

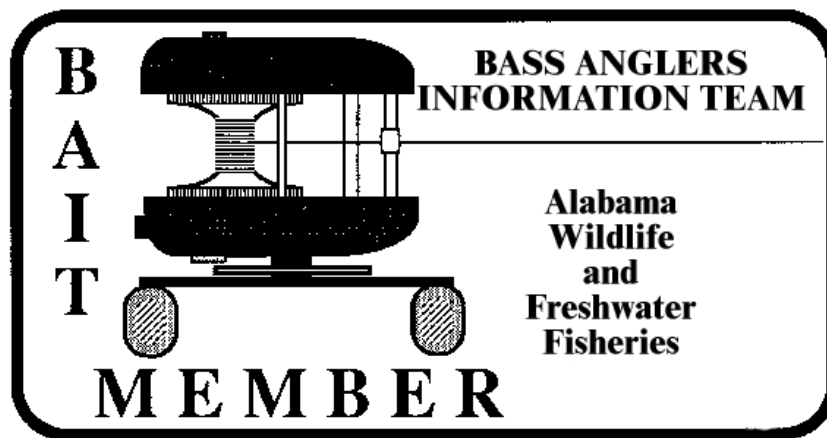
2011

Bass Angler Information Team Annual Report



64 North Union Street, Suite 551, Montgomery, Alabama 36130

B.A.I.T.
Bass Anglers Information Team
2011
Annual Report



By

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Alabama

ON THE INTERNET www.outdooralabama.com

Reservoir Reports...

www.outdooralabama.com/fishing/freshwater/where/reservoirs/

B.A.I.T. Program...

www.outdooralabama.com/fishing/freshwater/where/reservoirs/quality/

Limits and Regulations...

www.outdooralabama.com/fishing/freshwater/regulations/

Boating Access...

www.outdooralabama.com/boating/where/freshwater.cfm

Tournament Listings...

www.outdooralabama.com/tournaments/

2011 B.A.I.T. Summary

Bass fishing in the State of Alabama has shown an overall trend of improvement during the past several years, and particularly during the previous four. However, during 2011, this trend appeared to level off with very similar numbers being reported, statewide. One exception was the length of time required to catch a bass larger than five pounds, which increased by over 40% in 2011. Nevertheless, this figure equaled the 26 year statewide mean of 252 hours.

The lake that has shown the most improvement in recent years is unquestionably Pickwick, which has shown drastic improvements since 2006. This reservoir had the highest percent success (97%) and accounted for nearly 50% of all bass over five pounds caught in Alabama during 2011. Of all bass over eight pounds caught in Alabama during 2011, 86% of them came from Pickwick.

- ***Pickwick*** was the top lake in the overall quality indicator rankings
- ***Bankhead, Lay, Logan Martin, Mitchell, and Neely Henry*** moved into the upper 1/3 of the quality indicator rankings; ***Weiss Wilson***, and the ***Mobile Delta*** improved also; while ***West Point, Jordan, Harris, and Harding*** moved up also, but remained in the bottom 1/3, statewide
- ***Pickwick, Bankhead, Lay, Logan Martin, and Mitchell*** were the top five lakes in the overall quality indicator rankings
- ***Guntersville, Pickwick, Lay, Eufaula, and West Point*** were the top five big bass lakes in Alabama

2011 Statewide B.A.I.T. Statistics

3.72 – Number of bass caught per angler-day
7.54 – Pounds of bass caught per angler-day
2.02 – Average weight of bass caught
252 – Hours required to catch a 5 pound bass
9.90 – Weight of the largest bass caught
14 – Number of bass 8 pounds and larger
291 – Number of bass 5 pounds and larger

Introduction & Methods

The printing of the 2011 B.A.I.T. Annual Report marks the twenty-sixth year of the B.A.I.T. Program. The objective of the program since its inception has been to gather information on bass populations by combining the efforts of bass club members and state fisheries biologists. The B.A.I.T. Program summarizes catch data on reservoir bass populations that are collected and provided to us by participating clubs. This information is used by state fisheries biologists in combination with data from other sources as a basis for fisheries management decisions. Bass anglers use the report to establish future tournament sites, or to locate a reservoir that provides a particular type of fishing.

Through 2011, we have summarized 12,505 tournament reports. Anglers have spent 2,740,985 hours collecting data for this program. They have contributed data from 670,104 bass that weighed 1,173,558 pounds.

This report also contains information related to the Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries' Boating Access Maintenance and Development Program which maintains nearly 120 boating access areas statewide. The accomplishments made by this program during 2011 may be of particular interest to tournament bass anglers and their organizations. In addition, details of the Angler Recognition Program administered by the Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries can be found here as well.

Every year, we attempt to maintain the support of the previous year's clubs and to enlist the support of new clubs through public meetings, news releases and letters. Participating club officers or tournament directors are sent the previous year's annual report and tournament report postcards to be completed following each tournament. Clubs are assigned individual numbers to insure confidentiality. As tournament cards are received, they are checked

for accuracy and entered into a computer database. Club officers are contacted when data are suspected to be erroneous. We compile and analyze the data following receipt of December tournament reports. Statewide tournament results are sorted by reservoir and by club.

To rank reservoirs, five "fishing quality" indicators were used: percent of successful anglers (percent of anglers with one or more bass at weigh-in), average bass weight, number of bass per angler-day, pounds of bass per angler-day, and hours required to catch a bass five pounds or larger. Since the length of a fishing day varies between tournaments, an angler-day is defined as one angler fishing for ten hours. In this report, an angler-day may simply be referred to as a "day" of fishing. A minimum of five tournaments for an individual reservoir is considered necessary for minimum confidence in each reservoir dataset. Reservoirs with five or more tournament reports are ranked for each of the quality indicators. Values are assigned to each rank and an overall rank is determined for each reservoir by summing the values of the five quality indicators. This ranking system is intended to be a quick reference for club tournament site selection. It does not constitute a "best and worst" list of Alabama reservoirs and should not be interpreted that way.

Tournament results were also broken down by month for each reservoir with 10 or more reports. This section was intended to aid clubs in scheduling tournaments since the quality of fishing can vary considerably from one season to the next on any given reservoir. It also allows anglers to better understand their chances of achieving a particular goal (i.e., catching a big bass) on a given lake by studying in detail how anglers performed during each month of the year. When studying this section of the report, be aware that some months are represented by only one tournament, which may not be a good indicator of the overall quality of fishing during that month.



An impressive bag of spots from Holt Lake on the Black Warrior River.

Alabama's
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*Please take advantage of your
opportunity to provide perpetual support
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The cost of these tags is \$50 and they can be purchased wherever you have your tag renewed. Contact your county probate office or call the Alabama Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries Division at 334-242-3471 for more information.

Statewide Tournament Results

Bass clubs submitted 368 tournament reports during 2011, down slightly from 387 in 2010 (Tables 1 and 3). Club representatives did an excellent job filling out the cards and few reports were rejected due to incomplete or erroneous information. We want to again, thank all of the participants of the B.A.I.T. Program and urge them to keep up the good work! Twenty-two Alabama clubs provided data in 2011. One hundred

forty two reports from Alabama waters were received from Dr. Carl Quertermus of the University of West Georgia, who summarizes tournament data from the Georgia Bass Federation; and another 74 reports were received from Biologist Larry Pugh, with the

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. Without their support, several Alabama reservoirs would not have been well represented in the quality indicator rankings (Table 2). Once again, we must stress that reports from more locations increase the capability of the summaries to reflect actual fish population conditions and not just a good or poor day's fishing by one or two clubs.

In 2011, tournament reports were received from 29 bodies of water that were fished 74,439 hours. B.A.I.T. anglers caught 27,386 bass that weighed 56,134 pounds (Table 1). A total of 291 bass five pounds and larger were reported for an overall catch rate of

one bass five pounds or larger for every 252 hours of fishing. Tournament anglers weighed in 14 bass eight pounds and larger in 2011. The largest bass caught in 2011 came from Pickwick Lake and weighed 9.90 pounds. With 141 bass weighing five pounds or larger, Pickwick led this category. Other top lakes for big bass included Guntersville and Eufaula.

Of the 24 organizations that submitted data during 2011, only 75% submitted five or more tournament reports, and 33% submitted 10 or more reports. Three contributors submitted only one report. A list of contributing clubs for the 2011 B.A.I.T. Report is presented in Table 4.

Average catch rates in 2011 for both number (3.72) and pounds (7.54) of bass per angler-day slipped only slightly below the record numbers set the year before. Compared to 2010, 12 lakes improved in overall fishing success in 2011. The most notable improvements were on Bankhead, Lay, and Logan Martin, which all moved into the top 5 in the overall rankings (Table 2). The average size bass caught on Bankhead and Lay increased by

12–13% compared to 2010. Consequently, the number of pounds weighed-in per angler-day increased by 15–18%. The time required to catch a bass over five pounds on Bankhead has decreased by a whopping 55% since 2010!

Most tournament reports in 2011 were received from Pickwick (78), Eufaula (49), Guntersville (35), and Logan Martin (31). These four reservoirs accounted for 52% of the statewide tournament reports. Weiss, West Point, and Lay each had more than 15 reports (Table 1), which means that the other 29 reservoirs contributed only 33% of the annual total for 2011. A good distribution of reports provides more representative catch statistics

from which meaningful summaries can be prepared. All club representatives should understand that every report is important to the continued success of the B.A.I.T. Program. Of the 29 reservoirs from

Alabama's Top 10 Tournaments For Big Bass in 2011

CLUB	LAKE	DATE	No. >5lbs.
Everstart Series	Pickwick	Jun. 9 th	9
Everstart Series	Pickwick	Jun. 10 th	7
Alabama BASS Federation Nation	Eufaula	Mar. 12 th	7
BFL	Pickwick	Jun. 4 th	6
FLW Tour	Pickwick	Jul. 22 nd	6
FLW Tour	Pickwick	Jul. 21 st	6
North Alabama Tournament Anglers	Guntersville	Feb. 12 th	6
Morgan County Bass Club	Guntersville	Mar. 12 th	6
National Bass Trail (GA/AL)	Eufaula	Jun. 15 th	6
Peanut Craft	Pickwick	Apr. 23 rd	5

Alabama's Top 10 Tournaments For Average 5-Fish Weight in 2011

CLUB	LAKE	DATE	WEIGHT
Carroll County (Ga.) Bass Masters	Guntersville	May 14 th	20.37 lbs.
Macon (Ga.) Bass Club	Eufaula	Apr. 16 th	16.57 lbs.
Tenn-Tom Bassin	Pickwick	Jul. 16 th	15.94 lbs.
Peanut Craft	Pickwick	Apr. 23 rd	15.87 lbs.
Team Trails of Mississippi	Pickwick	Feb. 26 th	15.50 lbs.
Peanut Craft	Pickwick	May 7 th	15.49 lbs.
26 Bassmasters	West Point	Oct. 8 th	15.41 lbs.
Conasauga (Ga.) Bassmasters	Wheeler	May 15 th	14.83 lbs.
FLW Tour	Pickwick	Jul. 23 rd	14.78 lbs.
Everstart Series	Pickwick	Jun. 11 th	14.68 lbs.

which reports were received, 19 had five or more tournament reports (Table 1). The following comments deal with these reservoirs, which are ranked by quality indicators in Table 2. The percent of successful anglers (those with one or more fish) ranged from 70% at Harding to 97% at Pickwick. The average weight of bass caught ranged from 1.34 pounds at Harris to 2.77 pounds at Guntersville (Table 1). Catch rates expressed as bass per angler-day ranged from 2.18 at Harding to 5.03 at Bankhead. Catch rates as pounds per angler-day ranged from 2.99 at Harding to 10.41 at Pickwick. The statewide average weight for bass caught on all 29 reservoirs was 2.02 pounds.

Statewide Tournament Results

Overall, Pickwick accumulated more quality indicator points (92) than any other reservoir in Alabama, nearly doubling its 2010 margin over second place. Bankhead (76), Lay (73), Logan Martin (60), and Mitchell (60) rounded out the top five.

Readers should note that the primary intent of Table 2 is not to determine the overall “best” reservoir, but to characterize the fishery of each reservoir. Anglers should first review the quality indicator that is most important to them. The overall rating would be used to narrow choices. For example, if an angler wanted to have the best chance to catch a bass greater than 5 pounds, then Guntersville or Pickwick would be the place to go. Clubs interested in having all its members catch good quality stringers would look at the pounds per angler-day rankings to find that Pickwick, and Bankhead offer the best opportunity. If catching lots of bass is important, then Pickwick or Bankhead might be the best destination based upon their bass per angler-day rankings.

Bass data, as expressed in the B.A.I.T. report from reservoirs with harvest restrictions or length limits, will be biased since the data is a function of the restrictions. Length limits are imposed to increase the number of fish below a minimum length or within a specified length range (slot limit) which should eventually result in a greater supply of bass above the limit. Because all minimum lengths and length ranges will be above the 12-inch limit self-imposed by most tournaments, the restrictions will reduce the total harvest in numbers and possibly pounds. However, those fish weighed in will be larger (longer) by virtue of the minimum length (MLL) or slot limit. In the B.A.I.T. Report, length limit lakes should rank high for average weight and near the bottom for percent success and bass per angler-day. For instance, bass per angler-day averaged 3.72 statewide in 2011; but for Guntersville and Eufaula, each averaged 2.57. Statewide average weight was 2.02 pounds for all reservoirs combined; but Guntersville with its 15-in. MLL averaged 2.77 pounds. These average weights were higher primarily because anglers must release the smaller fish due to the minimum length limits. Length limits remained in effect during 2011 on West Point (14-inch MLL on largemouth), Wilson (14-inch MLL on smallmouth), Guntersville (15-inch MLL on

largemouth and smallmouth), Eufaula (14-inch MLL on largemouth), Demopolis (14-inch MLL on all black bass), Pickwick (14-inch MLL on smallmouth), Little Bear Creek (13- to 16-inch slot on largemouth), Smith (13- to 15-inch slot on all black bass), and Harris (13- to 16-inch slot on largemouth).

Bass fishing in Alabama has been excellent in recent years, with 2011 generally scoring near the top since the Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries began keeping records in 1986. For Alabama's bass fishermen, 2011 was among one of the best years reported during any of the previous 26 years of B.A.I.T. reporting. In general, the 2011 numbers slipped only slightly below the record setting year of 2010; however, the number of bass over five pounds decreased considerably.

The average number of hours (effort) needed to catch a bass larger than five-pounds dramatically increased beginning in 1998 due to the presence of the Largemouth Bass Virus (LMBV), and reached its peak of 837 hours the following year. From 1999 through 2010, the amount of effort required to catch a bass over five pounds decreased by 82%; however, in 2011 the time required to catch a bass over five pounds was 41% higher than the previous year, and equal to the 26 year average (Figure 1).

Although there have been no recent outbreaks of LMBV, there are indications that this disease may be impacting our bass fisheries by elevating natural mortality rates; so, please report any unusual bass die-offs to your district fisheries office, and never move fish from one lake to another.

The graphs throughout this report provide a historical record of how your favorite waters have performed in the B.A.I.T. Program. A few words of caution - these graphs are not restricted to bodies of water with five or more tournaments. Data points for some years may be represented by only a few tournaments. However, those situations are restricted to those water bodies that have not been included in the quality indicator rankings in Table 2. You can use these graphs to predict future fishing by looking for trends.

