



Mint Springs Lakes 2015



Located just west of Crozet in Albemarle County, the two Mint Springs lakes are small (< 5 acres) recreation lakes administered by Albemarle Parks and Recreation. The ponds are part of the Department's put-and-take trout stocking program, but also contain several warmwater species including largemouth bass, bluegill, and crappie. Channel catfish are stocked in both lakes to create an additional fishery. In the spring of 2014, the fish communities of both lakes were sampled by boat electrofishing. This report summarizes the results of these surveys and what anglers can expect to catch in the Mint Springs lakes.

The fish communities of both lakes are limited by small waterbody size. The main fishing attraction is the popular put-and-take trout stocking program. During sampling numerous trout were observed but were not collected. Excluding trout, a total of six fish species were collected in both lakes during the 2014 surveys (Table 1). Largemouth bass and bluegill were by far the most abundant species collected in both lakes (Table 1).

The bass fisheries in both lakes are severely stunted with bass stockpiling at sizes below 12 inches (Figure 1). A few larger bass were collected and were of exceptional size for the small lakes. The largest bass was collected in the lower lake, measured 21 inches and slightly larger than 7 lbs. To correct stockpiling and produce more quality bass, anglers should harvest every bass caught under 12 inches within the 5 bass per statewide creel limit. Once harvest is increased, bass growth will improve and more bass will grow to larger sizes. There is a 12-22 inch protective slot limit enforced at both lakes to protect the limited number of large bass produced. Additionally, harvest of only one bass over 22 is allowed per angler per day.

The sunfish population, primarily bluegill and black crappie, were limited in numbers. Although low in number, quality sized bluegill and crappie were collected (Figures 2 and 3). These fish were between 9 and 12 inches and would be a potential trophy catch for any angler. The largest sunfish collected was a crappie that was close to 12 inches in length and weighed over 1 pound.

The trout fisheries within the Mint Springs lakes are major fishing attractions but there are ample opportunities to catch other species including stocked catfish. The park has wonderful amenities including a fishing pier in the lower lake, numerous bank fishing access, and picnic areas. Swimming is the big attraction in the upper pond during the summer, but there is ample room for anglers to enjoy shore fishing. Mint Springs is open during daylight hours, and a small fee is required to enter the park. Boats are prohibited on both lakes.

For more information on the Mont Springs lakes please contact:

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Table 1. Species account and catch rates for fish collected throughout the Mint Springs lakes in 2014.

Species	Upper			Lower		
	Number Collected	Catch Rate (fish/hour electrofishing)	Percentage of the Catch	Number Collected	Catch Rate (fish/hour electrofishing)	Percentage of the Catch
Black Crappie	5	14	5	1	4	2
Bluegill	38	107	41	17	70	34
Brown Bullhead	1	3	1	None Collected		
Channel Catfish	5	14	5	None Collected		
Largemouth Bass	43	121	47	24	99	48
Warmouth	None Collected			8	33	16

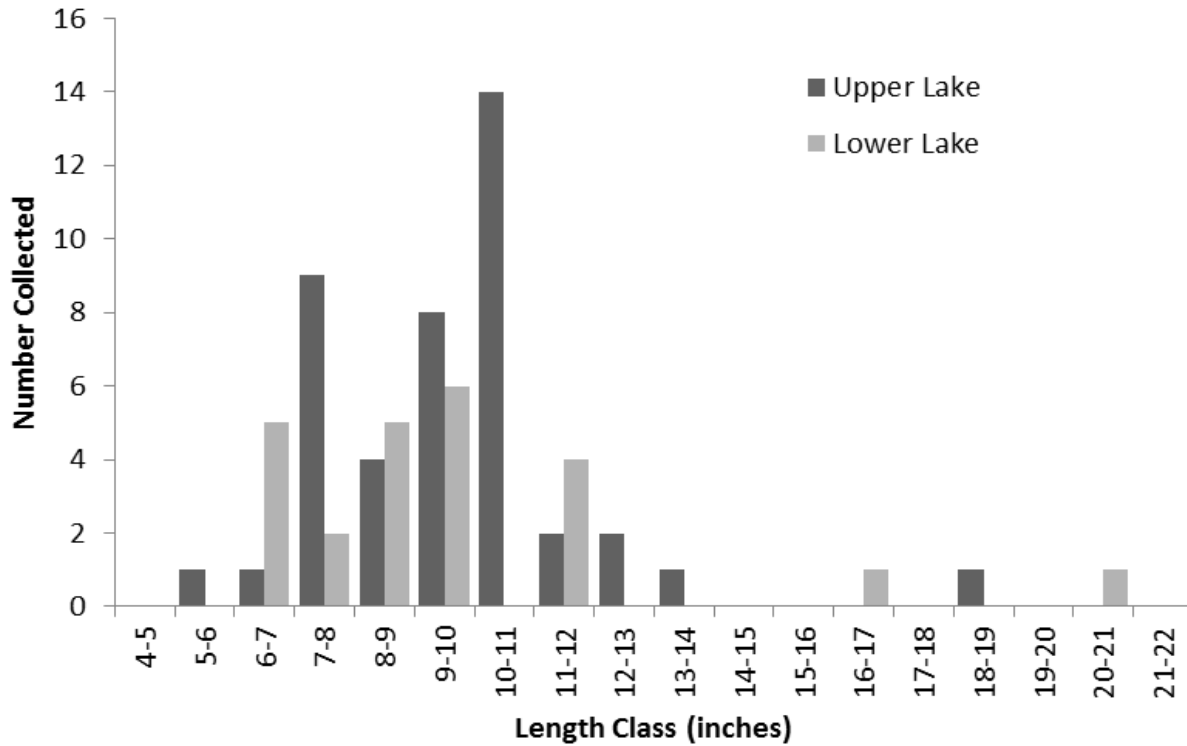


Figure 1. Length distribution of largemouth bass collected throughout the Mint Springs Lakes in 2014.

