



Mint Springs 2007



Mint Springs Park contains two ponds and the Albemarle County Parks Department administers it. The ponds are part of the Department's put-and-take trout stocking program, but also contain several warmwater species. Swimming is the big attraction in the larger upper pond during the summer, but there is ample room for anglers to enjoy shore fishing. Mint Springs is open during daylight hours.

The ponds were sampled using electrofishing in late-May, 2006. Despite sampling the entire shoreline of the lower pond, only 44 fish of five species were collected, including two rainbow trout. The steep shoreline and very clear water probably impacted the ability to effectively capture fish with electrofishing. But, the clear water also indicates that fertility is low. Largemouth bass was the most common species (23), but none exceeded 11 inches. Anglers present at the time of sampling indicated that there are a few large bass in the pond. Surprisingly, warmouth was the most abundant sunfish. Only four bluegill were collected. Given the small size of this pond and its low fertility, there are very limited options for management. It will continue to be stocked with trout.

The sample from the upper pond contained only three species of fish: largemouth bass, bluegill, and black crappie. Crappie had not been collected in previous samples; only two were caught. This is probably a very small population. Largemouth bass (46) and bluegill (45) were equally abundant, but this indicates an imbalance between the predator (bass) and forage (bluegill) populations. There should be significantly more bluegill present for balance to exist. Consequently, there is inadequate food for the bass and the largest one collected was just 13 inches long. The bluegill population had a diverse size structure with a few reaching 8 inches. Fertility of this pond also appeared relatively low and is probably responsible for the low population of bluegill and small size of bass. Trout should continue to provide the main attraction in this pond, though none were collected.