Good luck fishing, and don't forget to take a child with you and introduce him or her to your sport. Our children are our future anglers and stewards of Alabama's resources.

Bass Over Eight Pounds from 2011 B.A.I.T. Reports

Date	Organization	Lake	Weight
Feb. 26	Team Trails of Mississippi	Pickwick	9.60 lbs.
Mar. 5	Peanut Craft	Pickwick	9.90 lbs.
Mar. 12	Tifton Bass Busters	Eufaula	8.37 lbs.
Mar. 27	Memphis Bass Association	Pickwick	9.31 lbs.
Apr. 2	Peanut Craft	Pickwick	9.28 lbs.
Apr. 16	Lowndes County Bassmasters	Eufaula	8.02 lbs.
Apr. 23	Peanut Craft	Pickwick	8.88 lbs.
May 21	Fishers of Men	Pickwick	8.19 lbs.
May 21	Peanut Craft	Pickwick	8.02 lbs.
Jun. 4	BFL	Pickwick	8.81 lbs.
Jun. 10	Everstart	Pickwick	8.13 lbs.
Jul. 2	Peanut Craft	Pickwick	8.02 lbs.
Jul. 16	Tenn-Tom Bassin'	Pickwick	9.27 lbs.
Jul. 22	FLW Tour	Pickwick	8.69 lbs.

Monthly Tournament Stats

In this section, reservoirs with at least 20 reports are discussed in detail and often refer to the monthly tournament results listed in Table 6. This table provides monthly catch information for all reservoirs with at least 10 reports.

Eufaula

Forty nine (49) tournaments were reported during each month except September. The majority occurred during March (10) and May (10). Eight hundred seventy six (876) anglers fished for 9,438 hours to catch 2,436 bass that weighed 4,781 pounds, with an average size of 1.96 pounds.

Catch-rates declined by 20 % from the previous year, but remained well above the historical average for this reservoir. The average sized bass dropped below two pounds for the first time since 1991, but the percent of anglers catching at least one fish remained high, decreasing by only 5 % from the previous year.

The most notable change was the decline in bass larger than five pounds. The number of hours required to catch a bass of this size had shown steady improvement from 2007 (343 hours) to 2010 (85 hours); however, in 2011, it took anglers almost three times as long to catch a bass over five pounds than it had during the previous year. Nonetheless, this value was similar to the long-term average for this reservoir.

Guntersville

Thirty five tournaments were reported during each month from February through November, but most tournaments occurred in February (8) and March (8). Seven hundred twenty six anglers fished for 7,002 hours to catch 1,800 bass that weighed 4,989 pounds, with an average size of 2 lb. 12 oz. All quality indicators declined from 2010 to 2011, but remained above the 26-year average for the lake.

Overall, catch-rates fell slightly from 2010, but remained well above the long-term average for this reservoir. The fishery at Guntersville was dominated by largemouth bass (92 %) and no smallmouth bass were reported, although they do exist in the reservoir. Catch-rates from February through June were considerably higher than during the rest of the year. Twenty-four percent of anglers weighed in limits during 2011, as opposed to 37 % in 2010.

The number of hours required to catch a bass larger than five pounds (152 hrs.) was almost three times greater than a year ago; however, it was still much better than the long-term average for the lake (191 hrs.). Average bass weight declined by only 3 % from the previous year, indicating there are still good numbers of quality fish in the lake.

Excellent fishing and several elite bass tournaments have brought national attention to the quality of this bass fishery. The past several years have offered some of the best bass fishing in the 70 year history of this reservoir and have attracted anglers from across the country.

Logan Martin

Thirty one tournaments were reported during 2011, with the

majority being held during the months of May (6), September (6), and October (5). Five hundred seven anglers fished for 4,538 hours to catch 1,986 bass that weighed 3,240 pounds, with an average size of 1 lb. 10 oz.

Catch-rates were similar to 2010 and well above the 26 year average for this reservoir. The fishery at Logan Martin was dominated by spotted bass (74 %), but a quality largemouth bass fishery also exists there. The catch frequency for bass over five pounds (908 hrs.) was similar to the previous year (845 hrs.), but three times lower than the long-term average for the lake (297 hrs.). Catches of bass over five pounds from this reservoir have been quite variable over time ranging from 76 hours in 1991, to 1,444 hours in 2004.

The number of bass caught per angler-day (4.38) and the number of pounds per angler-day (7.14) were both nearly identical to 2010. Average big bass weight in 2011 tournaments was 3 lbs. 13 oz.; the second lowest of all Coosa River impoundments.

Pickwick

Seventy eight (78) tournaments occurred between January and October of 2011. The peak month was July (12 tournaments), but at least ten (10) tournaments were held during each month from March through August.

Two thousand five hundred eighty five (2,585) anglers fished for 23,761 hours to catch 10,250 bass that weighed 24,744 pounds, with an average size of 2 lb. 5 oz. The percent success increased to 97% in 2011, and more than 65% of anglers weighed in a limit of five (5) fish. Only two (2) lakes had a higher percentage of limits weighed in by tournament anglers. The ratio of largemouths to smallmouths was 4:1.

The hours required for an angler to catch a bass larger than five (5) pounds was slightly lower than the previous year (161 hours), but the time required to catch a bass over 8 pounds fell drastically from 6,423 hours in 2010 to just 1,892 hours in 2011! That's a 70% reduction, which was good news for the Pickwick trophy hunters.

Weiss

Twenty tournaments were reported during each month from May through November, but the majority of tournaments occurred in June (8). Three hundred twelve anglers fished for 2,831 hours to catch 1,059 bass that weighed 1,742 pounds, with an average size of 1 lb. 10 oz.

Catch-rates increased slightly, and remained well above the 25-yr. average for this reservoir. The fishery at Weiss shifted more towards largemouth bass from 2010 to 2011. This year largemouth bass made up 61 % of the catches, as opposed to 51 % the previous year.

The catch frequency of bass over five pounds (283 hrs.) dropped by 17 % from 2010, but remained similar to the 26 year average. The number of bass caught per angler-day (3.74) increased slightly, but the number of pounds per angler-day (6.15 pounds) decreased because average fish size was down 12 %.

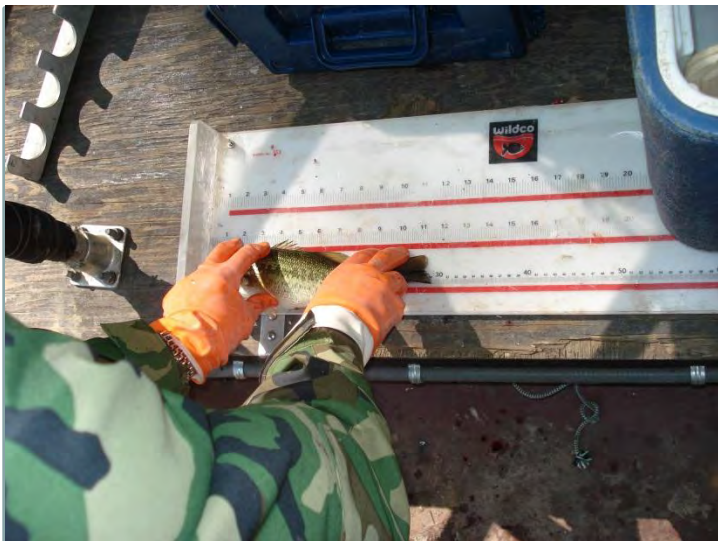
Standardized Electrofishing Results

The Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries manages 45 public reservoirs through five District Offices. Inside the front cover of this publication, each District Office is listed along with the reservoirs within their area of responsibility. Each reservoir is sampled on a routine basis to monitor the population structure of its sport fish species. These samples are conducted in a standardized manner according to the guidelines of the Alabama Reservoir Management Manual so that changes in population characteristics can be monitored over time. Most reservoirs are sampled on a three year cycle and management recommendations, such as length and bag limits, are determined from this research. There are three key components of the fish population that biologists must characterize in order to make these decisions; they are growth, mortality, and recruitment. Another important non-biological element is bass harvest rates, which is determined through the use of angler creel surveys.

These four variables ultimately determine the quality of each fishery, but all of them are limited by the nutrient levels in each reservoir. Even



Alabama Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries biologists conduct a standardized electrofishing sample at Lake Jordan on the Coosa River.

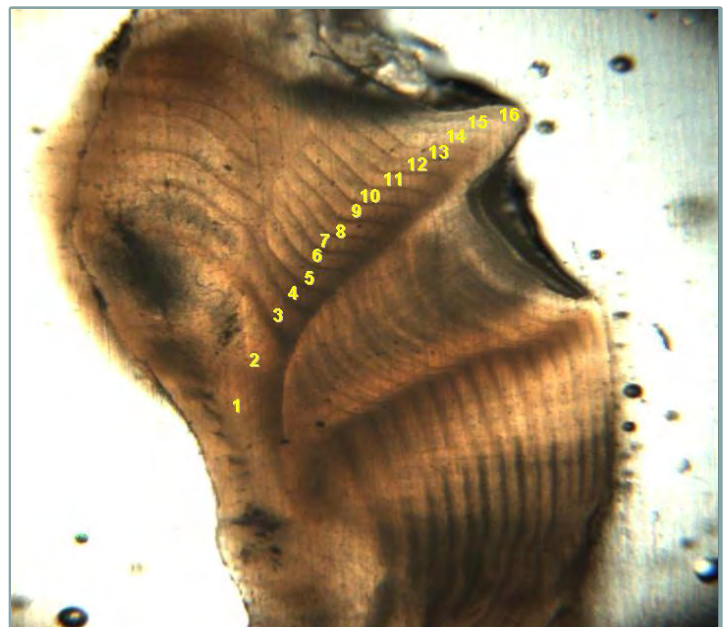


Bass are measured and weighed so that biologists can determine the size structure of the population, growth rates, and relative condition.

with good management, reservoirs with low fertility or poor water quality do not have the potential to produce outstanding fisheries. Depending on the results of these investigations, some management objectives may include the reduction of small bass through the use of slot limits, or increasing the number of larger fish using minimum length limits, which can also reduce the effects of variable recruitment.

A careful review of the information in this section reveals certain fishery trends that are reflected in the tournament reporting data. For example, reservoirs that consistently produce good numbers of trophy bass are usually those with populations that exhibit low annual mortality and rapid growth. Conversely, lakes that rarely produce trophy bass are often characterized by slow growth and high annual mortality.

Complex statistical models are developed from these variables that are used to predict how fish populations might respond to changes in the length or bag limits imposed on each reservoir. Over time, these model's predictive ability can be validated by comparing the predicted effects to the actual fishery responses to the changes in harvest restrictions. In general, harvest restrictions have miniscule impacts unless the rate of fishing mortality approaches or exceeds that of natural mortality because there is little biological justification for protecting fish that are dying primarily of natural causes. Since bass harvest in Alabama is generally very low, few reservoirs have restrictive length limits at this time. However, routine monitoring of bass populations will allow changes in harvest restrictions to be made whenever necessary.



Cross-section of an otolith from a 16 year old largemouth bass. Dark bands are formed in winter when cold temperatures reduce growth.

Standardized Electrofishing Results

Growth

One of the three most important objectives of fisheries biologist's assessment of a fish population is to determine the growth-rates for the fish being studied. There are many factors that can affect the rate at which fish grow. The most important are prey abundance, size, and nutritional value; and of course, the number of other fish competing with them for those food resources. Other factors include the age and health of the fish, water temperature, and water quality. Obviously, these variables do not remain constant over time, so the assessment represents a snapshot in time and can vary depending upon when the samples were obtained.

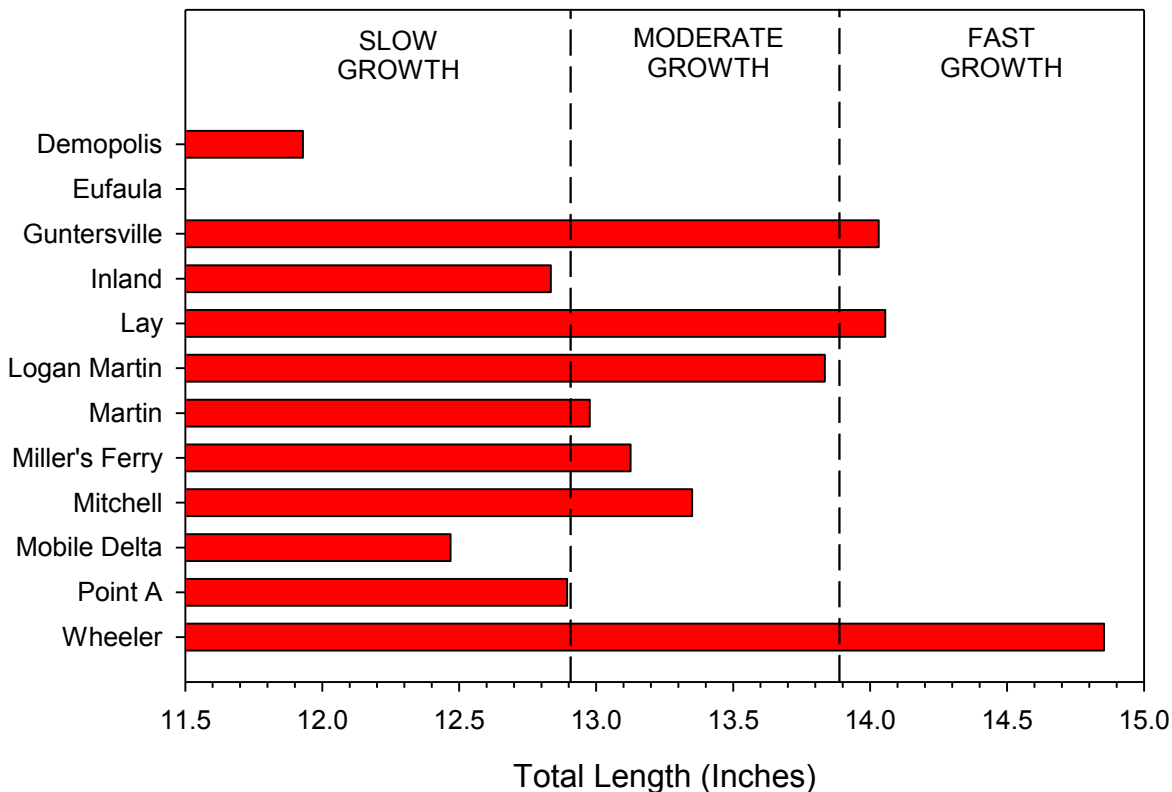
Biologist's determine fish's growth-rates by measuring their lengths at each age represented in the sample. This is done by examining the fish's otoliths, which are free-floating bones in the inner ear that form growth-rings similar to those that are visible on the top of a tree stump. These rings are formed because calcium is deposited at a constant rate no matter how fast the fish is growing. During winter, when the fish is not actively growing, the calcium is deposited in a more concentrated area, and leaves behind a ring once the fish's growth-rate increase as water temperatures become warmer. Using this technique, biologist's can easily

determine the amount of annual growth since birth, or between two given years.

