



Beaver Creek Reservoir 2024



Located in Albemarle County, Beaver Creek Reservoir is a 104-acre water supply impoundment for the town of Crozet. The reservoir contains self-sustaining populations of Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, Redear Sunfish, and Black Crappie. Additionally, the lake is stocked annually with Channel Catfish to maintain a fishery. The lake has traditionally provided excellent Largemouth Bass and panfish fisheries. In the spring of 2023, the fish community of Beaver Creek was sampled by boat electrofishing and trapnets. This report summarizes the results of these surveys and what anglers can expect to catch in Beaver Creek.

Beaver Creek Reservoir's fish community is diverse with a total of nine fish species collected in the 2023 surveys (Table 1). Largemouth Bass and Bluegill were by far the most abundant species collected in the electrofishing survey, while Black Crappie and White Perch were the most abundant species collected in the trapnet survey (Table 1). Beaver Creek's Largemouth Bass population is mediocre based on the size of bass collected. Bass catch rates were slightly high for the area, and the bass population is dominated by fish in the 11–13-inch size range (Figure 1). Like previous surveys, the bass are exhibiting some stunted growth and are stockpiling below 13 inches. This is a continued trend for Beaver Creek since the early 2000. The reservoir needs small bass (< 13 inches) harvest. Anglers should harvest bass under 13 inches within the 5 bass per statewide creel limit. A handful of bass over 20 inches were collected (Figure 1), but stockpiling is limiting the trophy bass potential of the lake. The largest bass collected measured 22 inches and weighed 7.3 lbs. The most productive areas for bass were the points and woody structures throughout the lake.

Sunfish electrofishing catch rates were somewhat low with Bluegill comprising most sunfish collected. The bulk of sunfish collected were small (< 9 inches); only a few Bluegill and Redear Sunfish between 9 and 10 inches were collected (Figure 2). The low catch rates are likely a function of predation by the abundant smaller bass. Anglers determined to catch quality sunfish should concentrate their efforts on around woody structure throughout the lake or on the sunny flats around the dam spillway.

Crappie catch rates were good with all the crappie catch composed of Black Crappie. Beaver Creek supports a quality crappie fishery with the majority of crappie collected in the 10-to-13-inch range (Figure 3). The lake is regulated under a 9-inch minimum size limit for crappie and the individuals in this fishery are exhibiting fast growth; on average crappie are exceeding 11 inches by age-3 (Figure 4). Based on numbers and growth rates, Beaver Creek provides an exceptional Black Crappie fishery. The 9-inch size restriction should be increased to 10-inches to protect crappie till they reach at least age-3.

A limited number of Channel Catfish were collected during the surveys, ranging in size between 9 and 22 inches. Catfish collected were all plump and the perfect size for a good meal. Additionally, we captured many White Perch during the 2023 surveys and these fish were of exceptional size for the species. The average White Perch measured nearly 11 inches with the largest measuring 13.5 inches. Anglers looking for an excellent crappie and White Perch lake that is in the Charlottesville area should visit Beaver Creek Reservoir. The lake offers good numbers of Largemouth Bass, Channel Catfish, and smaller panfish for anglers to enjoy. There is a concrete boat ramp, courtesy piers, bathrooms, and numerous areas for bank fishing. Gas powered motors are prohibited in the reservoir.

For more information on Beaver Creek, please contact:
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Table 1. Species account and catch rates for fish collected throughout Beaver Creek Reservoir in 2023.

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	18	14	6		130	7.0	40
Bluegill	109	82	36		59	3.0	18
Brown Bullhead	None Collected				6	1.0	2
Channel Catfish	3	2	1		2	1.0	1
Largemouth Bass	149	112	50		1	1.0	< 1
Redear	16	12	5		None Collected		
White Perch	2	2	1		127	6.0	39
White Sucker	1	1	< 1		1	1.0	< 1
Yellow Bullhead	1	1	< 1		1	1.0	< 1

