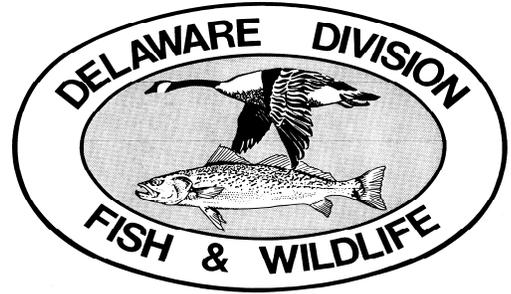


Tournament News



Fisheries Section Happenings

Summer 2009

Six ponds were sampled this spring to update fisheries population data: Abbotts, Concord, Derby, Garrisons, Killens, and Trap. Fish catch data, given as number of fish collected per electrofishing hour, are available online in the fish tables of the "Delaware Public Pond Guide" on the Division's website. The accompanying text on these six ponds will be updated later this year following aging of the scale samples taken during sampling. Starting this fall, new contour maps of the ponds will be developed—a big improvement over the current ones which were done in the mid-1970s. We will also be including the locations of the fish structures added under the "GO FISH" program.

Adult largemouth bass were collected from Broad Creek in April for the Nanticoke fingerling stocking program. A total of 35 bass were selected as brood fish. About 8,000 fingerlings (and the adults) will be returned to the Nanticoke later this summer and 2,000 stocked in the Broadkill.

The annual striped bass spawning survey in the Delaware River tagged 293 striped bass this spring. Overall, catch rates were down from recent years. However, catch rates of large stripers were similar to past years with the survey tagging fourteen fish over 40 inches long. The 2003 year class has been the strongest year class present in the spawning survey in recent years and should produce plenty of angling opportunities for stripers in the new 20 to 26 inch slot (2 per person) that runs from July 1 to August 31. If you have any questions or comments feel free to call the spawning striped bass project leader, Matt Fisher at 302-653-2887. Thank you for reporting your tags.

The Lewes boat ramp is now open. The next big construction project is the Laurel boat ramp planned for Laurel Park. Bids are going out mid-June with construction beginning in late summer or early fall. If all goes well, the ramp will be available by next spring. This will be a great improvement for boating access to the upper Broad Creek.

The process of planning for parking lot improvements & minor repairs to the boat ramps at Phillips Landing has begun. We would like to have the work completed prior to fall 2010 for the Mid-Atlantic Divisional Event planned for the Nanticoke.

www.fw.delaware.gov

Telephone numbers of Interest

- For tournament reports or tag returns: Cathy Martin, 302-653-2887, ext 106. Email:

catherine.martin @state.de.us
or

- Jared Jacobini, 302-653-2887, ext 110, Email:

jared.jacobini @state.de.us

- For tournament permits: Carol Gondeck, 302-739-9913

Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Agents:

New Castle County: 302-836-4682

Kent County: 302-739-6139

Sussex County: 302-855-1901

Dispatch Center: 302-739-4580

24-hour Enforcement Number for Environmental Complaints

1-800-662-8802

Operation Game Theft :

800-292-3030

Permit applications:

www.fw.delaware.gov/

Click on Fisheries, Go to More Info for Anglers, & click on Bass tournament/bass tag reports.

Updates....

A total of 22 tournament reports have been received thus far for 2009. Four reports from March, eight from April, eight from May, and two from June. Thanks to all of the tournament contacts who sent their reports in thus far.

Dover Bass—5 reports

Delaware Bass Hunters—5 reports

Blue Rock Bass—3 reports, and

Eastern Shore, First State, Mispillion, Diamond State, Delaware Bass Stalkers, Bad Weather Bassin', Golden Rule, Chester County, and Delmar Bass Trackers — each with 1 report.

However, 31 reports scheduled for March through mid-June have yet to be sent in. Please do so as soon as possible. Thanks for the cooperation.

Just a reminder: The Go FISH program wetlands permit expires in April 2010. If your club was thinking about putting fish habitat in one of the public ponds, now is the time to act. Contact me by telephone or email and I will send out an application. As many of you know, **Backlash Bassmasters** started the program by placing structures in Hearn's Pond during the emergency drawdown and **Eastern Shore** placed structures in two locations: Killens Pond and Griffith Lake. We will be placing poles marking two of the structures in each of the latter two ponds to assist anglers.



Preparing a brush pile for deployment at Hearn's Pond.

Youth Tournament: Fun & Prizes!

Each year on a Saturday in June, the Division's Enforcement Section sponsors free youth fishing tournaments, one in each county. Lums Pond in New Castle, Wyoming Pond in Kent, and Ingrams Pond in Sussex are the sites of the 3 events.

Kids from ages 4 to 15, sorted into 3 different age groups (4-7, 8-11, 12-15) compete for prizes. The top three winners in each age group and an overall winner get trophies and prizes such as rods and/or tackle boxes. Usually a large number of donated prizes such as lures, shirts, hats, tackle boxes, and nets are also given away to all participants through raffle tickets and give-aways. Everyone has fun!