In Alabama, largemouth bass rarely exceed 10 years of age, and relatively few of the fish in these samples include fish greater than 5 years old. In warmer climates, bass grow faster but do not live as long as fish in colder climates. Additionally, a biologist's ability to impact the size structure of a fish population through the use of length limits is most easily measured by examining the population characteristics of fish that are about to enter the fishery (i.e. those fish becoming available for harvest). Given all of these factors, a good benchmark for the growth-rates of most Southeastern bass populations is the average length of bass at three years of age, which is usually 12 -14 inches. The bar chart below illustrates the results of these studies on the reservoirs that were sampled by Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries biologists during Spring 2011.

In order to make good management decisions, growth-rates of bass populations are classified as slow, moderate, or fast. However, it should be noted that growth-rates are only one piece of the fish production puzzle and must be complimented by other desirable population characteristics in order to produce high quality fisheries.

Total Length of Largemouth Bass at Three Years of Age



Standardized Electrofishing Results

Mortality

The second of the three most important objectives in fishery assessments is to determine the mortality rate for the population. Mortality is the death of fish, which can be caused by a wide range of things that include both natural causes, and fishing-related causes. In this section, it is total annual mortality that will be discussed; however, separating natural mortality from fishing mortality is an important step in good fisheries management. Determining the fishing-related component of mortality is the most important, and most difficult, task that a fisheries biologist faces. Documenting the number and size of fish being harvested by anglers is relatively easy to do using angler interviews, but understanding how many fish die following tournaments or catch-and-release is a much more difficult task.

The most common way that biologist's determine the mortality rate of a fish population is to measure the rate of decline in the number of fish represented in each age group in the collection. For example, from a collection of fish with a mortality rate of 50%, you might expect to see a decline similar to this: Age-1 (100 fish), Age-2 (50 fish), Age-3 (25 fish), Age-4 (13 fish), Age-5 (6 fish), Age-6 (3 fish), Age-7 (2 fish), Age-8 (1 fish).

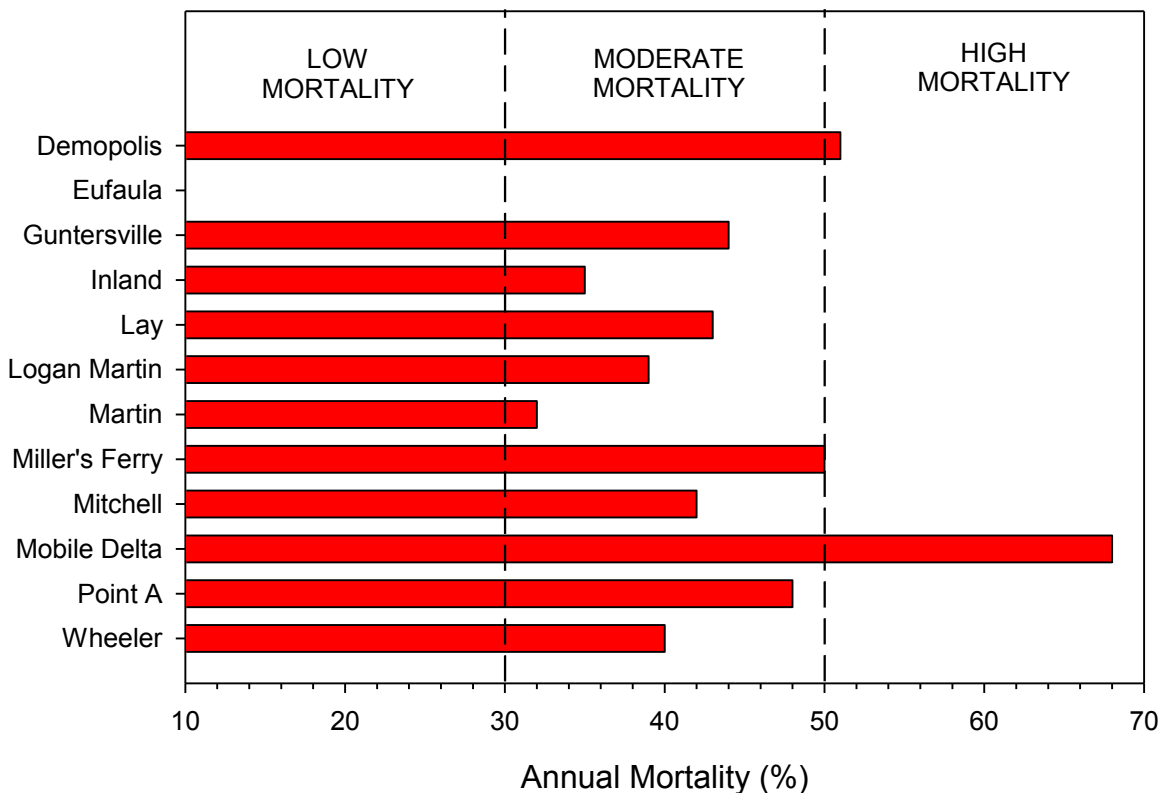
In Alabama, typical annual mortality-rates for largemouth bass range from 35% to 45%, but can vary considerably from one year to the next.

Only a small percentage of bass in Alabama populations live to exceed 10 years of age. Typically, less than 1% of bass collected in a standardized reservoir sample will exceed 10 years of age. Even in populations with very low mortality-rates, this figure is usually less than 3%.

Minimum length limits are a management tool often considered by biologists if mortality-rates are high; however, they are only effective if a large portion of the total annual mortality can be attributed to fishing-related causes. Limiting angler harvest cannot reduce bass mortality from natural causes.

The chart below reflects the total annual mortality rates of largemouth bass populations sampled during Spring 2011. Biologists' use this information to help guide them to make management decisions in an effort to improve the quality of fishing. A reduction in mortality-rates following the enforcement of a length limit is an indication that this management action has had a positive influence on the population. Obviously, if fishing-related mortality is low, then length limits will do little to improve the quality of a fishery.

**Total Percent of the Largemouth Bass Population
That Die Annually**



Standardized Electrofishing Results

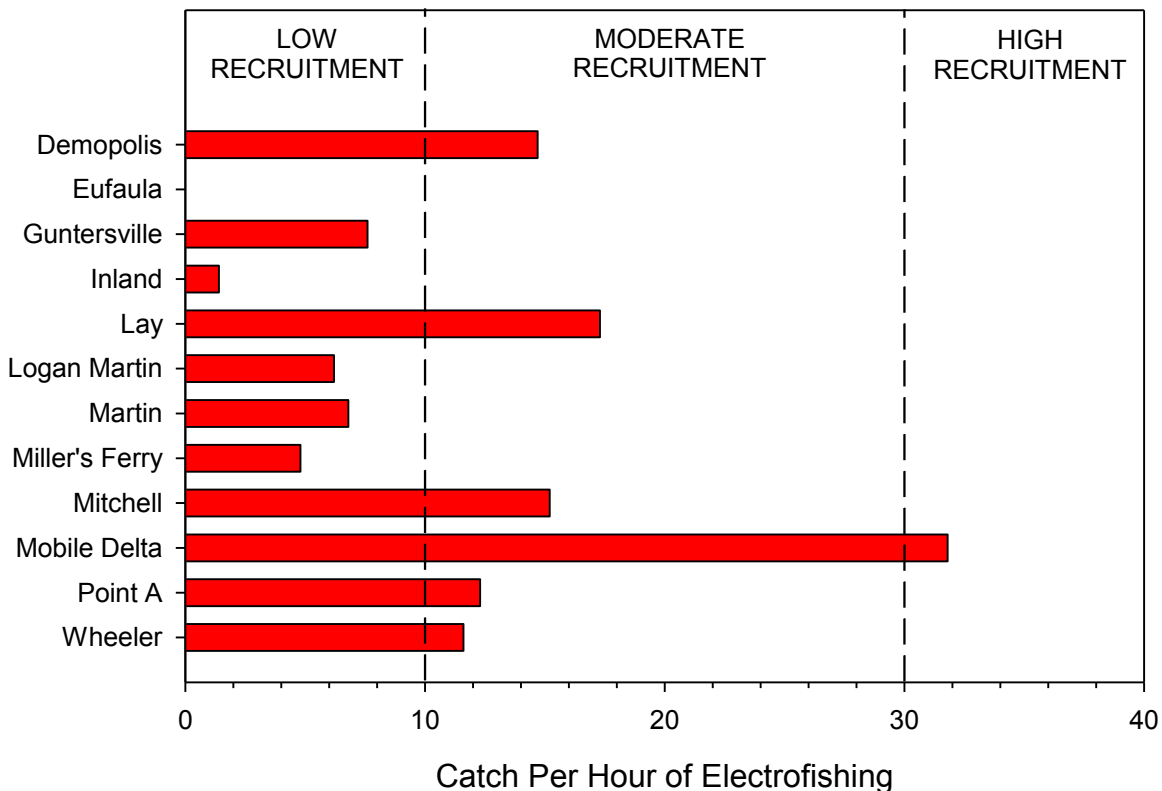
Recruitment

The final critical objective in fishery assessments is to determine recruitment of the population into the fishery. This is generally defined in two ways: 1) the number of fish surviving to reach one year of age, or 2) the number of fish surviving to reach harvestable size. The first is important because fish that do not reach 3 to 3 ½ inches before their first winter are less likely to survive to the following spring. The second is important because it is a measure of the percentage of fish that reach sizes large enough to be caught or harvested by anglers. Recruitment can be impacted by density-dependent and/or density-independent factors.

Density-dependent factors include population size, fish size and growth characteristics, reproductive fertility, cannibalism, disease, predation, and competition for food. Density-independent factors are non-biological in nature and may include floods, droughts, temperature extremes, excessive wind, and pollution.

Obviously, all of these factors can influence one another and may vary considerably over time. Although it is the biological and environmental interactions that have the greatest impact, exploitation (fish removed from the population by angling) can also influence the recruitment potential of a population.

Number of One Year Old Largemouth Bass Caught
Per Hour of Electrofishing



Standardized Electrofishing Results

Abundance

Another important population variable is the abundance of catchable sized fish in the population. Actual abundance is determined by a wide range of things, which may include survival during critical phases of life, habitat suitability, water quality, fertility, water productivity, competition with other fish, predation, or disease. However, it is also important to remember that a biologist's assessment of overall abundance is determined from electrofishing samples that are a snapshot in time and may be influenced by temporary environmental conditions during the sample period. Muddy water can prevent a biologist from seeing fish

beneath the surface while electrofishing, cold fronts may cause fish to move away from the shoreline, aquatic weeds can hinder their ability to see or capture fish that would ordinarily be collected, fish may be deeper than the reach of the electrical field in extremely clear water, etc. All of these things have the potential to bias estimates of abundance.

The number of 8-12 inch fish collected per hour of electrofishing is a general indicator of overall population abundance. In Alabama, the majority of samples, statewide, fall within the 11 – 26 fish per hour range. The chart below illustrates these values for samples conducted on public reservoirs during Spring 2011 survey efforts.

Number of 8 - 12 Inch Largemouth Bass Caught by Electrofishing

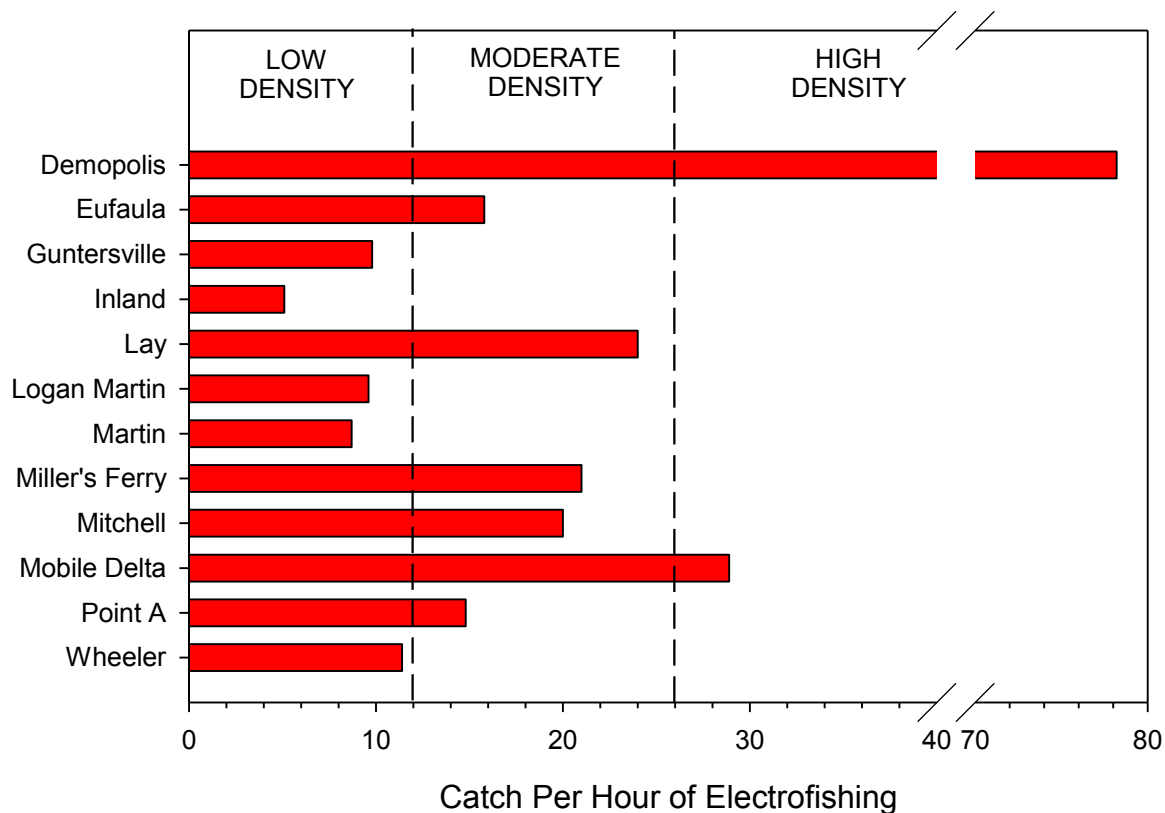


Table 1. Statewide summary of tournaments for bass clubs participating in the 2011 B.A.I.T. Program.

