



## Northeast Creek Reservoir 2023



Located in Louisa County, Northeast Creek Reservoir is a 170-acre water supply reservoir that is administered by the Louisa County Water Authority. The reservoir was constructed in 1983, open to fishing in 1987, and 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 2022, the fish community of Northeast Creek Reservoir was sampled by boat electrofishing. This report summarizes the results of these surveys and what anglers can expect to catch in Northeast Creek.

Northeast Creek Reservoir contains a diverse fish community for a small impoundment with a combined total of seven fish species collected in the 2022 survey (Table 1). Bluegill and Largemouth Bass were the most abundant species collected in the electrofishing survey, followed closely by Black Crappie and Redear Sunfish (Table 1). The Largemouth Bass electrofishing catch rate was low (33 fish/hour) when compared to a typical Central Virginia impoundment and the historical average for the lake (42 fish/hour). The lower than average catch rate was likely due to sampling variability instead of a decreased population. In the previous survey (2019), the bass catch rate was considerably higher than the historical average indicating variability instead of a downward trend in population size. Low bass catch rates in Northeast Creek are primarily a function of low lake productivity. The reservoir has a small watershed supplying nutrients to the lake, and the reservoir has a large presence of aquatic vegetation that utilize nutrient that would be available to prey fish.

The Largemouth Bass population is showing signs of slow grow due to the limited productivity. Previous surveys have shown that, on average, bass in Northeast Creek do not reach 12 inches until age-5 and do not reach 16 inches until after age-7. Further evidence of low productivity is stockpiling of bass in the 8 to 13 inch range (Figure 1). The largest bass collected in the 2022 survey measured 21 inches and weighed 5.7 pounds; these large fish were rare in the collections. Additionally, bass appear to be in poor condition with the average relative weight for adult fish below 83. Relative weight is a measure of fitness or plumpness, and in Central Virginia, ideal relative weights should range between 90 and 100. Overcrowding in the smaller size classes combined with poor lake productivity is leading to poor bass growth and less potential for the lake to produce quality bass. Angler harvest of small bass (< 13 inches) within the statewide 5 bass per day creel limit is encouraged. Anglers fishing for bass should concentrate around the edge of the water shield lily pads and in the areas with standing timber.

Northeast Creek Reservoir offers a marginal panfish fishery (mainly Black Crappie, Bluegill, and Redear Sunfish). These panfish are not extremely abundant but there are some harvestable-sized fish (> 8 inches) available to anglers. The majority of sunfish collected were between 3 and 9 inches (Figure 4). Catches of panfish > 9 inches were rare except for the occasional Black Crappie. 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. A good area to start is the brush piles in the eastern arm of the reservoir or the sandy banks on the western shore, just above the boat launch.

Channel Catfish and Chain Pickerel offer anglers a different variety of fishing experience in the reservoir. Channel Catfish are stocked annually, but only two were captured in our electrofishing survey. The absence of catfish in the catch is due to our sampling gear rather than a lack of fish. Very few pickerel were collected in the 2022 survey (Table 1), but the abundance of vegetation offers these fish plenty of suitable habitat and numerous places to hide. Fishing around the vegetation beds with rooster-tailed spinner or beetle-spin baits should give anglers a chance to catch a pickerel.

Anglers looking for a scenic experience with little interference from other anglers should visit Northeast Creek Reservoir. There is ample parking and a gravel ramp that accommodates most boats. The entrance to the lake is an unmarked gravel road directly off Route 33 (approximately 5 miles east of Louisa). 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 Water Authority, is required to fish the lake. Permits are \$2.00 daily, \$10.00 annual, \$8.00 for senior citizens (calendar year), and can be obtained by contacting The Water Authority (540.967.1122) or from Maddox Feed Store in Louisa.

For more information on Northeast Creek Reservoir, please contact:

Johnathan Harris  
District Fisheries Biologist  
Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources  
johnathan.harris@dwr.virginia.gov  
(804) 305-8940

Table 1. Species account and catch rates for fish collected throughout Northeast Creek Reservoir in 2022.

