



Lake Gordonsville 2014



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 2013, the fish community of Lake Gordonsville was sampled by boat electrofishing and trapnet gear. This report summarizes the results of these surveys 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 ten fish species collected (Table 1). Largemouth bass and bluegill were the most abundant species collected in the electrofishing survey while black crappie and bluegill were the most abundant species collected in the trapnet survey (Table 1). Lake Gordonsville continues to produce a quality largemouth bass fishery based on numbers and sizes of fish collected. The largemouth bass electrofishing catch rate was considerably higher than rates from previous surveys on the lake. The increase in catch was mainly attributed to increases in numbers of bass between 8 and 13 inches. The lake contains considerable numbers of bass in the 8 to 15 inch range and decent numbers of fish in the 15 to 20 inch range (Figure 1). There is trophy bass potential in the lake as exhibited by 4 bass collected that measured over 20 inches. The largest bass collected measured 24 inches and weighed approximately 7 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 12 to 15 inch range was very poor (Average Wr of 70, 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.

Crappie catch rates were low with all the crappie catch composed of black crappie. Lake Gordonsville supports a decent crappie fishery with the majority of crappie collected in the 5 to 11 inch range (Figure 2). Eighty percent of crappie collected were younger than age-5, indicating a young population. These younger fish are exhibiting fast growth; on average crappie are approaching 10 inches by age-4 (Figure 3). Very fast growth, a low catch, and a young population indicate overexploitation of the crappie fishery; the overharvest is also exhibited in the high mortality rate of the crappie population (around 35%). The mortality rate should ideally be under 30%, but the exploitation is not at a point of high concern. Biologist will continue to monitor the crappie population to observe any increase in the harvest and to determine if any regulations changes are needed to benefit the fishery.

Lake Gordonsville offers decent bluegill and redear sunfish fisheries. These panfish are not extremely abundant but there are numerous harvestable-sized fish (> 6 inches) available to anglers. The majority of sunfish collected were between 7 and 9 inches (Figure 4). Catches of panfish > 9 inches were rare. 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 only twenty five were captured in our surveys. The low capture rate of catfish was due to our sampling gear rather than a lack of fish. Channel catfish collected ranged in size from 10 to 24 inches with 60% being larger than 15 inches. 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 2013. The notation NC means none collected.

Species	Electrofishing			Trapnets		
	Number Collected	Catch Rate (fish/hour electrofishing)	Percentage of Catch	Number Collected	Catch Rate (fish/net night)	Percentage of Catch
Black Crappie	48	34	16.8	99	3.3	44.0
Bluegill	61	44	21.3	46	1.5	20.4
Brown Bullhead	NC	NC	NC	16	0.5	7.1
Channel Catfish	1	1	0.3	24	0.8	10.7
Creek Chubsucker	NC	NC	NC	2	0.1	0.9
Golden Shiner	3	2	1.0	1	0.0	0.4
Largemouth Bass	145	104	50.7	13	0.4	5.8
Redear	21	15	7.3	7	0.2	3.1
White Sucker	7	5	2.4	2	0.1	0.9
Yellow Bullhead	NC	NC	NC	15	0.5	6.7