Lake	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% of anglers w/ at least 1 fish	% of anglers w/ a limit of fish	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Bass per day ^a	Pounds per day ^a	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	Days ^a to catch a bass over 5 lb.
Aliceville	5	64	94.7 ^c	50.9 ^c	544	171 ^b	100.0 ^c	0.0 ^c	0.0 ^c	96 ^c	344	1.61 ^c	0 ^c	0 ^c	3.86 ^c	94.74 ^c	3.80 ^c	6.33	.	.
Bankhead	5	106	96.2	80.2	904	455	12.9 ^c	87.1 ^c	0.0 ^c	94 ^c	780	1.71	2	0	4.75	96.23	5.03	8.63	452	45
Big Creek	1	12	83.3	16.7	120	31	100.0	0.0	0.0	.	37	1.18	0	0	1.84	83.33	2.58	3.05	.	.
Coffeeville	2	13	69.2	38.5	104	59	.	.	.	97	81	1.37	0	0	4.58	69.23	5.67	7.75	.	.
Demopolis	4	139	84.2	33.8	1195	404	90.6 ^c	9.4 ^c	0.0 ^c	96	887	2.19	4	0	5.06	84.17	3.38	7.42	299	30
Eufaula	49	876	78.0 ^c	21.0 ^c	9438	2436	86.2 ^c	13.8 ^c	0.0 ^c	96	4781	1.96	39	2	4.65	77.97 ^c	2.57	5.04	242	24
Gainesville	4	115	80.9	52.2	1036	377	97.8 ^c	2.2 ^c	0.0 ^c	99 ^c	602	1.60	1	0	4.61	80.87	3.64	5.81	1036	104
Guntersville	35	726	80.2	24.4	7002	1800	92.3 ^c	7.7 ^c	0.0 ^c	97 ^c	4989	2.77	46	0	5.31	80.17	2.57	7.13	152	15
Harding	8	112	69.6	10.7	944	206	66.0	34.0	0.0	91	282	1.37	0	0	3.45	69.64	2.18	2.99	.	.
Harris	11	167	88.0	45.5	1369	466	15.4	84.6	0.0	89	624	1.34	4	0	3.72	88.02	3.40	4.56	342	34
Holt	6	97	74.2	46.4	795	296	15.1 ^c	84.9 ^c	0.0 ^c	100	493	1.67	2	0	4.56	74.23	3.72	6.20	398	40
Jones Bluff	3	52	88.5	76.9	493	216	74.1 ^c	25.9 ^c	0.0 ^c	98	408	1.89	1	0	4.46	88.46	4.38	8.27	493	49
Jordan	8	132	85.6	38.6	1278	459	13.8 ^c	86.2 ^c	0.0 ^c	98	771	1.68	1	0	3.96	85.61	3.59	6.03	1278	128
Lay	16	253	88.5	47.4	2108	808	30.0 ^c	70.0 ^c	0.0 ^c	98 ^c	1727	2.14	10	0	4.47	88.54	3.83	8.19	211	21
Logan Martin	31	507	92.9	56.8	4538	1986	26.3 ^c	73.7 ^c	0.0 ^c	96	3240	1.63	5	0	3.83	92.90	4.38	7.14	908	91
Martin	12	268	91.4	47.8	2546	1053	17.8 ^c	82.2 ^c	0.0 ^c	93	1444	1.37	1	0	3.52	91.42	4.14	5.67	2546	255
Millers Ferry	2	33	90.9	51.5	304	121	87.8 ^c	12.2 ^c	0.0 ^c	98	195	1.61	1	0	5.32	90.91	3.99	6.43	304	30
Mitchell	7	243	89.7	46.1	2109	851	13.8 ^c	86.2 ^c	0.0 ^c	95 ^c	1536	1.80	1	0	4.15	89.71	4.04	7.28	2109	211
Mobile Delta	9	89	95.5	50.6	743	312	100.0	0.0	0.0	94	460	1.48	0	0	2.81	95.51	4.20	6.20	.	.
Neely Henry	11	298	92.3	49.0	2614	1019	52.4 ^c	47.6 ^c	0.0 ^c	97	1779	1.75	4	0	3.62	92.28	3.90	6.81	654	65
Pickwick	78	2585	96.7 ^c	65.7 ^c	23761	10250 ^b	73.2 ^c	2.4 ^c	24.4 ^c	98 ^c	24744	2.33	141	12	5.90	96.71 ^c	4.46	10.41	161	16
Smith	3	90	77.8	15.6	712	204	20.9 ^c	79.1 ^c	0.0 ^c	99	310	1.52	0	0	3.05	77.78	2.87	4.36	.	.
Tuscaloosa	2	71	94.4	64.8	620	286	47.3 ^c	52.7 ^c	0.0 ^c	95 ^c	361	1.26	0	0	4.57	94.37	4.62	5.83	.	.
Upper Bear	1	10	90.0	20.0	85	27	51.9	48.1	0.0	100	42	1.54	0	0	2.94	90.00	3.18	4.91	.	.
Warrior	1	16	93.8	81.3	152	68	100.0	0.0	0.0	97	125	1.83	0	0	4.50	93.75	4.47	8.20	.	.
Weiss	20	312	94.6	44.2	2831	1059	60.8 ^c	39.2 ^c	0.0 ^c	92	1742	1.64	10	0	4.33	94.55	3.74	6.15	283	28
West Point	19	294	88.4	31.3	3323	1080	34.5 ^c	65.5 ^c	0.0 ^c	94 ^c	1747	1.62	12	0	4.25	88.44	3.25	5.26	277	28
Wheeler	10	195	83.6	34.4	1779	539	83.6 ^c	2.2 ^c	14.2 ^c	98 ^c	940	1.74	3	0	4.53	83.59	3.03	5.29	593	59
Wilson	5	119	84.0	39.5	998	347	69.4 ^c	0.0 ^c	30.6 ^c	96 ^c	663	1.91	3	0	4.12	84.03	3.48	6.65	333	33
Grand Total	368	7994	86.6^c	47.2^c	74439	27386^b	53.1^c	46.1^c	0.8^c	96^c	56134	2.02^c	291^c	14^c	4.60^c	86.62^c	3.72^c	7.54	252^c	25^c

^a a day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

^b due to missing data these values are artificially low

^c incomplete records were excluded from these calculations

Table 2. Ranking by quality indicators for all reservoirs with five or more tournament reports in the 2011 B.A.I.T. Program.

Rank	Percent Success	Average Bass Weight	Bass per Angler-Day	Pounds per Angler-Day	Hours per Bass > 5 lbs.	Overall	Value
1	Pickwick	Guntersville	Bankhead	Pickwick	Guntersville	Pickwick	92
2	Bankhead	Pickwick	Pickwick	Bankhead	Pickwick	Bankhead	76
3	Mobile Delta	Lay	Logan Martin	Lay	Lay	Lay	73
4	Aliceville	Eufaula	Mobile Delta	Mitchell	Eufaula	Logan Martin	60
5	Weiss	Wilson	Martin	Logan Martin	West Point	Mitchell	60
6	Logan Martin	Mitchell	Neely Henry	Guntersville	Weiss	Neely Henry	60
7	Neely Henry	Neely Henry	Neely Henry	Neely Henry	Wilson	Guntersville	59
8	Martin	Wheeler	Lay	Wilson	Harris	Weiss	55
9	Mitchell	Bankhead	Aliceville	Aliceville	Holt	Wilson	53
10	Lay	Jordan	Weiss	Holt	Bankhead	Mobile Delta	48
11	West Point	Holt	Holt	Mobile Delta	Wheeler	Aliceville	46
12	Harris	Weiss	Jordan	Weiss	Neely Henry	Holt	41
13	Jordan	Logan Martin	Wilson	Jordan	Logan Martin	Eufaula	40
14	Wilson	West Point	Harris	Martin	Jordan	Martin	40
15	Wheeler	Aliceville	West Point	Wheeler	Mitchell	West Point	39
16	Guntersville	Mobile Delta	Wheeler	West Point	Martin	Jordan	38
17	Eufaula	Martin	Guntersville	Eufaula	Aliceville	Wheeler	35
18	Holt	Harding	Eufaula	Harris	Mobile Delta	Harris	29
19	Harding	Harris	Harding	Harding	Harding	Harding	6

Table 3. Tournament summary for bass clubs participating in the 2011 B.A.I.T. Program.

Club No.	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% of anglers w/ at least 1 fish	% of anglers w/ a limit of fish	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Bass per day ^a	Pounds per day ^a	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	Days ^a to catch a bass over 5 lb.	
1	13	134	73.9	10.4	1060	243	79.5	1.0	19.5	91	439	1.81	1	0	3.45	73.88	2.29	4.14	1060	106	
2	13	131	79.4	26.7	1085	320	38.1	60.0	1.9	100	617	1.93	5	0	4.05	79.39	2.95	5.69	217	22	
3	8	166	82.5	36.7	2168	665	78.2	21.8	0.0	97	1305	1.96	12	0	5.43	82.53	3.07	6.02	181	18	
4	1	18	44.4	11.1	117	19	21.1	78.9	0.0	100	31	1.62	0	0	4.94	44.44	1.62	2.62	.	.	
5	1
6	8	106	81.1	58.5	865	292	36.8	63.2	0.0	86	565	1.94	4	0	4.09	81.13	3.38	6.54	216	22	
7	5	97	96.9	80.4	831	435	73.9	26.1	0.0	97	839	1.93	1	0	4.34	96.91	5.24	10.10	831	83	
8	5	39	89.7	30.8	350	117	100.0	0.0	0.0	97	159	1.36	0	0	2.54	89.74	3.35	4.54	.	.	
9	8	196	89.8	32.7	1780	571	.	.	.	94	1102	1.93	7	0	4.85	89.80	3.21	6.19	254	25	
10	10	140	84.3	52.9	1256	487	78.1	21.9	0.0	96	793	1.63	1	0	4.33	84.29	3.88	6.31	1256	126	
11	6	506	86.0	29.1	4048	1521	.	.	.	98	2767	1.82	6	0	5.48	85.97	3.76	6.83	675	67	
12	3	58	84.5	39.7	497	163	61.1	2.2	36.7	97	433	2.65	9	0	6.01	84.48	3.28	8.71	55	6	
13	5	35	94.3	74.3	304	155	64.3	35.7	0.0	100	307	1.98	1	0	4.14	94.29	5.10	10.08	304	30	
14	1	13	38.5	69.2	104	59	.	.	.	97	81	1.37	0	0	4.58	38.46	5.67	7.75	.	.	
15	3	65	89.2	61.5	562	222	.	.	.	100	406	1.83	2	0	4.85	89.23	3.95	7.23	281	28	
16	13	360	78.9	33.9	3152	960	.	.	.	96	1860	1.94	15	0	4.75	78.89	3.05	5.90	210	21	
17	13	158	96.2	84.2	1264	716	18.9	81.1	0.0	96	1511	2.11	6	0	4.79	96.20	5.66	11.95	211	21	
18	5	790	92.0	45.6	8748	3315	.	.	.	98	6583	1.99	22	0	6.05	92.03	3.79	7.53	398	40	
19	9	192	92.2	69.3	1920	686	.	.	.	96	1706	2.49	8	0	5.14	92.19	3.57	8.89	240	24	
20	2	39	92.3	30.8	361	110	100.0	0.0	0.0	99	155	1.41	0	0	3.31	92.31	3.05	4.29	.	.	
21	11	90	80.0	14.4	759	185	34.4	65.6	0.0	96	305	1.65	5	0	3.18	80.00	2.44	4.02	644	64	
22	9	379	88.7	66.8	3222	1221	.	.	.	.	2060	1.69	.	.	4.95	88.65	3.79	6.40	133	13
23	74	2143	.	68.6	18216	7992	.	.	.	.	20319	2.42	129	12	5.95	.	4.61	11.15	382	38
24	142	2139	86.2	30.6	21775	6932	51.5	48.4	0.1	95	11792	1.70	57	2	4.15	86.16	3.18	5.40	.	.	
Grand Total	368	7994	86.6°	47.2°	74439	27386 ^b	53.1°	46.1°	0.8°	96°	56134	2.02°	291°	14°	4.60°	86.62°	3.72°	7.54	252°	25°	

^a a day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

^b due to missing data these values are artificially low

^c incomplete records were excluded from these calculations

Table 4. Clubs supporting the 2011 B.A.I.T. annual report.

Club Name	Address	City	State	Zip Code	Representative	Phone
BOEING BASS CLUB	100 SHAWNEE DR. NW	HUNTSVILLE	AL	35806	JOANTHAN MANTEUFFEL	256-423-8674
LAKE GUNTERSVILLE BASSMASTERS	3480 LITTLE DR SW	HARTSELLE	AL	35640	PHIL EKEMA	256-751-3656
NATIONAL BASS TRAIL (GA/AL)	979 KENNON DR.	CATALULA	GA	31804	BLAINE SOUERWINE	706-494-0699
PALS & GALS	3313 CUTOFF ROAD	MOUNDVILLE	AL	35474	BILLY RICHARDS	205-792-7398
A&D TEAM TRAIL	6130 HWY 17	COFFEEVILLE	AL	36919	ANTHONY SKINNER	251-542-9644
HILLCREST BASS CLUB	5117 POST OAK RD.	OXFORD	AL	36206	CLYDE ABERNATHY	256-835-9412
FISHERS OF MEN - SOUTH ALA.	P.O. BOX 2222	E. BREWTON	AL	36427	ALLEN COUCH	251-867-9852
MOBILE BASSMASTERS	4951 GOVERNMENT BLVD.	MOBILE	AL	36693	BOB STEELE	251-661-9600
BIRMINGHAM BASSMASTERS	13784 DIANNE DR.	MCCALLA	AL	35111	MIKE LINN	205-477-7643
NORTHPORT BASS CLUB	11008 BUSTER TIERCE SPUR	NORTHPORT	AL	35475	ROBERT FINDLAY	205-339-5546
ALABAMA BASS FEDERATION	1362 COUNY ROAD 85	PRAITVILLE	AL	36067	JIM SPARROW	334-201-4135
MORGAN COUNTY BASS CLUB	171 ROSECLIFF DR.	HARVEST	AL	35749	KEVIN MAYES	256-837-5711
PRAITVILLE BASS ANGLERS	1752 WHIPPOORWILL CT.	DEATSVILLE	AL	36022	TIM BAKER	
DIXIE BASS	P. O. BOX 1214	WAYNESBORO	MS	39367	MARGUERITE PALMER	601-735-3058
NORTH ALABAMA FISHING FORUMS.COM	PO BOX 185	WARRIOR	AL	35180	JODY HARRISON	205-243-4572
NORTH ALABAMA TOURNAMENT ANGLERS	24963 LISA DR.	ATHENS	AL	35613	STAN SHERROD	256-230-0081
NORTH BIBB BASS CLUB	1177 MT. CARMEL DR.	WEST BLOCKTON	AL	35184	DOUG HAYNES	205-938-2455
ALABAMA B.A.S.S. FEDERATION NATION	605 FARR CIRCLE	BIRMINGHAM	AL	35226	EDDIE PLEMONS	205-979-3526
WEST ALABAMA BASS FISHERMANS ASSN	P.O. BOX 210	GORDO	AL	35466	JEFF GILLIAM	205-364-8530
PENSACOLA HAWG HUNTER BASS CLUB	5680 MULDOON ROAD	PERDIDO RIVER	FL	32526	WILLIAM MYRICK	850-456-6860
BLUE CITY BASSMASTERS	501 FIVE MILE RD.	EUFULA	AL	36027	JIM HOWARD	334-616-1918
FAYETTE BASS CLUB	10991 HWY 13N	BANKSTON	AL	35542	TODD TUCKER	
MISS. DIV. WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & PARKS	1505 EASTOVER DR.	JACKSON	MS	39211	LARRY PUGH	601-432-2400
GEORIGA BASS FEDERATION	BIOLOGY DEPT., 1601 MAPLE ST	CARROLLTON	GA	30118	DR. CARL QUENTERMUS	678-839-4035

Table 5. Statewide summary of bass tournaments by month for bass clubs participating in the 2011 B.A.I.T. Program.