Species	Electrofishing		
	Number Collected	Catch Rate (fish/hour electrofishing)	Percentage of Catch
Black Crappie	32	24	19
Bluegill	63	47	37
Channel Catfish	2	2	1
Chain Pickerel	4	3	2
Largemouth Bass	44	33	26
Redear Sunfish	23	17	13
Warmouth	3	2	2

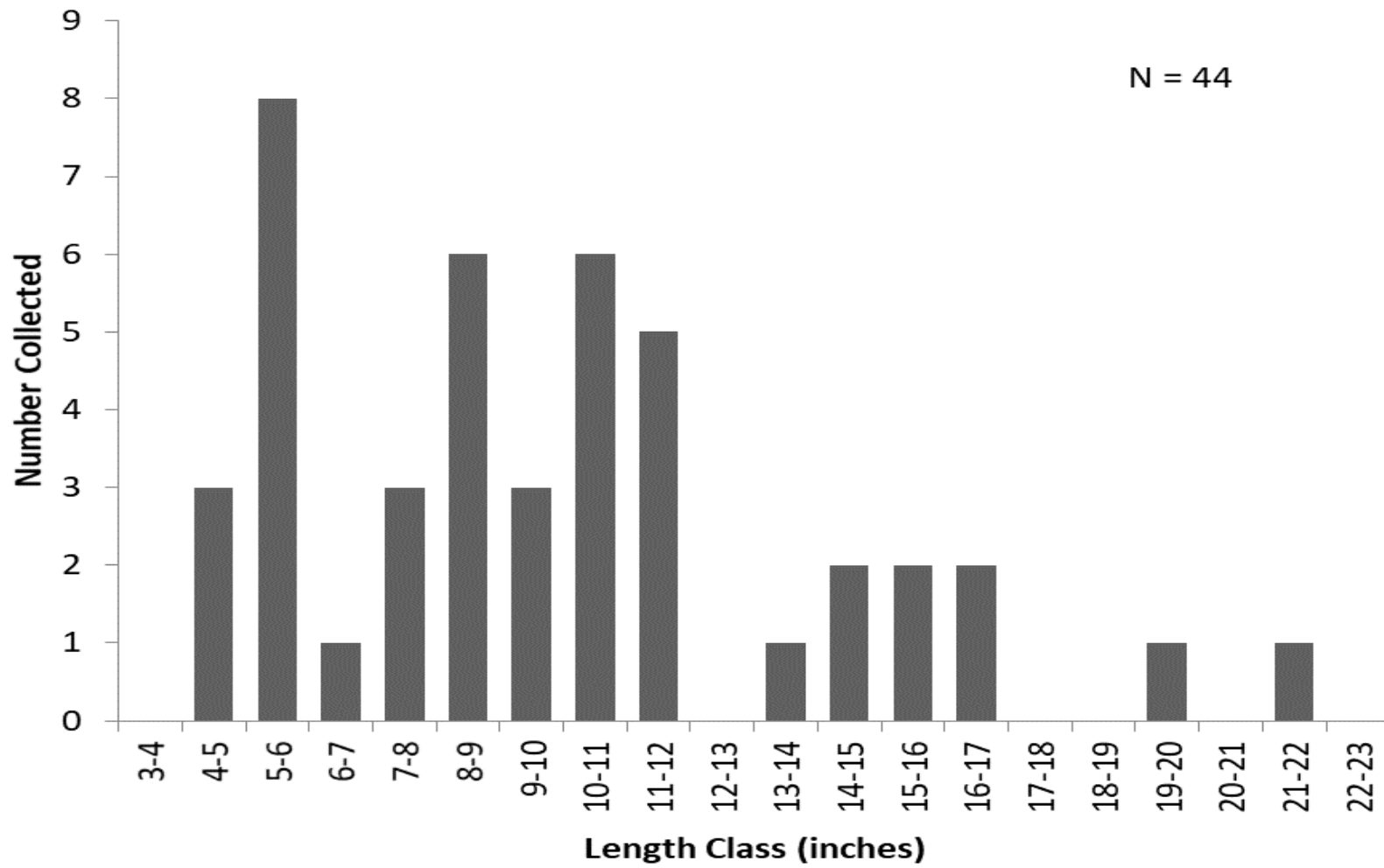


Figure 1. Length distribution of Largemouth Bass collected throughout Northeast Creek Reservoir in 2022.

