



Yellow Creek Lake

Indiana County

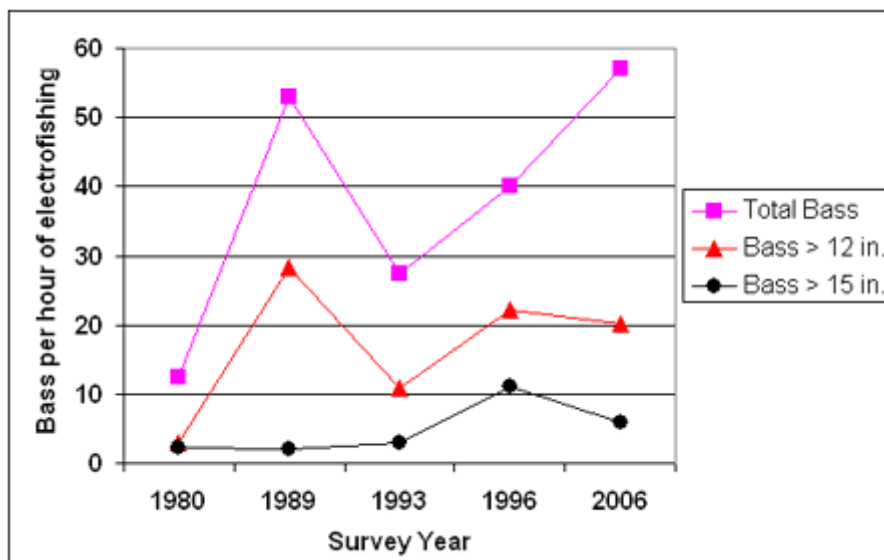
May 2006

20 trap net sets - May 1-5

Night electrofishing - May 30-31

Yellow Creek Lake is a 720-acre impoundment in Indiana County that is operated by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) as part of [Yellow Creek State Park](#). [Big Bass Regulations](#) were implemented at the lake in 1991. All the other fish species at Yellow Creek Lake are managed under [statewide regulations](#). We surveyed Yellow Creek Lake as part of a statewide study of the [Panfish Enhancement Regulations](#) that have been implemented on a number of waters across the state. Yellow Creek Lake will be used as a control lake for the statewide Panfish Enhancement study. The PFBC stocks walleye fingerlings annually, muskellunge fingerlings on even years, and tiger muskellunge fingerlings on odd years. Yellow Creek Lake is a moderately productive impoundment that had a pH of 7.3 and alkalinity of 19 mg/l as measured during the survey.

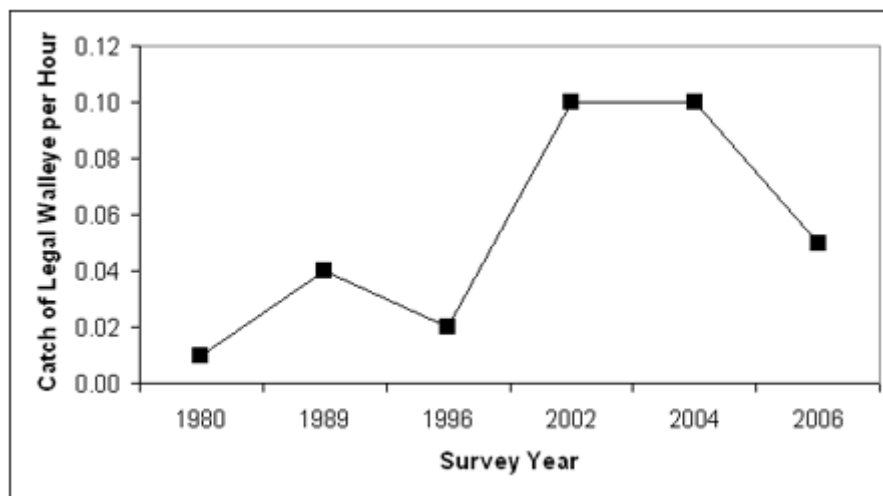
Our night electrofishing bass catch rates in Yellow Creek Lake have improved since the Big Bass Regulations were implemented in 1991. The total bass catch rate was highest in 2006 with 57 bass per hour of electrofishing. The catch rate of bass over 15 inches in 2006 was second highest recorded at the lake. The bass population in Yellow Creek Lake consists of both largemouth and smallmouth bass. The smallmouth bass are primarily found along the north shore and near the dam where the lake is deeper, has rockier habitat and fewer weeds. Largemouth bass are located throughout the lake, but are more abundant along the south shore.