Month	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% of anglers w/ at least 1 fish	% of anglers w/ a limit of fish	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Bass per day ^a	Pounds per day ^a	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	Days ^a to catch a bass over 5 lb.
JAN	10	129	41.3	2.8	1034	78	58.9	41.1	0.0	100	184	1.52	1	0	2.79	41.28	0.90	1.77	1034	103
FEB	32	568	80.6	36.6	4625	1454	50.4	49.6	0.0	100	3155	1.93	33	1	4.90	80.59	3.34	6.82	140	14
MAR	44	1276	78.5	32.4	11276	3456	63.7	36.3	0.0	96	7707	2.21	59	3	5.32	78.45	3.09	6.83	188	19
APR	41	913	93.3	58.1	8170	3440	54.1	45.9	0.0	97	7053	1.98	45	3	5.30	93.29	4.31	8.63	175	17
MAY	47	1021	93.1	65.6	10088	4136	62.4	37.1	0.5	96	9095	2.14	44	2	4.86	93.10	4.16	9.02	229	23
JUN	41	1229	92.0	63.1	11659	4938	65.2	34.2	0.6	93	10219	2.07	49	2	4.82	92.01	4.22	8.74	235	24
JUL	31	714	81.8	58.4	6063	2508	46.8	46.8	6.4	93	5671	2.26	24	3	4.50	81.79	4.14	9.35	242	24
AUG	27	366	88.2	45.9	3191	1103	55.5	41.2	3.3	94	2092	1.90	8	0	4.45	88.15	3.46	6.56	399	40
SEP	29	685	84.9	31.8	5953	2003	34.5	64.3	1.2	96	3612	1.80	6	0	3.87	84.93	3.36	6.07	960	96
OCT	38	730	88.4	30.7	9214	3117	43.3	56.3	0.4	96	5485	1.76	16	0	4.06	88.40	3.38	5.95	576	58
NOV	17	214	89.3	40.7	1851	690	38.6	61.4	0.0	97	1166	1.69	5	0	3.87	89.25	3.73	6.30	370	37
DEC	11	149	86.6	34.9	1317	463	38.0	62.0	0.0	95	695	1.50	1	0	4.00	86.58	3.52	5.28	1317	132
Grand Total	368	7994	86.6°	47.2°	74439	27386^b	53.1°	46.1°	0.8°	96°	56134	2.02°	291°	14°	4.60°	86.62°	3.72°	7.54	252°	25°

^aa day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

^bdue to missing data these values are artificially low

^cincomplete records were excluded from these calculations

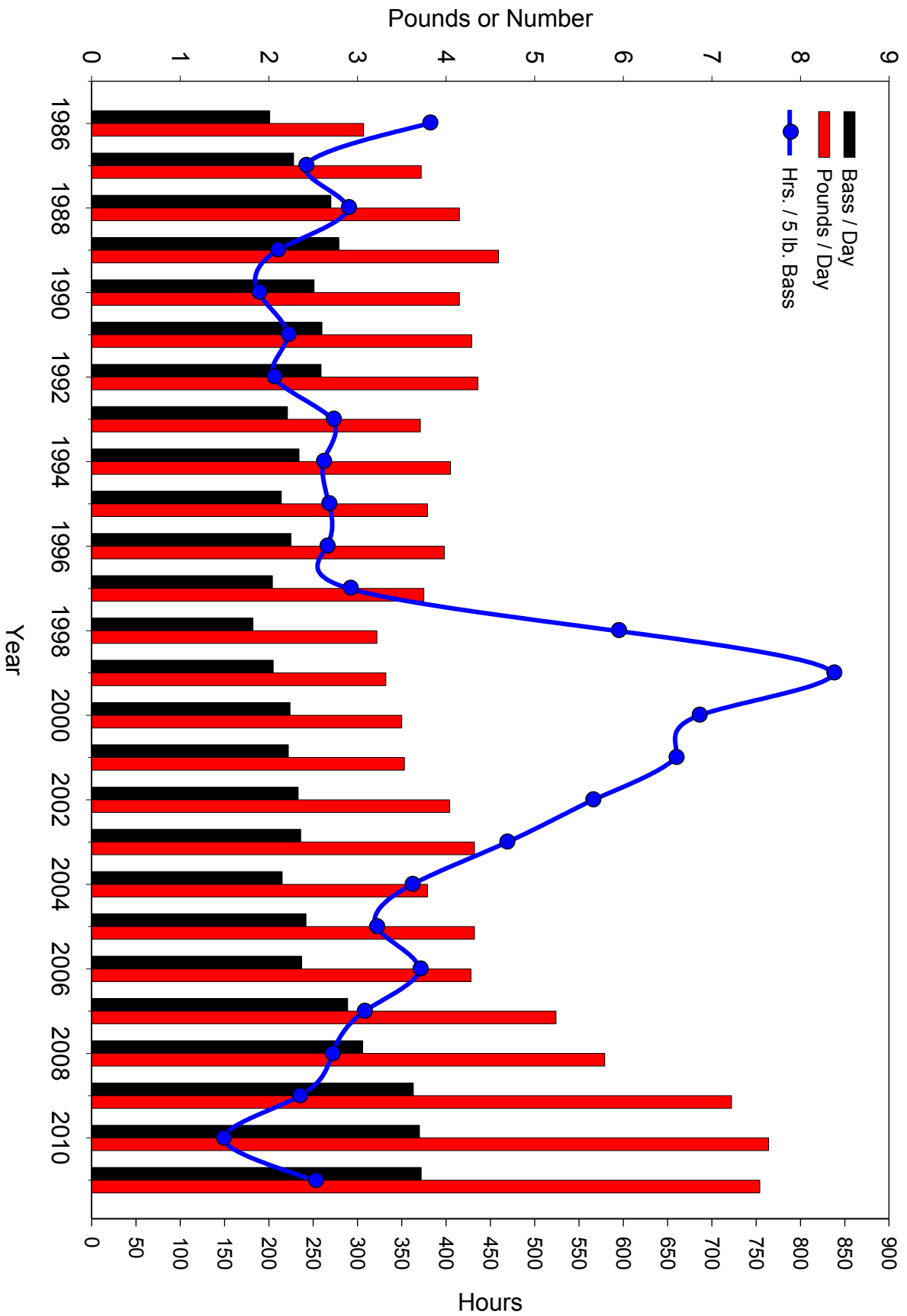


Figure 1. Annual catch for B.A.I.T. tournaments, 1986 - 2011.

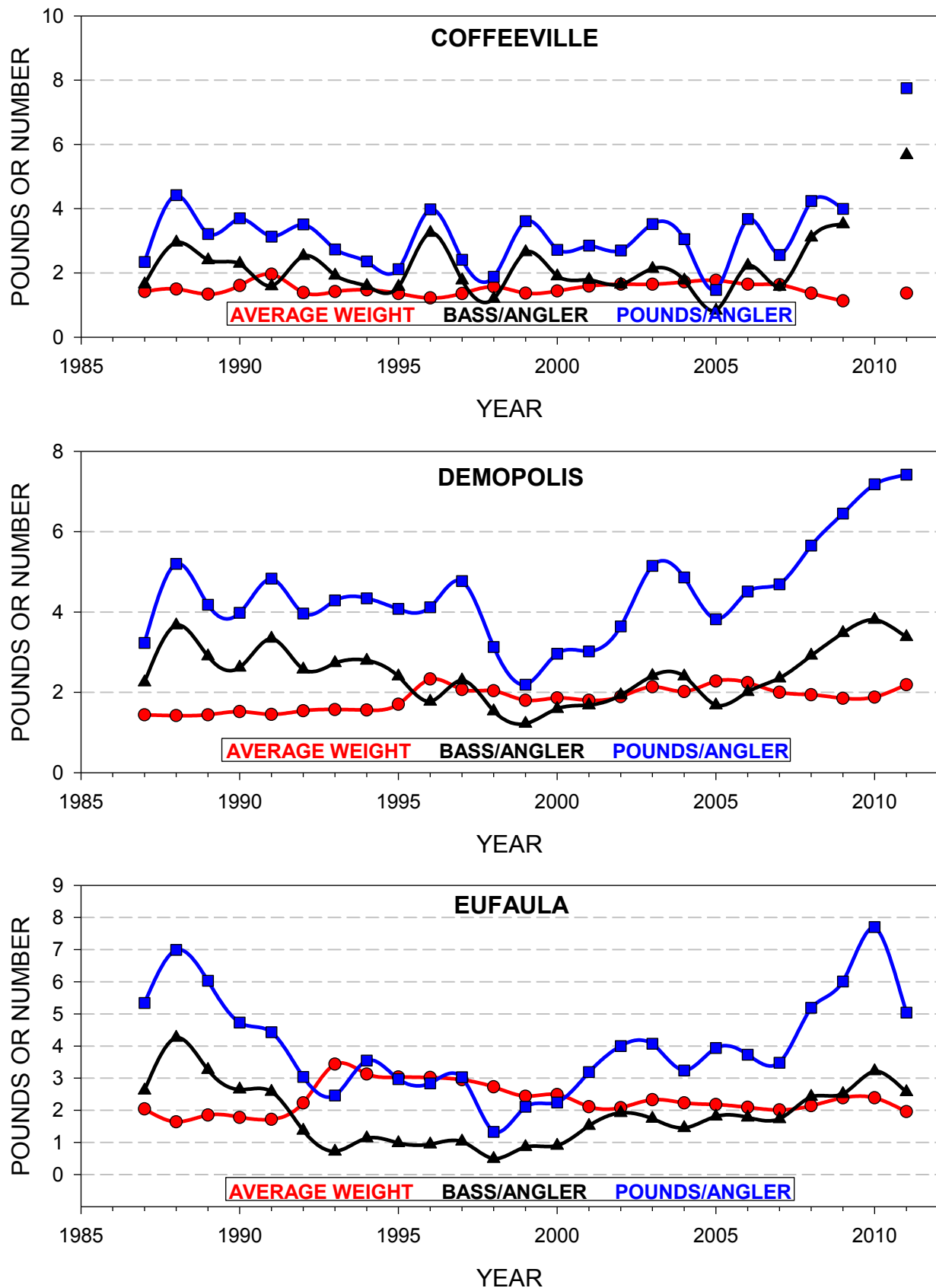


Figure 2. Annual quality indicators for Coffeetown, Demopolis, and Eufaula, through 2011.

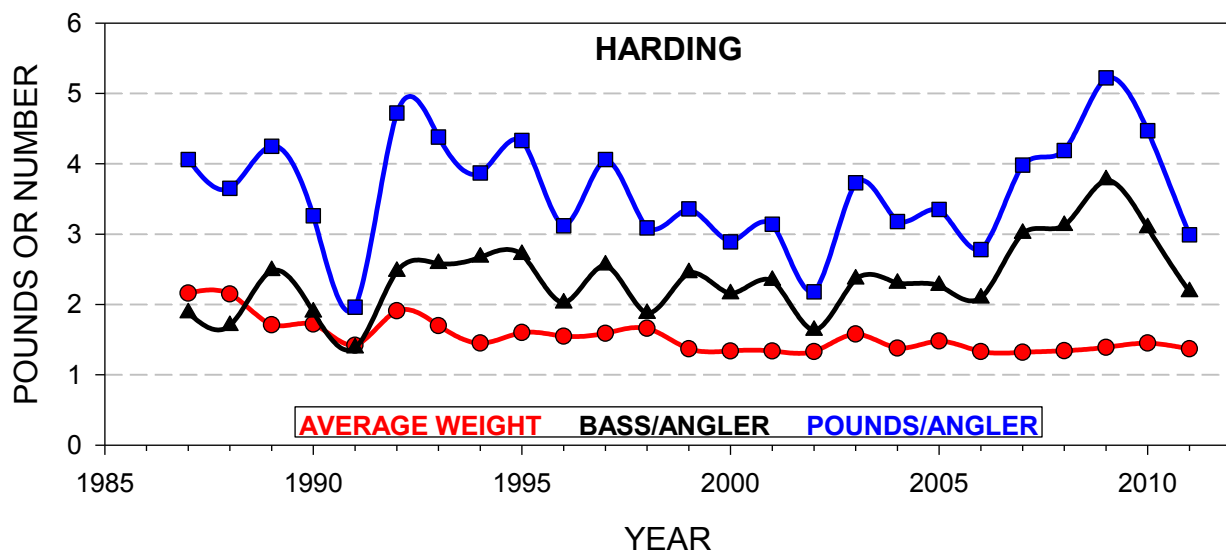
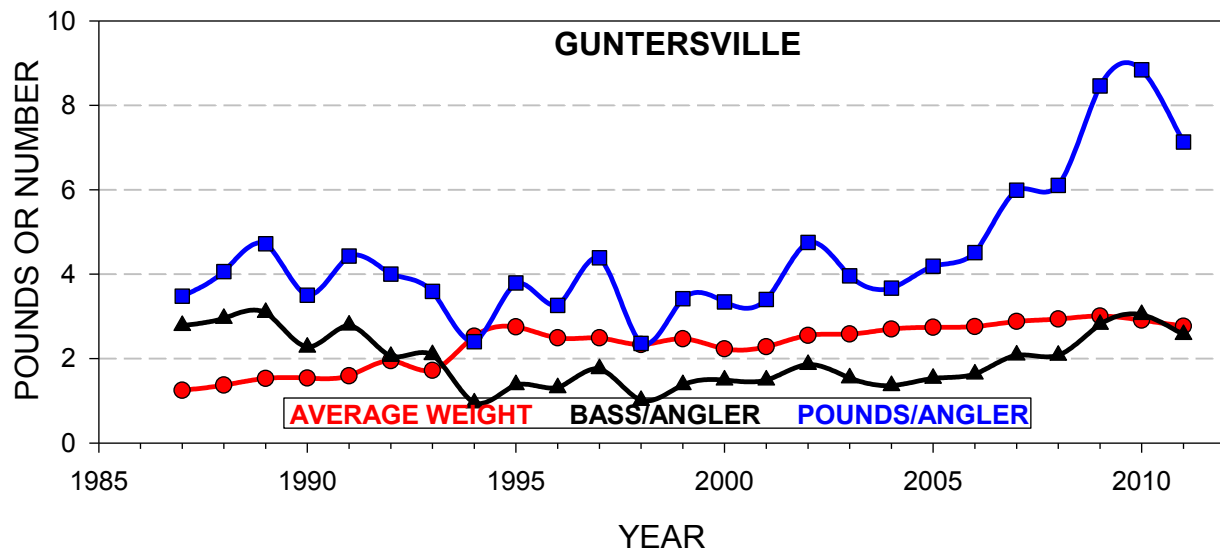
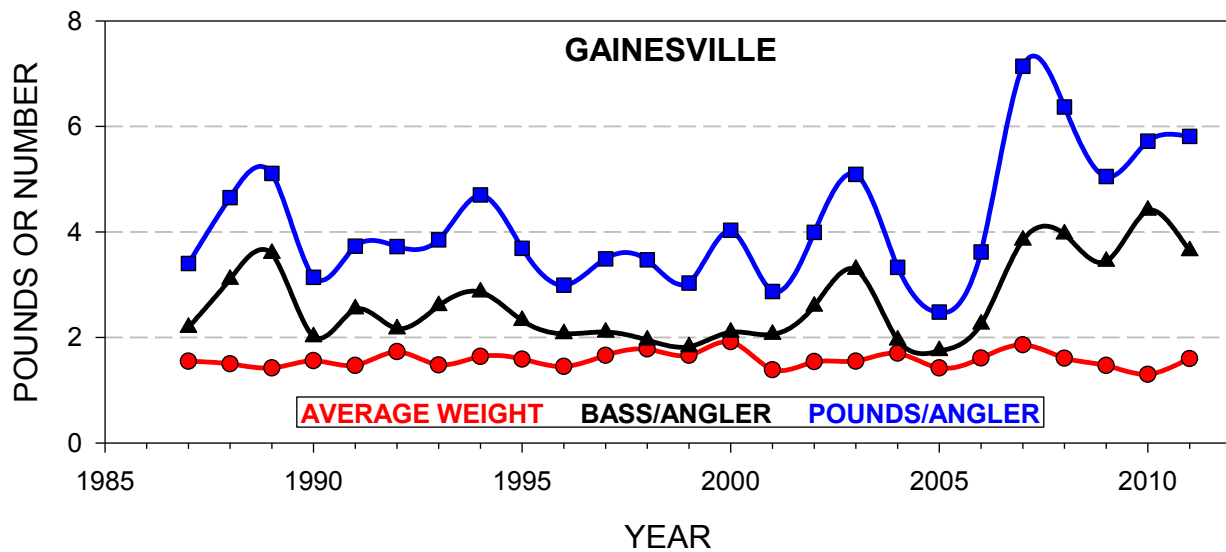


Figure 3. Annual quality indicators for Gainesville, Guntersville, and Harding, through 2011.

