March 2013 Fish Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Anglers</th>
<th>Number of Bass</th>
<th>Pounds of Bass</th>
<th>Number of Bream</th>
<th>Pounds of Bream</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>223.25</td>
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<td>Calendar YTD</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>353.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ib/Bass Average</td>
<td>Ib/Acre Average</td>
<td>Ib/Bream Average</td>
<td>Ib/Acre Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>----------------</td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>7.06</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Three year Monthly Angler Attendance Comparison

- 2013 Angler Attendance
- 2012 Angler Attendance
- 2011 Angler Attendance

Formula:
- Pounds of fish (lbs) divided by number of fish = lb/fish average
- lbs fish divided by 50 (acres) = lb/acre average
### Monthly Harvest Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of Anglers</th>
<th>Number of Bass</th>
<th>Pounds of Bass</th>
<th>Number of Bream</th>
<th>Pounds of Bream</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2012</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>1182</td>
<td>589.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2011</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>393.50</td>
<td>1364</td>
<td>645.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Three year Bream Harvest Comparison

- **2013** Number of Bream Harvested
- **2012** Number of Bream Harvested
- **2011** Number of Bream Harvested
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Anglers</th>
<th>Number of Bass</th>
<th>Pounds of Bass</th>
<th>Number of Bream</th>
<th>Pounds of Bream</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>1493.25</td>
<td>1490</td>
<td>799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>1584</td>
<td>1115</td>
<td></td>
<td>1638</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Fish Averages (Year-to-Date)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month/Year</th>
<th>lb/Bass Average</th>
<th>lb/Acre Average</th>
<th>lb/Bream Average</th>
<th>lb/Acre Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>7.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2012</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>29.86</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2011</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>22.30</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>15.68</td>
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</table>
Lake Conditions

We had 5 inches of rainfall at Lake LU in March bringing the 2013 total up to 22.4 inches. We had 19.6 inches of rainfall at the end of March 2012. Water clarity is 31 inches. I called Jay Haffner this morning and he said water clarity at Dallas County Lake was at 36 inches. I converted the old bass harvest chart to a water temperature chart to reflect how cold this year has been so far. The water temperature was 62°F on 4-3-13. I have to look back five years to find water temperatures as cold as this year.
Bass Fishing

BASS HARVEST IS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. NO BASS OF ANY SIZE MAY BE REMOVED FROM THE WATERS OF LAKE LU. BASS ANGLERS MAY CATCH AND RELEASE BASS WITH BARBLESS HOOKS ONLY. BARBLESS HOOKS ARE SIMPLY HOOKS THAT HAVE HAD THE BARB TURNED DOWN WITH A SET OF PLIERS.

It is official; visitor attendance is at an all-time low. Many factors are causing this and I mainly blame the excessive rainfall and cold weather we have had this year. A bass angler stopped by the lake office the other day and we chatted. I told him that I have seen a marked reduction in bass angler attendance. He said that bass anglers were avoiding the lake due to the closed bass harvest. I mentioned to him that many of our bass anglers
were catch and release anglers. He said that folks didn't want to come out to the lake, catch a trophy 10 or 12 pound bass, and have to “deal with me and getting the fish out.” He said that bass anglers were just going to bide their time until the State lifted the bass harvest restriction. I am kind of glad for this. I have heard stories of what happened to a past lake manager when the State had a “one bass, 10 pounds or better” restriction on bass anglers. I often hear stories about what happened to a past lake manager when some “southern boys” wanted to take out a 9 and a half pound bass one day and he wouldn’t let them. Whatever the case may be, bass harvest will reopen in the future. The question is how far into the future?

I talked with Jay Haffner this morning and he wants to do an electro shock of Lake LU during the last part of April to assess the bass and shiner population. Mark Grant has been fishing on the lake a good bit this spring and Mark thinks that the shiner population has been impacted by perhaps as much as 50% by the bass predation. I wish I had Mark’s optimism. I think that the cold temperatures have just kept the shiners from coming to the surface where they can be seen. Next week we will have a week or more stretch of temperatures in the 70’s and 80’s and the lake should change a good bit then.

I bumped into a river fisherman the other day when I was at the grocery store and he (like the rest of the world’s population), asked me if the fish were biting. I told him that for the first time in my 15 years as Lake Manager I could tell him the truth. NO! The fish were not biting! This has been the worst spring bass fishing experience since I was 12 years old! Bass are not biting very well at many locations in the Deep South. I have had four or five trips over to the farm with my boys to the Blind Man’s Pond and we have not caught enough bass to cook for Mawmaw and Pawpaw’s supper! I’ll tell you it’s not just happening at Lake LU, but is a regional occurrence. Never fear though, warm weather is increasing as the sun climbs higher and higher into the sky. When the leaves pop out on the Osage orange and the pecan tree, bream and bass will begin biting!
Here is a photo of Danhai “Dan” Wu, from Guangzhou City, China with his first EVER bass if not his first ever fish! Guangzhou City has a population of around 12.7 million people. To put it in perspective New York City has a population of about 8 million. Dan has been fishing at the lake for a few weeks now, mostly sitting in the sun with his girlfriend. The other day I noticed they were fishing and I stopped by to visit. Dan had rigged up his tackle for live bait fishing. I noticed he had snelled hooks tied on and they didn’t appear to be pre-packaged. I asked him if he had tied on his own hooks and he beamed and enthusiastic, “YES!! I watched a YouTube video on how to tie on fishhooks!” (We are definitely living in a different world with all the available knowledge at our fingertips!)