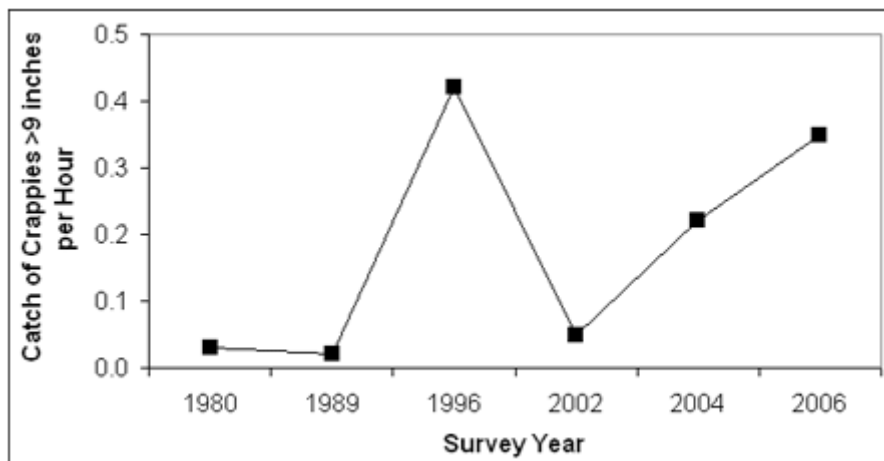
Fisheries Technician Gary Smith with a 19 inch, 3.3 lb. and 17.5 inch, 2.6 lb. smallmouth bass

A total of 26 walleyes, including 23 legal (15 inches or larger) fish, were collected in 2006 for a catch rate of 0.05 fish per hour of trap netting. This catch rate was lower than in 2002 and 2004, but higher than surveys from 1980 to 1996. The increase in the number of walleye since 1996 is most likely due to the switch from mainly fry stocking (prior to 1996) to fingerling stocking (from 1996 to the present).



The northern pike trap net catch of 16 fish in 2006 was lower than in previous surveys. Four of the 16 pike in 2006 were legal fish (24 inches or greater). The largest pike was 33 inches, 7 lbs 11 oz. Although muskies and tiger muskies are stocked by the PFBC in Yellow Creek Lake, we did not collect any during our survey. Previous surveys at the lake have also yielded low catch rates of these fish. We plan to eliminate stocking of musky and tiger musky in Yellow Creek Lake.

The black crappie population was the highlight of our trap net survey. In 2006, 135 crappies of the 235 captured were 9 inches or greater, including two 16-inch crappies. The 2006 catch rate of crappies that are 9 inches or greater was the second highest recorded at Yellow Creek Lake. Crappie fishing should be very good this year at the lake.



Area Fisheries Manager Rick Lorson with two nice black crappie



Fisheries Biologist Aide Matt Kinsey with two hefty brown bullheads

Bluegills were the most abundant panfish species collected in Yellow Creek Lake, with the majority of the bluegills between 4 and 8 inches long. Bullheads were available in moderate numbers and good sizes. Yellow Creek Lake would be a good lake for anglers to target large bullheads.

The most abundant fish collected during our trap net survey at Yellow Creek Lake was alewives with 11,099 fish captured. Most of the alewives were between 2 and 4 inches long. The alewife is a member of the herring and shad family that was stocked in Yellow Creek Lake in 1987 by the PFBC. Alewives are forage fish that primarily live in open water and are preyed upon by predatory fish such as walleyes.



Yellow Creek Lake alewives

Yellow Creek Lake provides angling opportunities for bass, walleye, northern pike, and panfish.

<i>Fish Species</i>	<i>Number Collected</i>	<i>Size Range (inches)</i>	<i>Additional Comments</i>
Largemouth bass	128	4-18	13% greater than 15 in.
Smallmouth bass	109	3-20	7% greater than 15 in.
Walleye	26	14-28	88% greater than 15 in.
Northern pike	16	17-33	25% greater than 24 in.
Black crappie	235	4-16	72% greater than 9 in.
Bluegill	334	2-10	32% greater than 7 in.
Pumpkinseed	20	2-7	
Sunfish hybrid	1	9	
Yellow perch	32	4-13	23% greater than 9 in.
Rock bass	6	4-9	
Brown bullhead	74	10-17	96% greater than 12 in.
Yellow bullhead	8	10-12	
Alewife	11,099	Not measured	
Golden shiner	127	Not measured	
White sucker	19	Not measured	
Common carp	6	Not measured	

-- Gary Smith, Area 8 Fisheries Technician & Rick Lorson, Area 8 Fisheries Manager

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