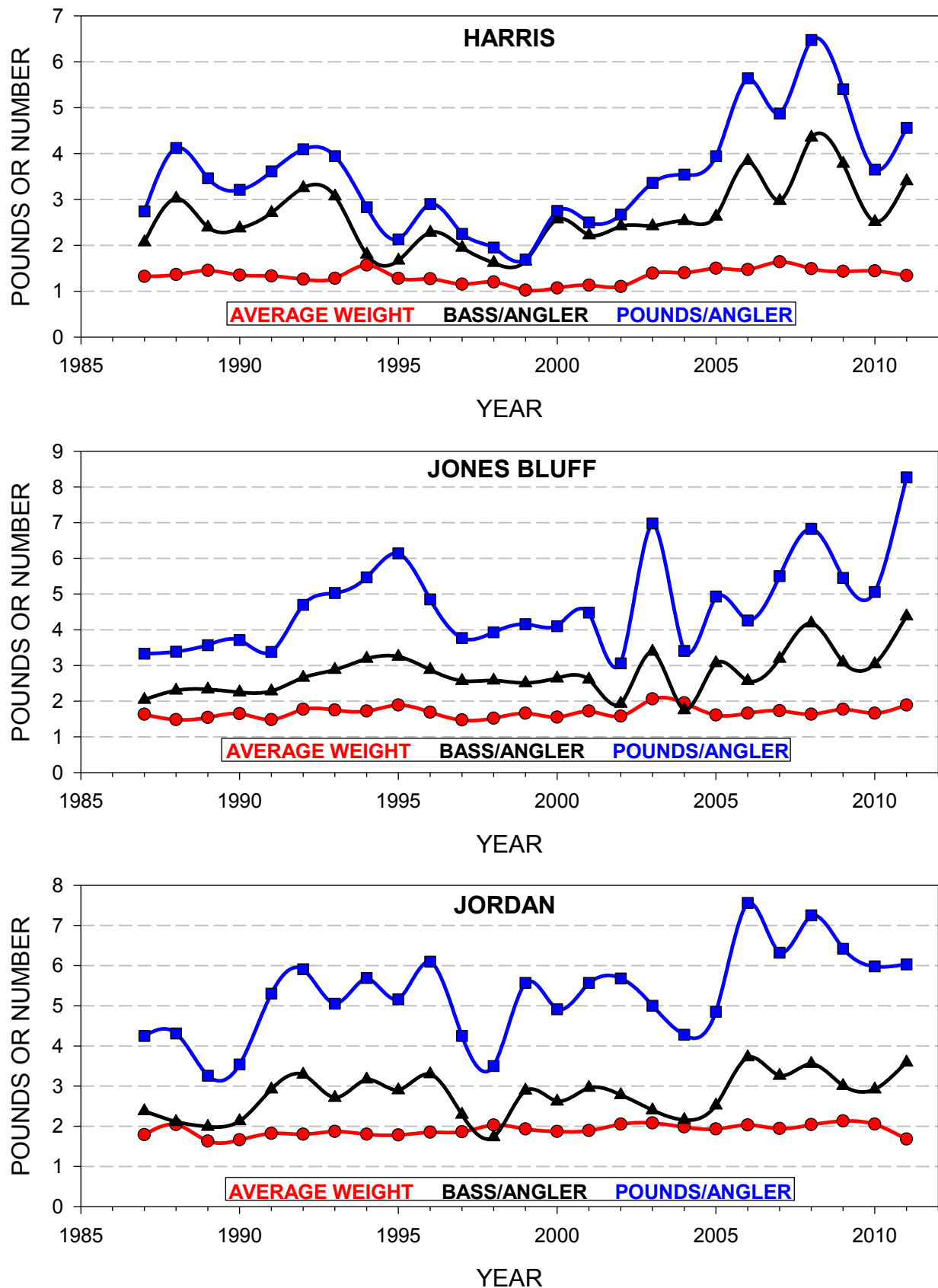


Figure 4. Annual quality indicators for Harris, Jones Bluff, and Jordan, through 2011.

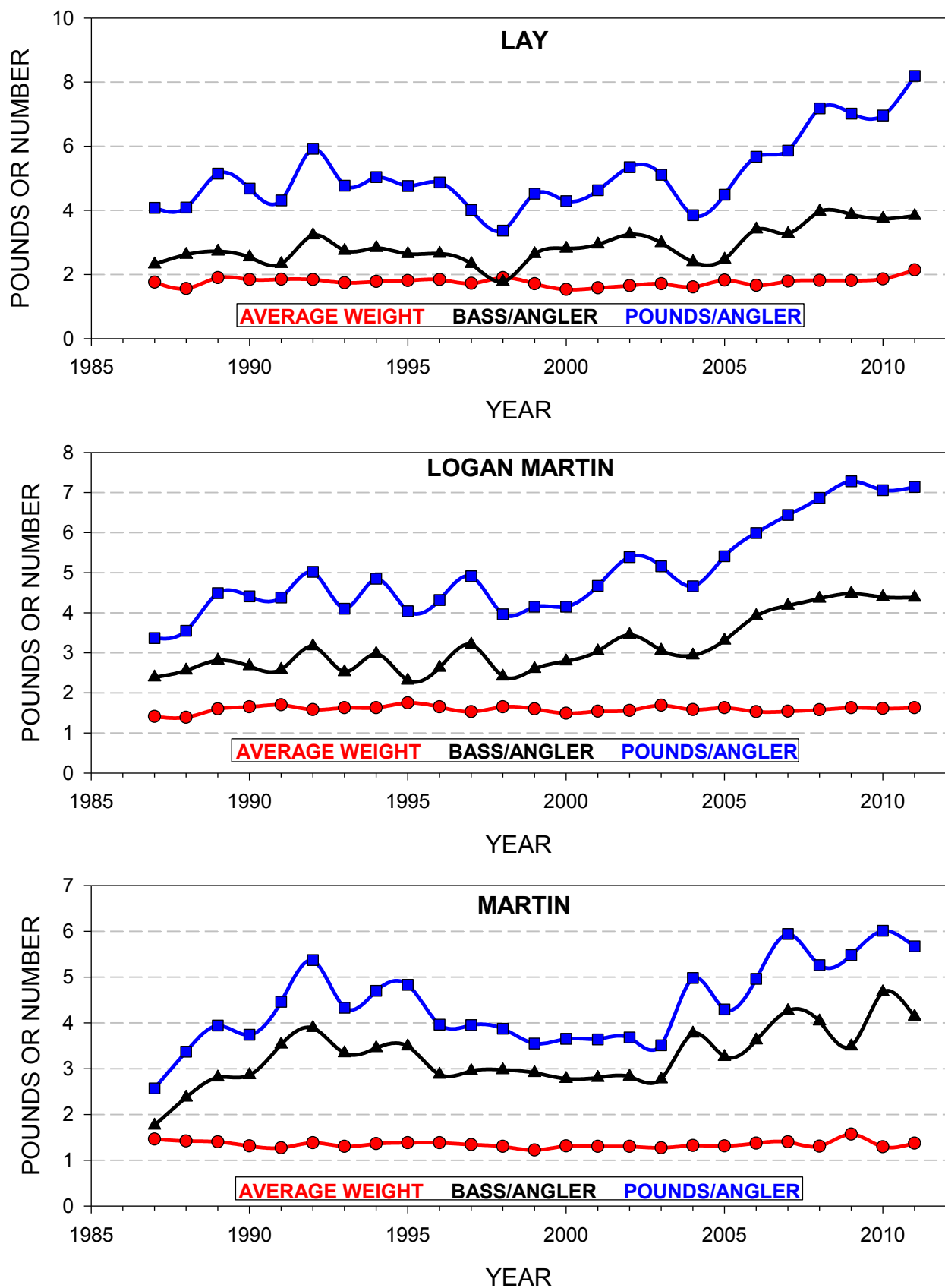


Figure 5. Annual quality indicators for Lay, Logan Martin, and Martin, through 2011.

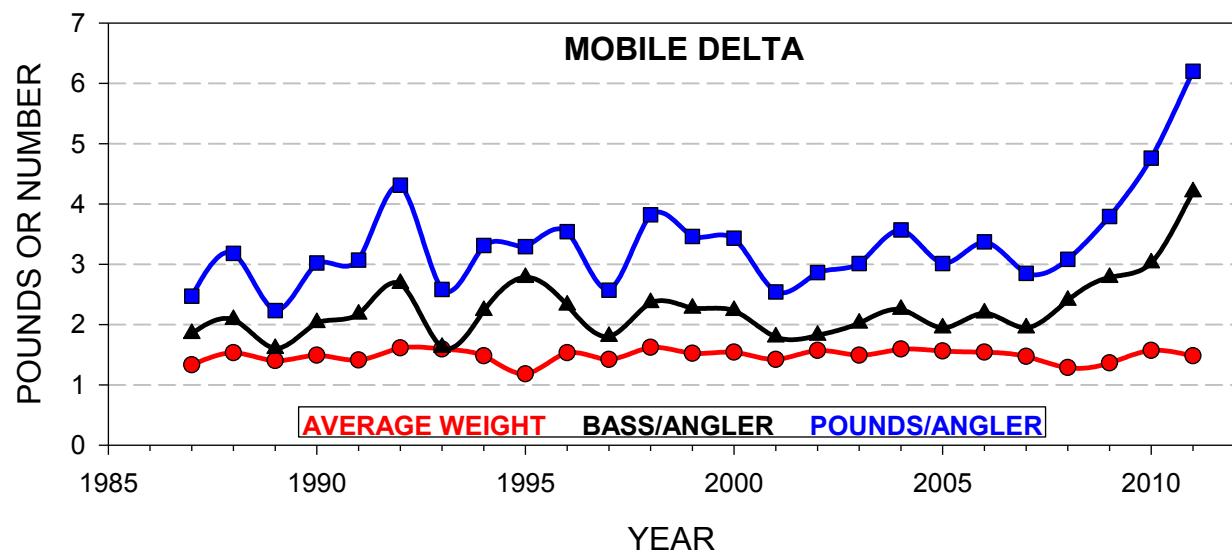
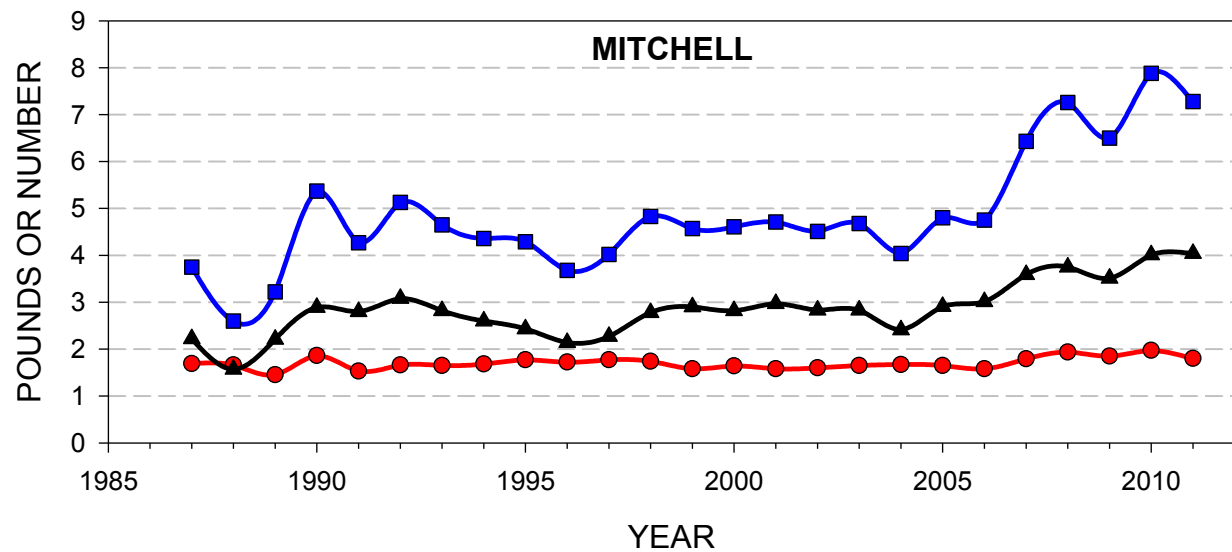
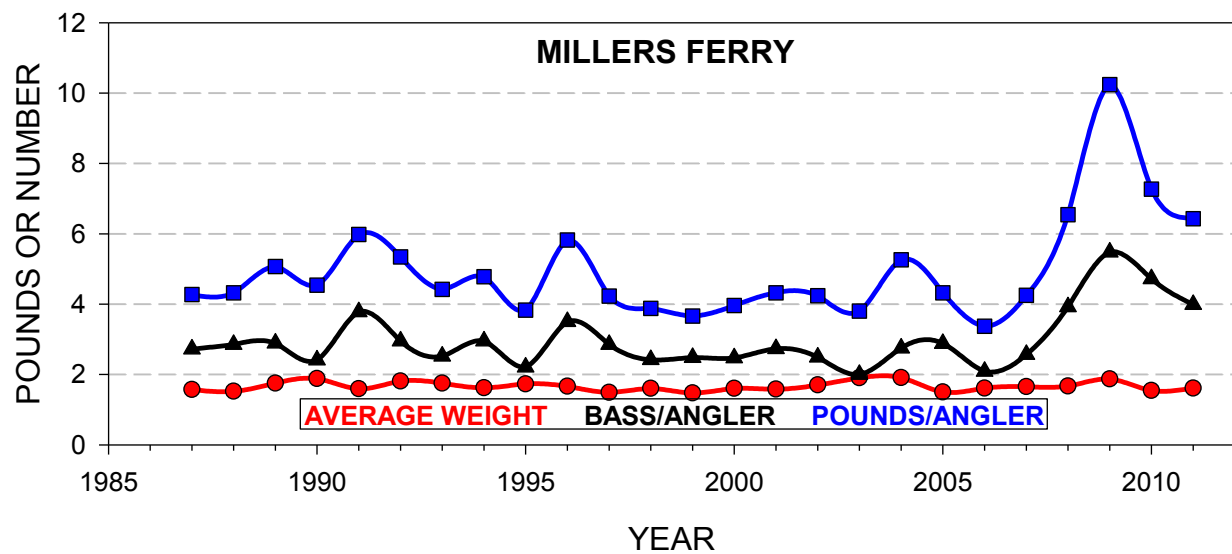


Figure 6. Annual quality indicators for Millers Ferry, Mitchell, and the Mobile Delta, through 2011.

