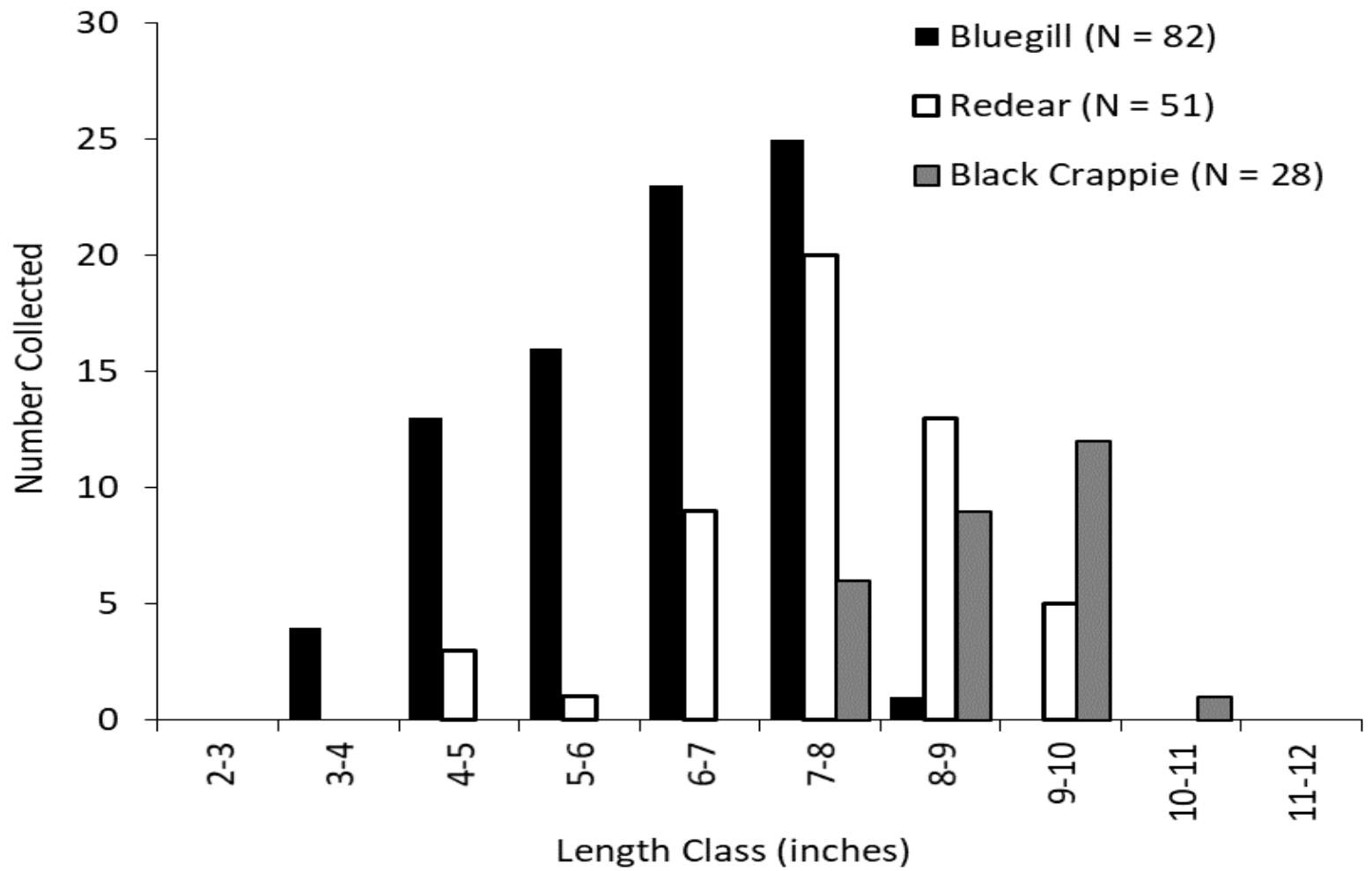


Figure 2. Length distribution of Bluegill, Redear, and Black Crappie collected with electrofishing gear throughout Lake Gordonsville in 2022.