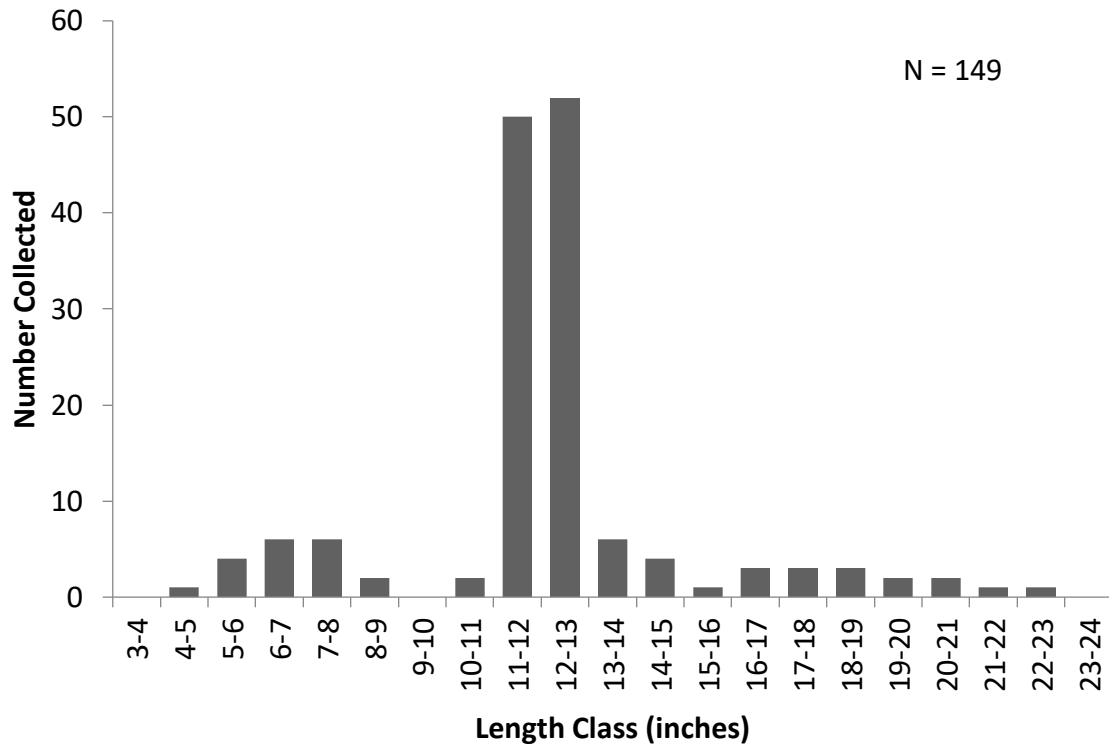


Figure 1. Length distribution of Largemouth Bass collected with electrofishing gear throughout Beaver Creek Reservoir in 2023.

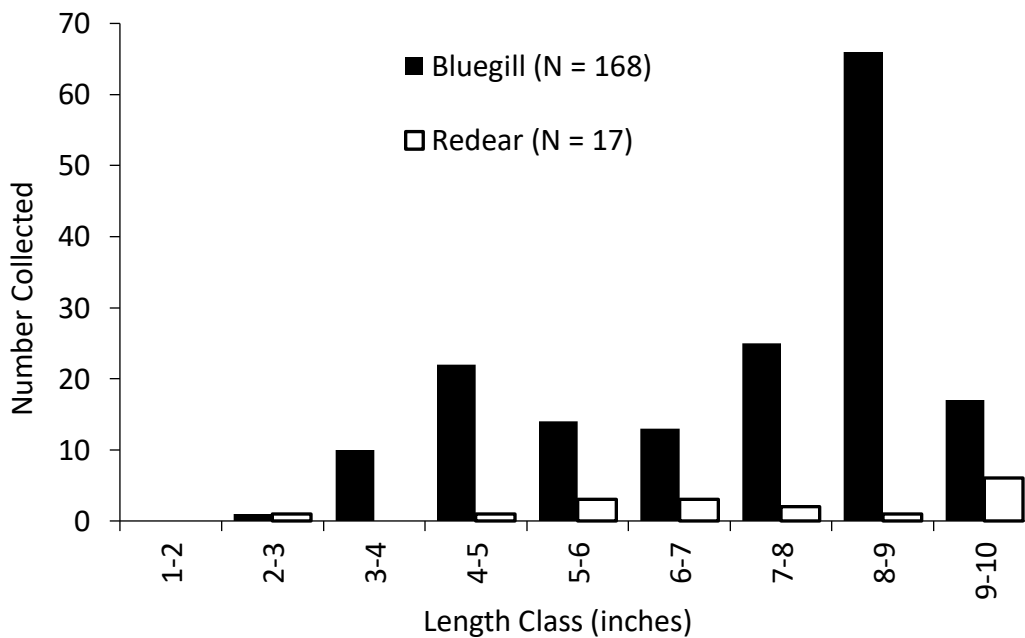


Figure 2. Length distribution of sunfish collected with electrofishing gear throughout Beaver Creek in 2023.