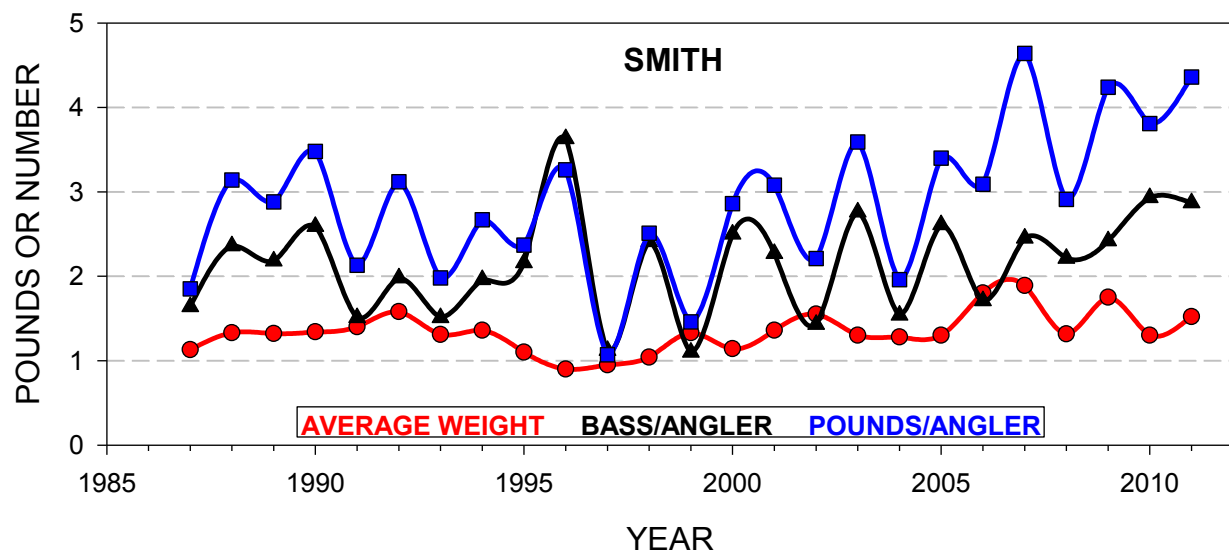
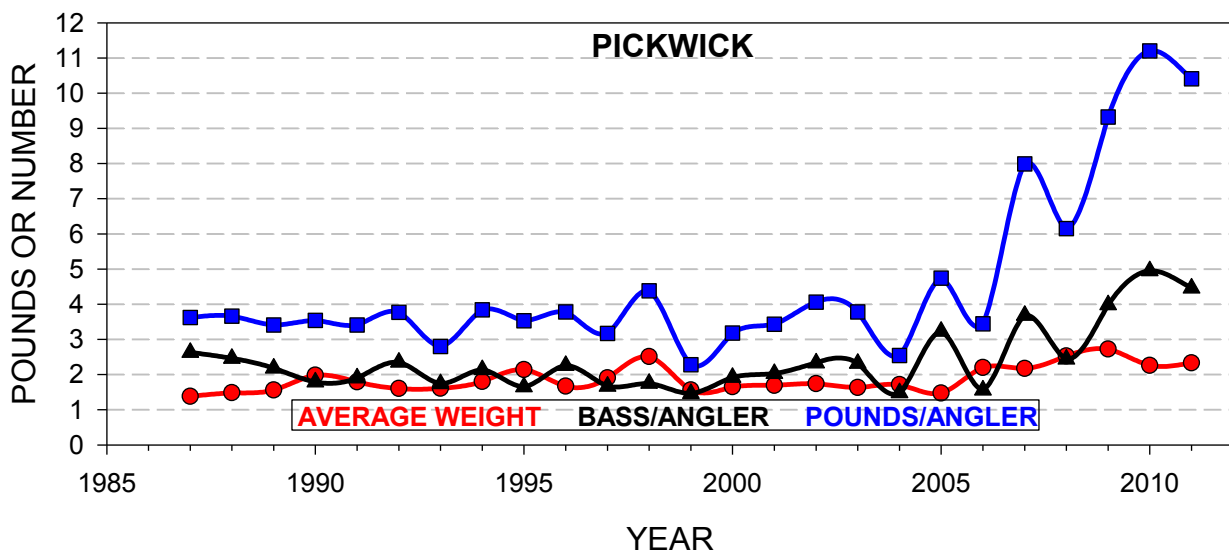
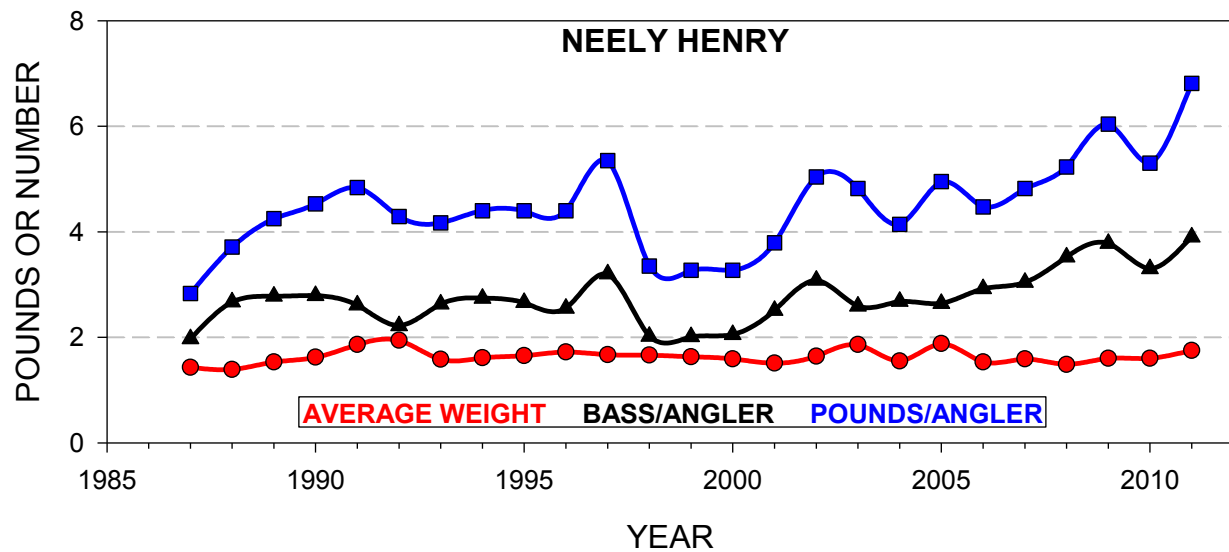


Figure 7. Annual quality indicators for Neely Henry, Pickwick, and Smith, through 2011.

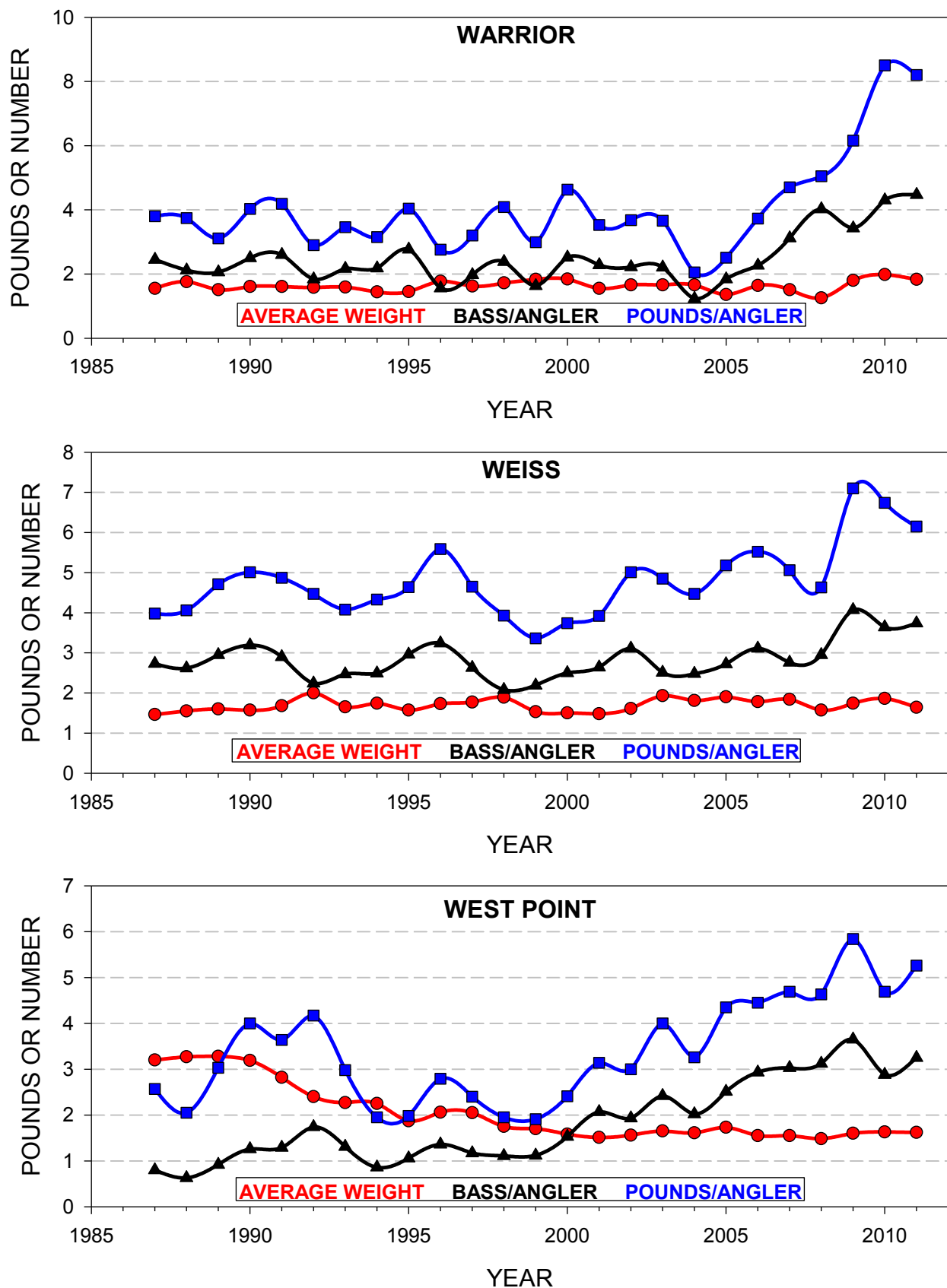


Figure 8. Annual quality indicators for Warrior, Weiss, and West Point, through 2011.

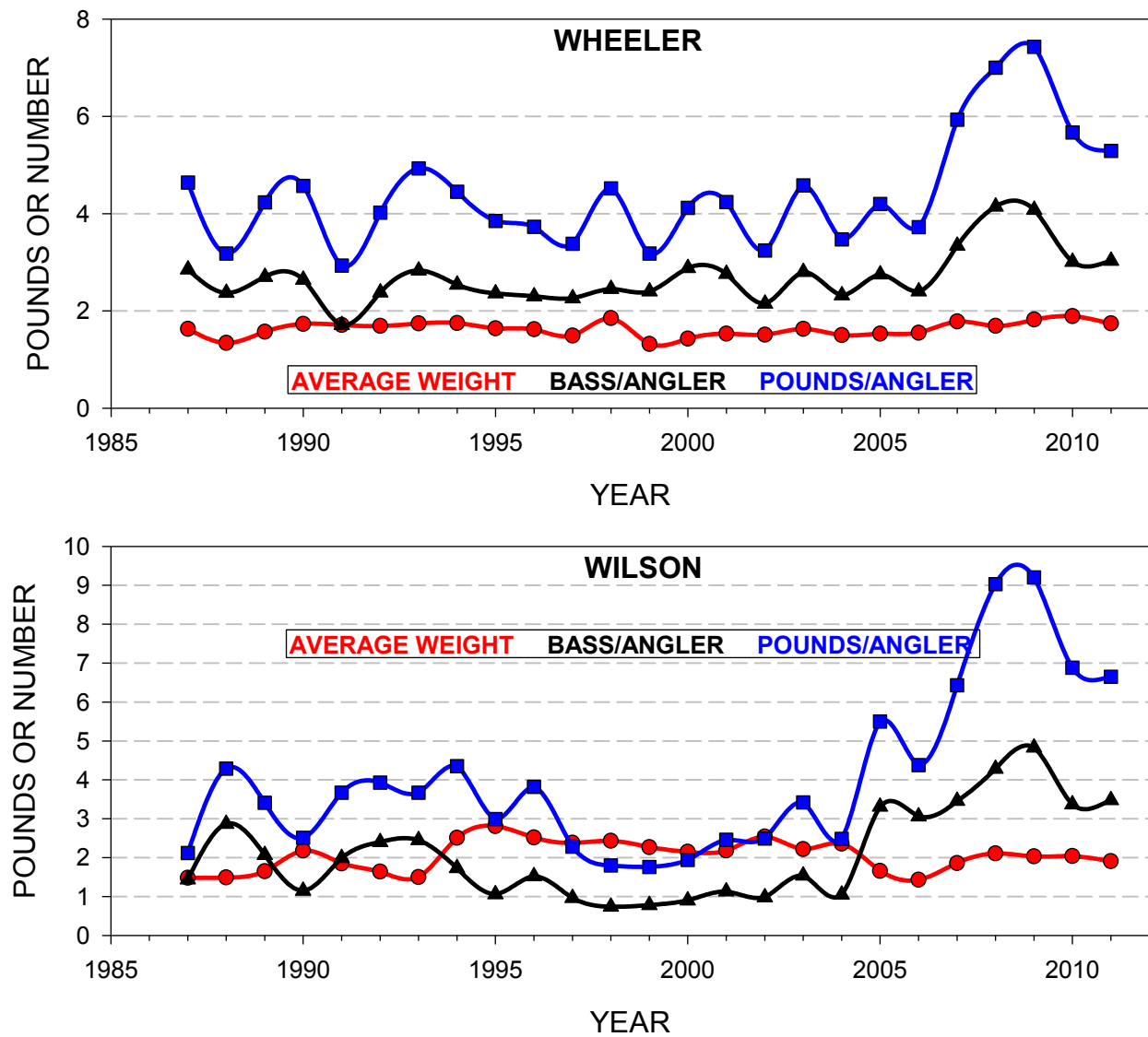


Figure 9. Annual quality indicators for Wheeler and Wilson, through 2011.