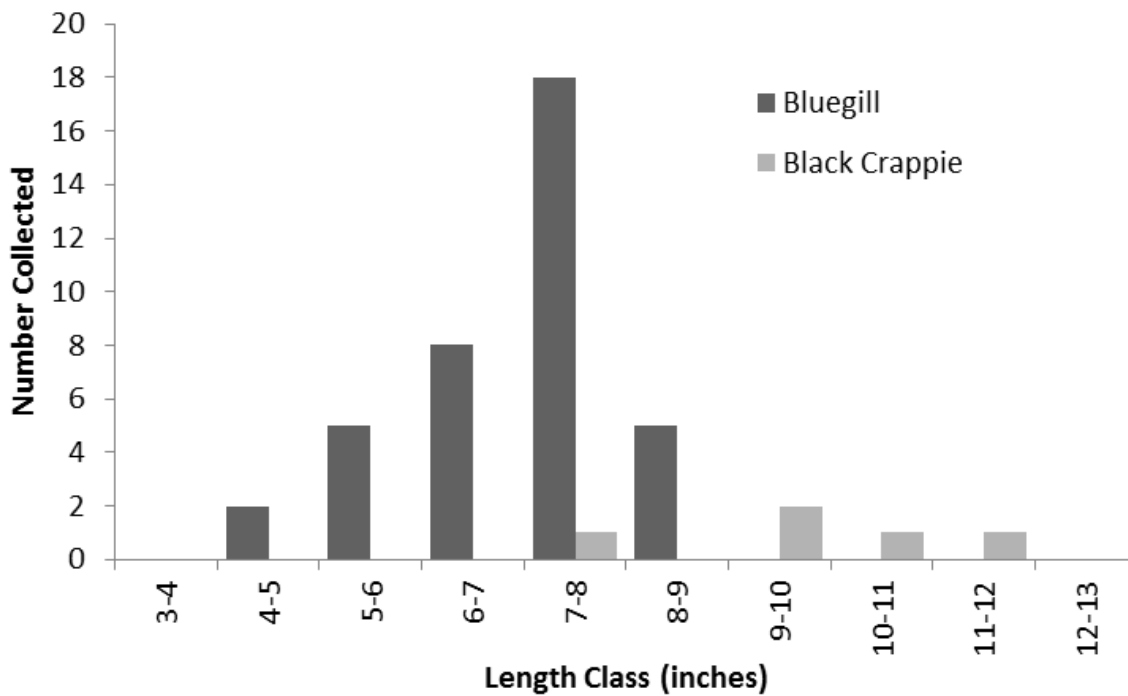


Figure 2. Length distribution of bluegill and black crappie collected throughout upper Mint Springs Lake in 2014.

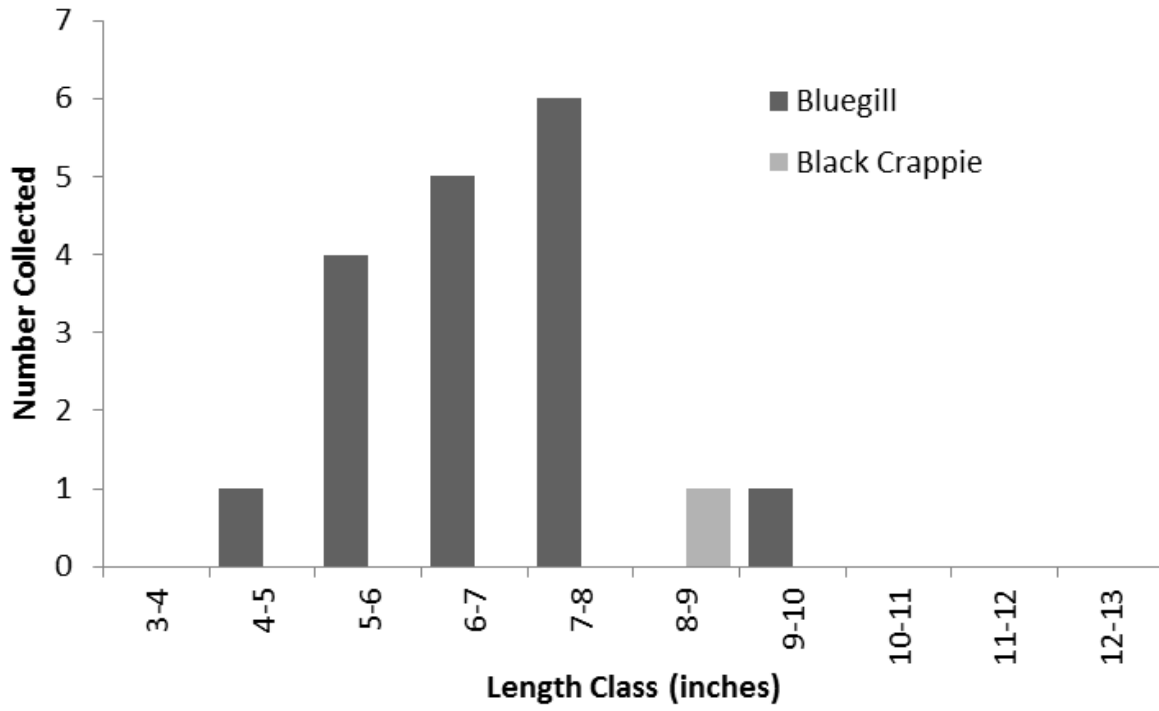


Figure 3. Length distribution of bluegill and black crappie collected throughout lower Mint Springs Lake in 2014.