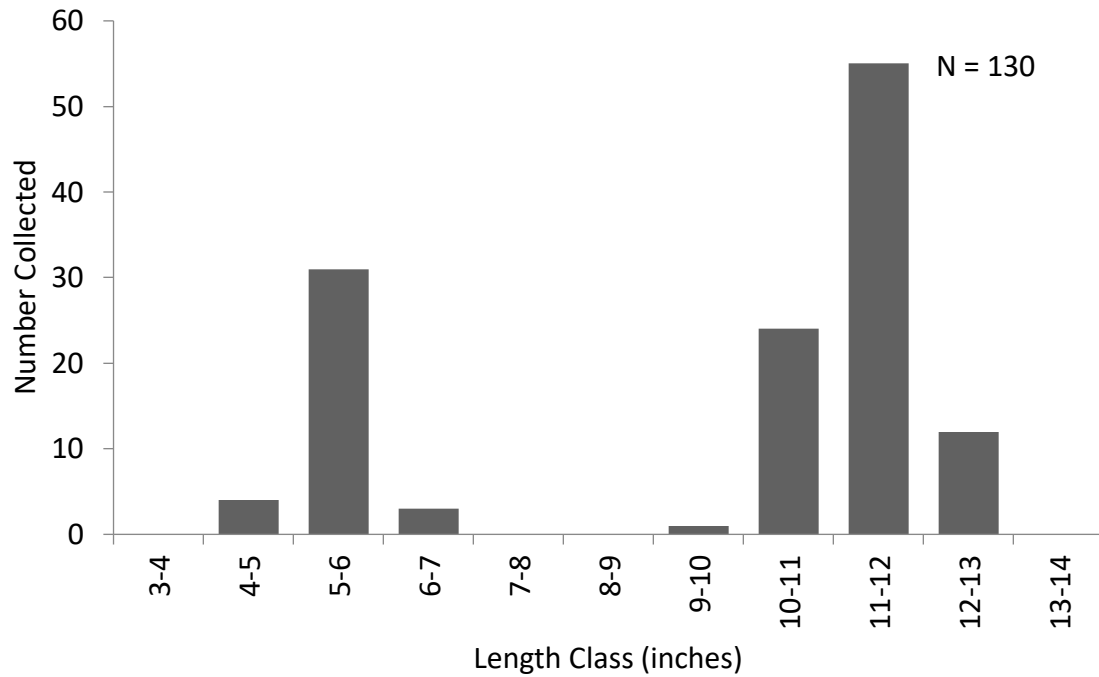


Figure 3. Length distribution of Black Crappie collected with trapnets throughout Beaver Creek Reservoir in 2020.

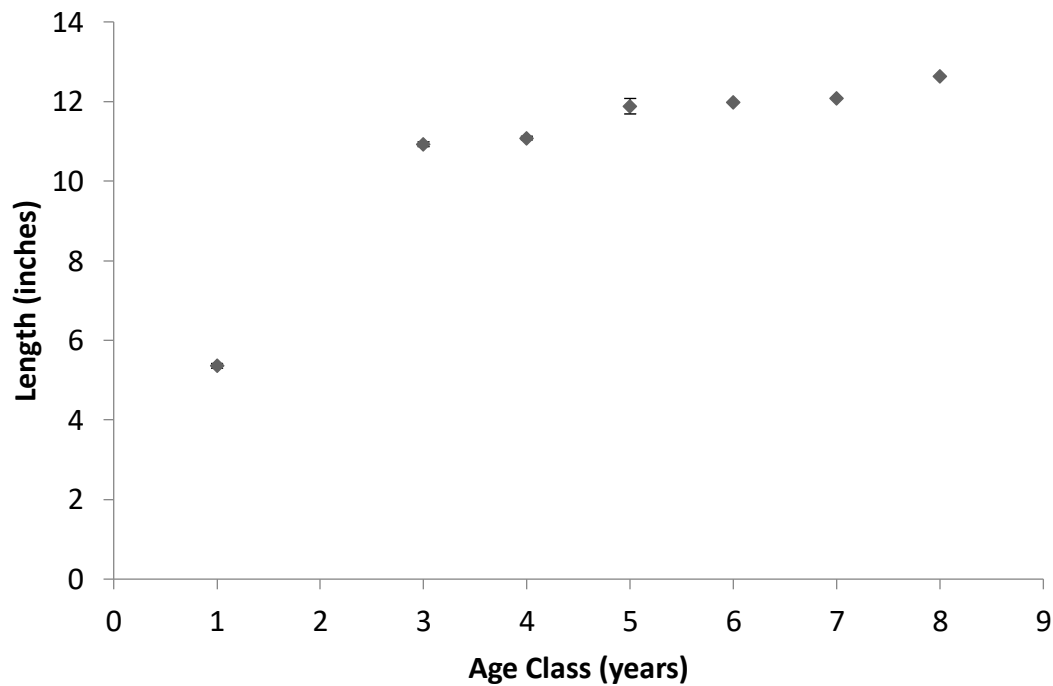


Figure 4. Average length-at-age of crappie collected throughout Beaver Creek Reservoir in 2023. Error bars indicate standard error.