County winners are then tabulated to determine the statewide winner. In 2009, the results were:

State winner: Danny Blasch, 12.54 lbs

New Castle Co: Danny Blasch

Kent Co. : Ronald Degano

Sussex Co.: Julia Ballard

A total of 331 kids participated in the one-day (10 am to 1 pm) event during 2009 including 202 at Lums Pond, 76 at Wyoming Mill Pond, and 53 at Ingrams Pond.

Ronald Degano had a special treat when he hooked a 1.05 lb bluegill from Wyoming Mill Pond during the contest. The fish was eligible for a citation from the Delaware Sportfishing Contest, a statewide year-long event.

Next year's event will take place in each county on June 12, 2010. Give the kids a special treat and plan to attend.

Abbotts Pond

A call from an alert tackle shop owner in the Milford area brought a potential problem to our attention. A heavy rainstorm on May 25 caused a large sinkhole to develop along Abbotts Pond shoreline between the parking lot and outlet structure. Following investigation, the problem was identified as leaking pipes under Abbotts Mill Rd. The road is now closed between Rt. 36 & the DNS facility at Abbotts Mill due to the danger of road collapse. However, the parking lot is open and fishing in the pond is still possible.

DelDOT is working on fixing the problem as soon as possible. Currently the pond water level is down between 2 & 5 inches.

Some flow is going through the millrace to lessen pressure on the pipes. An older pipe between the boat ramp parking lot and the outlet structure will be opened up to divert additional flow.

Work to replace the leaking pipes under the road is planned for this fall if possible. At that time, the water level will have to be dropped about one foot in order to dewater the work area. Planning and permit applications are proceeding. Public notices will precede the work and any restrictions on the roadway. If at all possible, work will be completed prior to spawning season next spring.

Invasive Species: Water Chestnut

Water chestnut, *Trapa natans*, is an invasive aquatic plant present in both MD and PA waters. Turner Creek in the Sassafras River is well-known to bass anglers and is also a water chestnut site. A watch group formed in that area tries to control the plant by manual harvesting.

Since it spreads by either seed or pieces of the plant itself (vegetatively), it is very important to make sure your boat is clean after fishing in any area with water chestnut.

With roots growing at depths up to 12 feet, a rosette of distinctive triangular shaped, toothed leaves floats at the water's surface.

Small white flowers, present in June, become sharp seeds with 4 horns with barbs- an-

other easily identifiable characteristic.

Water chestnut can grow in any freshwater area including tidal waters. It forms dense surface mats which can reduce oxygen levels and shade out native plant species. It appears to prefer water with high levels of nitrates and phosphates.

Originally from Europe, Asia, and Africa, the plant was brought to the US for its ornamental properties. Only after its escape during flooding did its invasiveness become known.



Water chestnut plant with distinctive leaves.
Photo by Mike Naylor, MD DNR



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On the Web

www.fw.delaware.gov/

Redear Sunfish

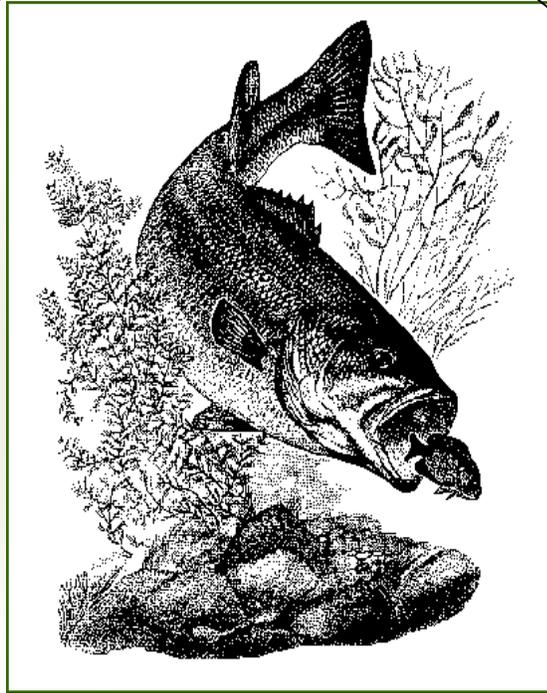
This member of the sunfish family (which also includes, bass, crappie, and the many sunfish species) is the newest species to hit Delaware. It was first documented in 1994 in Wagamons Pond by Division of Fish & Wildlife biologists during routine sampling efforts.

In the 15 years since, it has turned up in many of our public ponds and tidal creeks, possibly stocked by anglers. Hopefully, they will not have a negative effect on other members of the family.

The redear is distinguished from the bluegill by the red and white edges on the edge of the gill flap. However, it does not have the greenish stripes on the head like a pumpkinseed sunfish. Redear are also able to achieve a much larger size than other sunfish. Although the US record (from South Carolina) is over 5 lbs, the Delaware record is a respectable 3 lbs, 1 oz.

The redear is also called “shell cracker” farther south, due to its food preference for snails, mussels, and freshwater clams.

Although originally in Wagamons (and Diamond Pond), the healthiest population in recent years has been in Trap Pond. Sampling in Trap Pond has resulted in catches of numerous fish over one pound. However, Hearn's Pond and Broad Creek also support good populations.



A nice pair of redear sunfish from Trap Pond.