

Masseys Mill Pond
35 acres
Cheswold, Delaware

Fish Community

Masseys Mill Pond was draw down to stream level in August of 2011 to prepare for potential flooding from Hurricane Irene. The pond refilled with precipitation from the hurricane, but a large proportion of the fish escaped downstream into Leipsic River which flows into Garrisons Lake. The pond was restocked in October of 2011 with 3"-5" Bluegill to provide adults for spring spawning and 3.5"-5" Golden Shiners to supplement the forage base. The following August, Largemouth Bass fingerlings (>3") were stocked to aid in rebuilding the population. An electrofishing survey conducted by the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife in 2014 revealed a low



Golden Shiners were stocked to supplement the forage base after the pond refilled in 2011.

density bass population with a fairly high proportion of fish $\geq 12"$. Relative weights (indication of condition or 'plumpness') were good, likely due to the abundant Bluegill population that is providing forage. To supplement previous stocking efforts and to keep Bluegill from becoming too abundant, additional Largemouth Bass of various sizes were stocked in September of 2014. Relative weights of Bluegill have improved over values observed prior to the draw down. Pumpkinseed were the only other panfish species captured during sampling in 2014 and abundance was low. No Black Crappie were captured during the 2014 survey, however, many areas with woody debris along the shoreline and upstream areas that could attract crappie were too shallow to be accessed by the electrofishing boat. Stocking Black Crappie may be warranted although this species has historically never been abundant in the pond. Common Carp dominated the non-game fish community. They were likely able to persist when water levels were low during the drawdown and then thrived as part of a low density fish community. Less abundant were Brown Bullhead, American Eel, Golden Shiner, and Gizzard Shad. Most of these species were present prior to the draw down as well.

Vegetation

Spatterdock beds occur throughout the pond but are most dense in the downstream portion. A variety of aquatic vegetation occurs in the upstream end of the pond where it is especially shallow. This is a nice area of the pond to traverse with a canoe or kayak, and amble woody debris provides a good place to cast a line. Planktonic algae, which are single celled plants that become so numerous the water appears to be green, is common in the warm summer months. In the past, floating mats of filamentous algae had to be removed with a mechanical harvester to provide areas of open water.

Access

There is an unimproved gravel area along the side of Massey Millpond Road (County Road 148) where small boats and canoes can be launched. The drop-off is close to shore so some care must be taken during launching and loading. In addition, for safety, a second person to watch for vehicle traffic may be needed due to the lack of clearance between the launch area and the road. Shoreline angling is accessible along Masseys Millpond Road. There is minimal space to fish over the dam along Brenford Road (County Road 42). Parking is very limited with only a few places to pull over along Masseys Millpond Road.



Unimproved access area along Massey Millpond Road (County Rd 148), Northwest of Cheswold



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- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.



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(See Pond Map on next page)