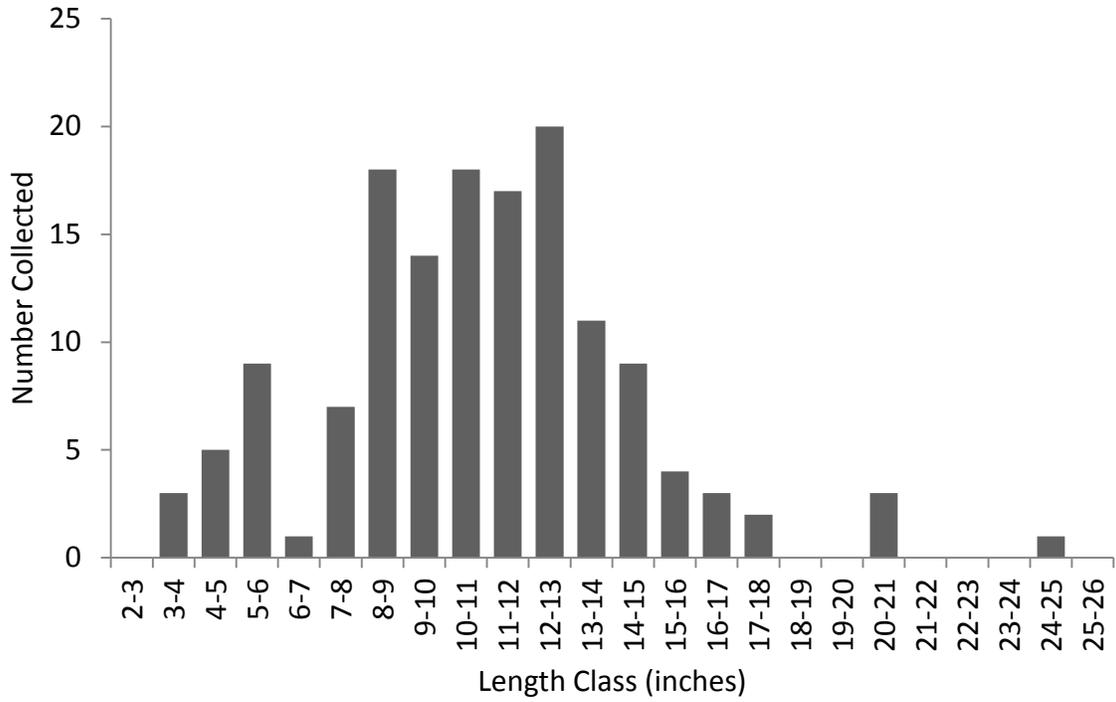


Figure 1. Length distribution of largemouth bass collected throughout Lake Gordonsville Reservoir in 2013.

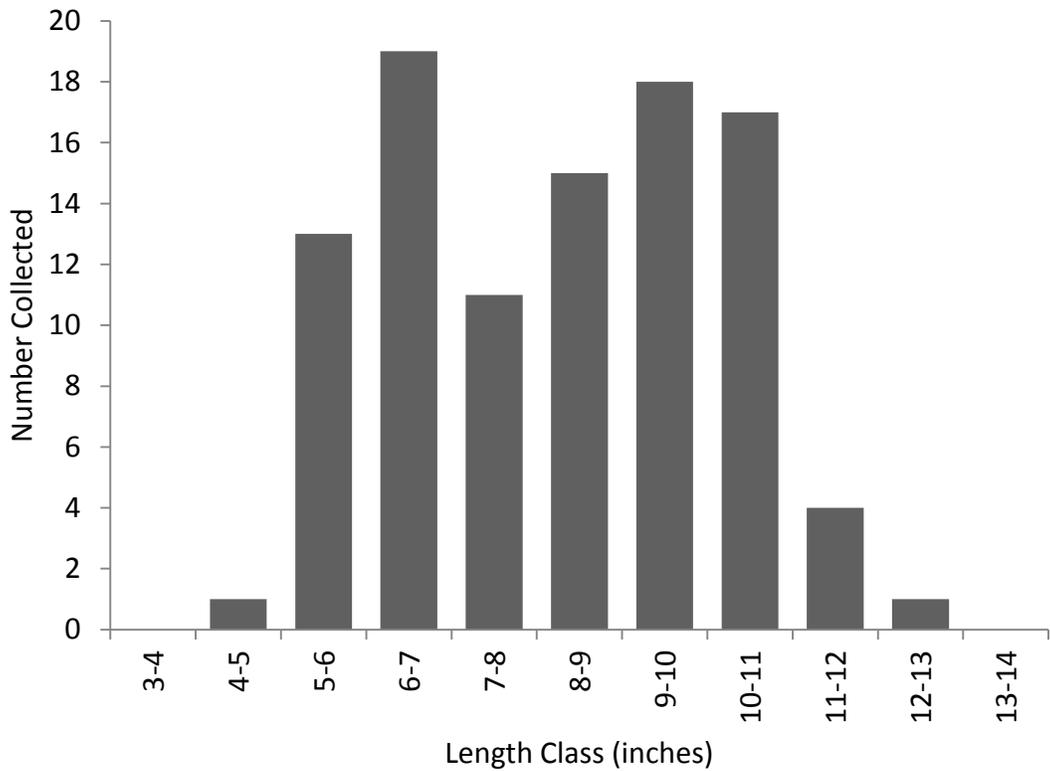


Figure 2. Length distribution of black crappie collected with trapnets throughout Lake Gordonsville in 2013.