Dan asked me if I knew how to use artificial lures to catch fish and I said I did. I told him that if he wanted to learn how, just stop by my office and I would
change his life forever. Well it wasn’t but a few minutes before Dan came by the office. I showed him the basics behind how to fish with soft plastic worms. I gave him a couple of hooks and a sinker or two and soon he was back at the lake shore. This time when I stopped by to visit, I noticed that he was not sitting with his girlfriend on a blanket in the sun, but was instead feverishly intent on trying to catch some of the bass that were feeding on minnows around the closest brush pile. I left Dan to his fishing thinking that my lessons were learned probably as well as a YouTube video.

An hour or two later some local “Southern” boys were checking out and told me that Dan had missed a couple of bass and they showed him how to set the hook. They said that he eventually caught the bass in the photo above, and Dan’s girlfriend took his picture! I asked Dan to send me the photo and he did and I am featuring him in this newsletter. He said I was right. Plastic worm fishing changed his life forever! I ask the guys and girls from China if they have any place to fish where they live and they said no. One girl said that if they did have a lake like Lake LU that it would probably be drained to make way for housing! We take a lot of things for granted in this country. Get out and wet a hook people!!!

Mark’s Remarks
(by UWA student Mark Grant)

March really didn’t live up to my expectations, but overall it wasn’t bad. I didn’t fish the last two weekends, so I can’t give an up-to-date report. What I can say is that the bass up to around a pound are fat and healthy. Bass under a pound are a bit skinny, but who wants to catch little ones
anyways, right? When I left for spring break, larger bass really liked suspending jerk baits and I had a bit of luck with subsurface walkers. I heard reports of other anglers who had great success with Texas-rigged lizards. With the water and air temps steadily rising, things should heat up before the spawn. I'll be busy with football a bunch throughout April and I leave in early May for summer, so this will probably be my final article. I will fish every now and then for the first two weeks of this month, then get into it hard again once football ends. If you would like to contact me to ask anything about fishing in Lake LU, my email address is grantm7140@uwa.edu. Good luck to all anglers, God bless!

WOW! I hadn’t realized that UWA was about through its academic year. It’s been a long winter with basically no spring. Mark, I have really appreciated your article that you send in each month. I’ll see you in the Fall. ~ RL.

Bream Fishing
Bream fishing has also been ridiculously slow this spring. Many bream anglers are only catching 6 or 10 bream each visit. Their number one complaint is the price of live red worms and the shiners that are eating up the $4 per can bait. About two weeks ago I had a bream angling couple fishing near the baseball field and they had a grocery bag full of shiners they had caught. They said they would make nice cut bait for use at the river. Eunice Triggs complained the other day that she spent $20 on bait and all she caught was shiners and bass and she couldn’t eat any of them! She did say she caught about 40 bass in the six to eight inch range. I walked the bank one sunny day last week and observed multitudes of bluegill darting around in the shallows. The bream are there but they are not biting! With the reduction in bass anglers and also angler attendance in general, the harvest numbers are plummeting! It feels like a Stock Market Crash!!!
Here is a photo of Susan Fortner with a nice slab shell cracker she caught one Saturday at Lake LU.

Additional Lake Information

It's not lake related but may be of interest to some. The UWA Sucarnochee Folklife Festival is Saturday, April 20, 2013.

For more information go to the following address:

http://centerforblackbelt.org/divisions/sucarnochee-folklife-festival/
Warm weather has many people taking advantage of the Nature Trail Complex at Lake LU.
Red imported Fire ants, *Solenopsis invicta*, are a common menace along the trails at Lake LU.
Rob’s Fire Ant Tip #1: (Here’s one you'll remember for the rest of your life!) The next time you get stung by fire ants spray the stings with WD-40 and the sting will be neutralized within SECONDS!!! Don’t believe me? Go out and let them sting you and test it for yourself! IT WORKS! (And NO this is NOT an April Fool’s joke!)
It’s going to be a bad year for plum jelly. I found only one living baby plum on the bush in this photo.
The bag of shiners that the bream angling couple caught.
Brian Cross and Randall Durden; trail hikers.
UWA student Brianna Davis checking test plots in the prairie for Dr. Stanton’s Ecology class.
Yes, there is a sign that says that swimming is prohibited at Lake LU.
Profanity is also not to be tolerated at the lake. This UWA student now thoroughly understands this regulation.
Brandon Rivers asked me one day if he could get a free boat rental to go out in the lake and retrieve a $9 crank bait that had gotten hung up in a brush pile. I told him we could work out some kind of deal so that he could get the free boat rental since he did not have $3. Oh yeah, I’ve got a little job you can do for me! Hehehehe, call me when you get a boat load of blue flag iris. I’ll transplant them around the lake. Brandon and Mitch Brumbeloe (white shirt) gathered a whole boatload of iris and more than paid for their boat rental.
They harvested so many iris that we gave them a complimentary tow back to the boat area.
I transplanted the blue flags over near the big oak tree.
These are the native blueflags that were burned over in last month’s newsletter. They really like fire!
Tim and I burned the northwest corner of the lake near the rodeo horse pens. The cold north wind really pushed the fire through this area.
The finished product.
Since all the prairie grass was burned up, we decided to set fire to the old oak tree log pile. We will now have to rename this area since the old oak tree is now gone.
The UWA Carpentry Department brought us a gazebo this month.
On St. Patrick’s Day I convinced the boys that if you found a four leafed clover on St. Patrick’s Day, that you would have good luck all year long. The truth is that I told them they couldn’t have any TV until they had found a four leafed clover. With a last name of Limerick, we have to celebrate our Irish heritage!
Mirror smooth blue lake.
We saw the comet last month, did you?

If anyone wants any advice on fishing Lake LU, please call me at 1-205-652-9266 or e-mail me at lrr@uwa.edu. Feel free to visit Lake LU's website at www.lakelu.uwa.edu

Thank you,

Robby Limerick
Lake Manager
Lake LU
lrr@uwa.edu
1-205-652-9266