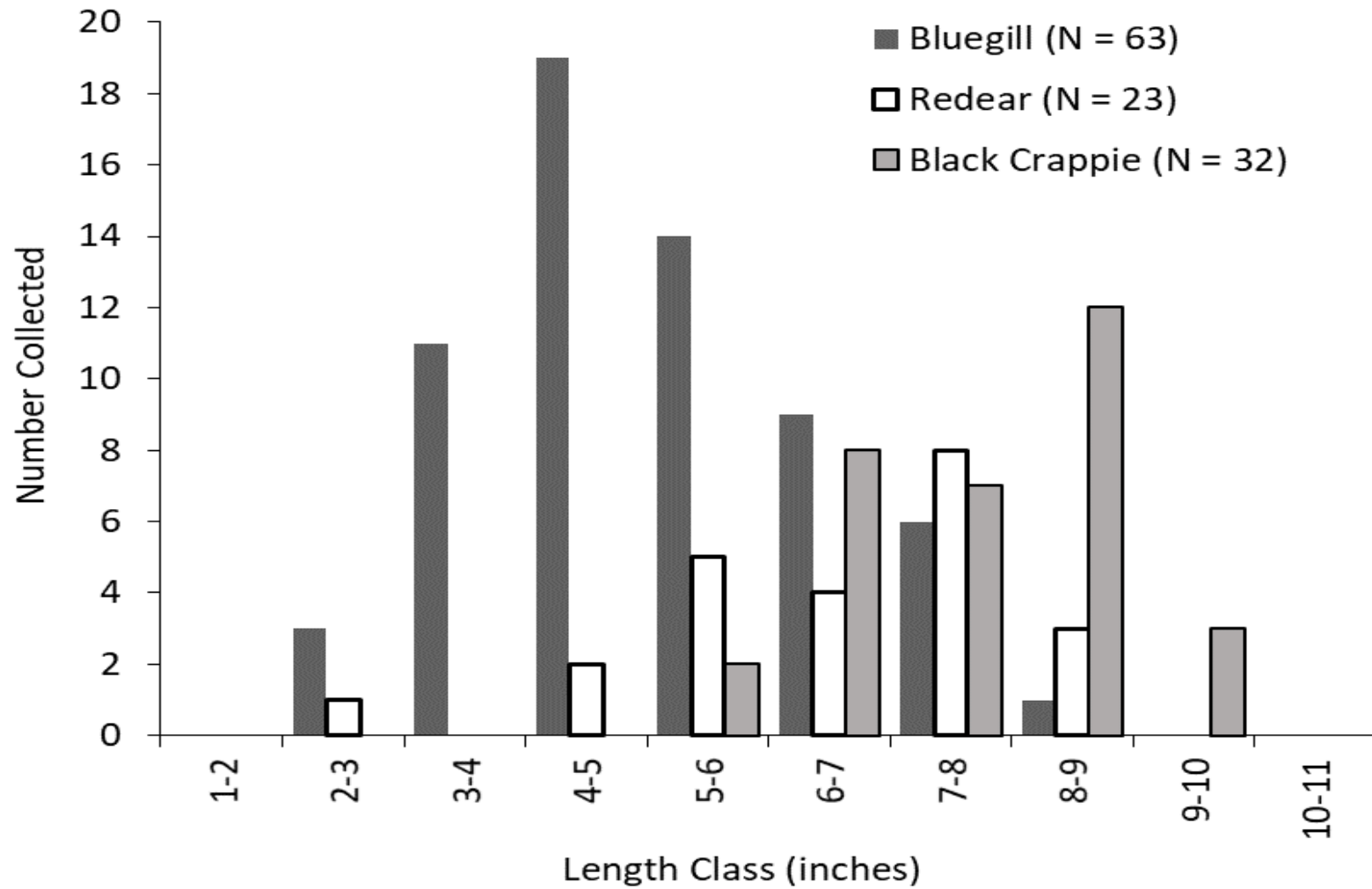


Figure 4. Length distribution of Bluegill, Redear, and Black Crappie collected throughout Northeast Creek Reservoir in 2022.