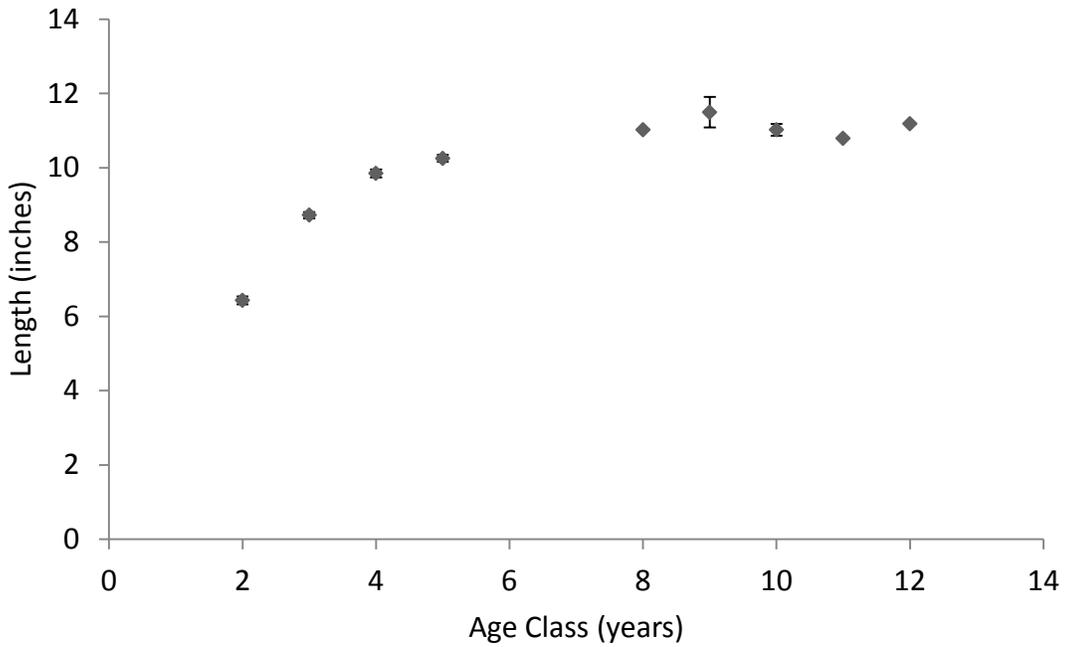


Figure 3. Average length-at-age of crappie collected throughout Lake Gordonsville in 2013. Error bars indicate standard error.

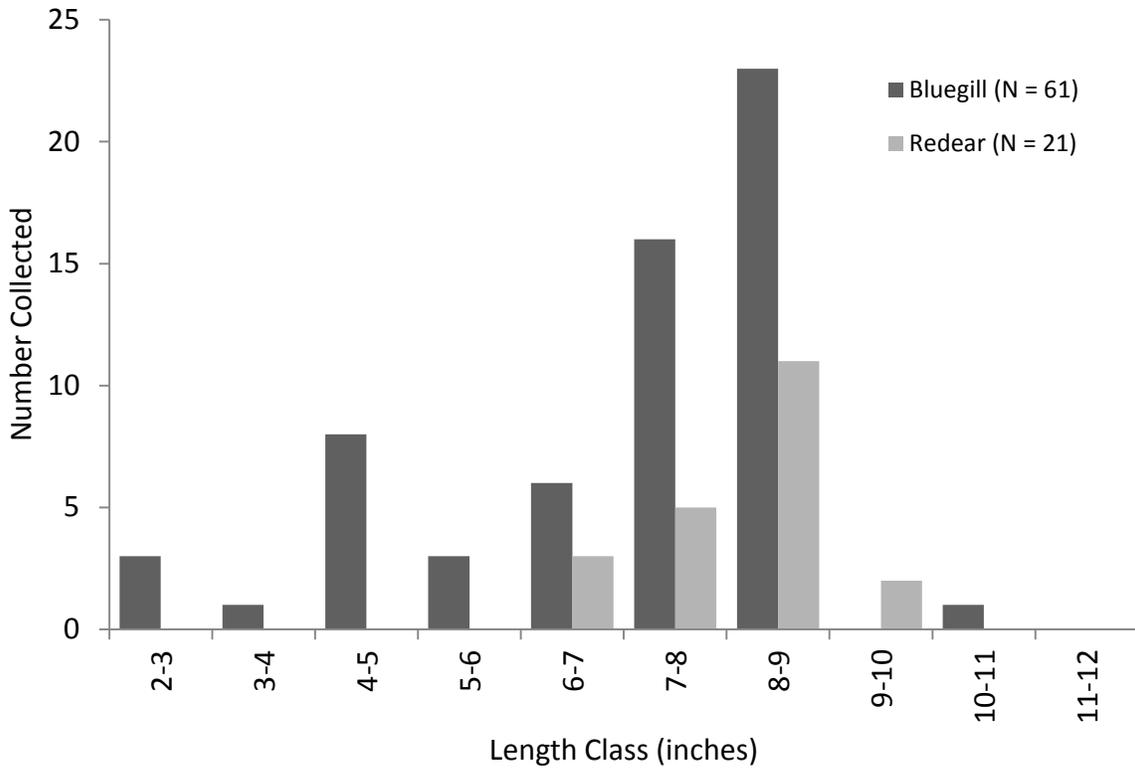


Figure 4. Length distribution of bluegill and redear collected with electrofishing gear throughout Lake Gordonsville in 2013