Table 6. Summary of bass tournaments by lake and month for bass clubs participating in the 2011 B.A.I.T. Program.

Lake	Month	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Bass per day ¹	Pounds per day ¹	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.
Eufaula	JAN	2	33	33.3	264	24	95.5	4.5	0.0	100.0	43.1	1.80	0	0	2.24	0.91	1.63	.
	FEB	5	59	76.3	466	149	88.7	11.3	0.0	98.0	299.9	2.01	2	0	4.75	3.20	6.43	233
	MAR	10	305	71.8	2643	631	87.7	12.3	0.0	98.7	1382.9	2.19	13	1	5.28	2.39	5.23	203
	APR	8	112	88.4	1271	381	93.7	6.3	0.0	96.3	779.9	2.05	11	1	5.49	3.00	6.14	116
	MAY	10	144	77.8	1674	380	87.4	12.6	0.0	94.2	677.3	1.78	3	0	4.06	2.27	4.05	558
	JUN	4	84	97.6	1566	470	81.3	18.7	0.0	96.0	866.6	1.84	7	0	4.53	2.91	5.37	224
	JUL	2	21	85.7	189	41	76.7	23.3	0.0	87.8	65.1	1.59	0	0	2.93	2.17	3.45	.
	AUG	2	18	77.8	243	72	71.4	28.6	0.0	87.5	128.9	1.79	1	0	6.17	2.96	5.31	243
	SEP	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	OCT	4	75	85.3	939	241	85.6	14.4	0.0	96.7	439.7	1.82	1	0	4.05	2.57	4.68	939
	NOV	1	9	88.9	72	20	60.0	40.0	0.0	100.0	45.7	2.28	1	0	5.25	2.78	6.34	72
	DEC	1	16	68.8	112	27	85.2	14.8	0.0	96.3	51.9	1.92	0	0	4.84	2.41	4.63	.
Guntersville	JAN	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	FEB	6	96	82.3	744	216	93.0	7.0	0.0	100.0	625.3	2.90	12	0	6.04	2.90	8.41	62
	MAR	6	127	81.1	1460	357	90.4	9.6	0.0	99.7	1049.2	2.94	12	0	5.22	2.45	7.19	122
	APR	3	81	91.4	767	234	95.9	4.1	0.0	91.5	622.2	2.66	7	0	6.20	3.05	8.12	110
	MAY	4	74	93.2	868	320	96.0	4.0	0.0	91.5	1066.7	3.33	5	0	5.42	3.69	12.29	174
	JUN	2	40	92.5	340	96	.	.	.	.	239.3	2.49	2	0	6.25	2.82	7.04	170
	JUL	1	40	65.0	360	67	.	.	.	95.5	168.1	2.51	1	0	5.88	1.86	4.67	360
	AUG	2	22	77.3	186	39	82.1	17.9	0.0	94.9	89.9	2.30	0	0	4.14	2.10	4.83	.
	SEP	4	143	79.7	1307	334	90.5	9.5	0.0	98.8	766.4	2.29	2	0	4.31	2.56	5.86	654
	OCT	5	74	58.1	726	96	91.7	8.3	0.0	99.0	251.4	2.62	3	0	4.92	1.32	3.46	242
	NOV	2	29	69.0	245	41	91.7	8.3	0.0	100.0	110.6	2.70	2	0	5.26	1.67	4.51	123
	DEC	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Harris	JAN	2	20	50.0	160	12	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	15.2	1.27	0	0	1.36	0.75	0.95	.
	FEB	1	29	93.1	261	113	6.2	93.8	0.0	100.0	147.9	1.31	0	0	4.18	4.33	5.67	.
	MAR	1	28	85.7	224	51	29.4	70.6	0.0	29.4	84.4	1.65	2	0	5.69	2.28	3.77	112
	APR	1	11	100.0	88	40	37.5	62.5	0.0	97.5	55.0	1.38	0	0	3.75	4.55	6.25	.
	MAY	1	16	100.0	128	35	65.7	34.3	0.0	97.1	63.4	1.81	1	0	5.13	2.73	4.95	128
	JUN	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	JUL	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	AUG	1	20	100.0	160	62	11.3	88.7	0.0	79.0	81.9	1.32	1	0	6.91	3.88	5.12	160
	SEP	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	OCT	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	NOV	1	8	100.0	68	33	9.1	90.9	0.0	100.0	41.4	1.26	0	0	2.31	4.85	6.09	.
	DEC	3	35	88.6	280	120	7.5	92.5	0.0	98.3	134.9	1.12	0	0	3.43	4.29	4.82	.
Lay	JAN	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	FEB	4	86	88.4	716	273	30.7	69.3	0.0	100.0	590.8	2.16	6	0	5.43	3.81	8.25	119
	MAR	3	41	87.8	360	117	20.4	79.6	0.0	98.1	250.1	2.14	1	0	3.89	3.25	6.95	360
	APR	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	MAY	1	6	100.0	60	28	64.3	35.7	0.0	100.0	62.6	2.24	0	0	4.89	4.67	10.43	.
	JUN	2	37	89.2	296	131	6.7	93.3	0.0	94.7	272.2	2.08	0	0	4.33	4.43	9.20	.
	JUL	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	AUG	1	6	66.7	48	6	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	8.9	1.48	0	0	1.94	1.25	1.84	.
	SEP	3	56	85.7	460	153	13.5	86.5	0.0	90.5	316.4	2.07	1	0	4.34	3.33	6.89	460
	OCT	2	21	100.0	168	100	53.0	47.0	0.0	100.0	225.7	2.26	2	0	4.85	5.95	13.43	84
	NOV	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	DEC	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

¹a day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

Table 6. Cont'd.

Lake	Month	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Bass per day ¹	Pounds per day ¹	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.
Logan Martin	JAN	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	FEB	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	MAR	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	APR	4	71	94.4	637	321	31.2	68.8	0.0	96.6	562.1	1.75	2	0	4.31	5.04	8.82	319
	MAY	6	118	95.8	1068	490	27.7	72.3	0.0	94.5	711.7	1.45	1	0	3.86	4.59	6.66	1068
	JUN	3	130	87.7	1116	451	47.7	52.3	0.0	94.7	807.1	1.79	1	0	4.24	4.04	7.23	1116
	JUL	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	AUG	3	21	95.2	168	56	11.1	88.9	0.0	98.2	78.4	1.40	0	0	2.79	3.33	4.66	.
	SEP	6	62	93.5	530	240	12.5	87.5	0.0	95.4	389.9	1.62	0	0	3.89	4.53	7.36	.
	OCT	5	57	98.2	619	266	23.3	76.7	0.0	95.9	411.9	1.55	1	0	3.48	4.30	6.65	619
	NOV	2	16	87.5	128	59	71.2	28.8	0.0	100.0	94.3	1.60	0	0	3.31	4.61	7.37	.
	DEC	2	32	90.6	272	103	12.6	87.4	0.0	100.0	184.4	1.79	0	0	4.35	3.79	6.78	.
Martin	JAN	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	FEB	2	28	82.1	230	61	11.7	88.2	.	100.0	90.7	1.49	0	0	2.78	2.65	3.94	.
	MAR	2	35	85.7	360	127	7.9	92.1	0.0	98.4	184.5	1.45	0	0	4.28	3.53	5.13	.
	APR	1	94	95.7	752	407	.	.	.	99.3	574.6	1.41	1	0	5.88	5.41	7.64	752
	MAY	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	JUN	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	JUL	1	28	92.9	280	81	18.5	81.5	0.0	100.0	118.2	1.46	0	0	3.90	2.89	4.22	.
	AUG	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	SEP	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	OCT	4	55	90.9	707	292	23.3	76.7	0.0	78.1	367.6	1.26	0	0	3.02	4.13	5.20	.
	NOV	2	28	92.9	217	85	15.3	84.7	0.0	98.8	108.7	1.28	0	0	3.14	3.92	5.01	.
	DEC	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Neely Henry	JAN	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	FEB	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	MAR	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	APR	2	148	93.9	1332	562	26.7	73.3	0.0	96.4	1090.4	1.94	4	0	4.58	4.22	8.19	333
	MAY	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	JUN	1	13	100.0	104	34	79.4	20.6	0.0	100.0	56.2	1.65	0	0	3.18	3.27	5.41	.
	JUL	4	52	88.5	434	154	50.0	50.0	0.0	93.5	223.9	1.45	0	0	3.23	3.55	5.17	.
	AUG	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	SEP	3	64	93.8	566	214	46.7	53.3	0.0	100.0	318.6	1.49	0	0	3.71	3.78	5.63	.
	OCT	1	21	81.0	179	55	.	.	.	98.2	90.3	1.64	0	0	3.44	3.08	5.06	.
	NOV	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	DEC	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Pickwick	JAN	2	20	.	170	.	.	.	.	.	64.7	.	1	0	4.90	.	3.81	170
	FEB	5	83	.	706	116	.	.	.	.	618.6	2.38	12	1	5.92	2.68	8.77	59
	MAR	10	490	.	4165	1486	.	.	.	.	3514.8	2.37	25	2	6.93	3.57	8.44	160
	APR	11	168	.	1428	620	.	.	.	.	1877.6	2.66	13	2	6.04	5.03	13.15	86
	MAY	11	391	100.0	3422	1778	.	.	.	98.0	4443.0	2.36	25	2	6.19	5.44	12.99	137
	JUN	10	528	.	4488	2305	.	.	.	.	5510.4	2.39	31	2	6.78	5.14	12.28	140
	JUL	12	386	88.9	3272	1725	75.0	1.9	23.1	94.2	4366.8	2.53	21	3	6.02	5.27	13.35	144
	AUG	10	158	87.3	1319	472	68.1	4.3	27.7	95.7	1030.4	2.18	4	0	4.77	3.58	7.81	330
	SEP	2	141	.	1199	481	.	.	.	.	924.4	1.92	3	0	6.13	4.01	7.71	334
	OCT	5	220	97.9	3593	1267	79.2	0.0	20.8	98.7	2393.0	1.89	6	0	4.13	3.53	6.66	599
	NOV	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	DEC	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

¹a day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

Table 6. Cont'd.

Lake	Month	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Bass per day ¹	Pounds per day ¹	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.
Weiss	JAN	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	FEB	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	MAR	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	APR	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	MAY	3	33	97.0	277	128	54.7	45.3	0.0	97.7	247.0	1.93	3	0	5.22	4.62	8.92	92
	JUN	8	155	96.8	1464	572	65.6	34.4	0.0	89.0	907.1	1.59	5	0	4.41	3.91	6.20	293
	JUL	2	27	96.3	216	65	58.5	41.5	0.0	93.8	110.8	1.70	0	0	3.95	3.01	5.13	.
	AUG	2	43	95.3	415	149	61.1	38.9	0.0	94.6	226.1	1.52	0	0	3.96	3.59	5.45	.
	SEP	2	30	93.3	263	77	48.1	51.9	0.0	97.4	121.2	1.57	0	0	3.28	2.93	4.61	.
	OCT	2	17	70.6	140	46	65.2	34.8	0.0	100.0	75.3	1.64	0	0	3.45	3.30	5.39	.
	NOV	1	7	85.7	56	22	63.6	36.4	0.0	100.0	54.3	2.47	2	0	6.42	3.93	9.69	28
	DEC	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
West Point	JAN	1	9	22.2	72	2	50.0	50.0	0.0	100.0	4.5	2.25	0	0	2.19	0.28	0.63	.
	FEB	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	MAR	2	27	92.6	216	78	30.8	69.2	0.0	100.0	118.4	1.52	1	0	4.82	3.61	5.48	216
	APR	2	39	94.9	312	126	31.0	69.0	0.0	98.6	203.4	1.61	3	0	5.37	4.04	6.52	104
	MAY	5	104	90.4	1270	388	39.7	60.3	0.0	97.7	611.4	1.58	5	0	4.59	3.06	4.82	254
	JUN	1	14	100.0	252	58	67.2	32.8	0.0	89.7	99.3	1.71	1	0	5.28	2.30	3.94	252
	JUL	2	24	79.2	201	51	33.3	66.7	0.0	62.7	69.0	1.35	0	0	2.94	2.54	3.43	.
	AUG	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	SEP	3	38	86.8	342	104	40.4	59.6	0.0	76.0	142.0	1.37	0	0	3.41	3.04	4.15	.
	OCT	2	35	91.4	590	236	14.6	85.4	0.0	99.2	445.4	1.89	2	0	5.55	4.00	7.55	295
	NOV	1	4	100.0	68	37	10.8	89.2	0.0	97.3	54.0	1.46	0	0	2.72	5.44	7.94	.
	DEC	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

¹a day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

Other Topics

TOURNAMENT PERMITS

The Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries does not require tournament organizations to secure tournament permits for any of their events. However, the Alabama Marine Police requires a Marine Event Permit for any event (including bass tournaments) with more than 100 boats participating. Applications can be obtained from the Alabama Marine Police free of charge by calling (334) 242-3630, and must be completed and submitted to them at least 15 days prior to the event.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also requires a Special Use Permit for bass tournaments with more than 10 boats which are held on any of their reservoirs. Corps permits must be submitted 30 days prior to the event, and can be obtained from your local project office or from their website at: <http://bwt.sam.usace.army.mil/specialevent.htm>.

CORPS OF ENGINEERS ANNUAL DAY USE PERMITS

Annual passes can be obtained from the guard shack at all park entrances, or by contacting your local Corp of Engineers Resources Management office. These passes allow you to use any boat ramp operated and maintained by the Corps of Engineers, nationwide. The charge for these permits is \$30 and is good for one year from the date of purchase. Local and regional offices are listed below.

Alabama River Lakes Site Office (Hayneville)	334-872-9554
Millers Ferry Resource Office (Camden)	334-682-4244
Holt Resource Office (Peterson)	205-553-9373
Black Warrior/Tombigbee Project Mgmt. Office (Tuscaloosa)	205-752-3571
Demopolis Site Office (Demopolis)	334-289-3540
Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Office (Carrollton)	205-373-8705

TRAILER TOURNAMENTS

Any tournaments where rules permit anglers to fish in various water bodies and then bring their catch to a particular lake for a weigh-in where fish are then released alive into that body of water are in direct violation of Alabama's Public Water Stocking (220-2-.129) regulation. Moving live fish from one lake to another can have a number of detrimental consequences; examples include 1) moving fish caught from lakes with consumption advisories into lakes without advisories, 2) introducing genetically inferior strains of spotted bass into our world-class spotted bass fisheries of the Coosa River, 3) introducing diseases such as the Largemouth Bass Virus which decimated many of our bass fisheries in Alabama beginning in the late 1990's, 4) diluting the genetic benefits of our Florida bass stocking program, and 5) introducing non-native, potentially harmful species into lakes where they do not currently exist.

However, it is important for anglers to know that only the act of releasing fish into a body of water other than where they were caught is

illegal. If tournament organizations want to continue to offer these types of tournaments to their competitors, they are certainly free to do so as long as the fish brought in from other reservoirs are not released there. If you participate in one of these tournaments, **do not release your fish into that lake if you did not catch them there.** Your fish can be eaten, donated to a charitable organization such as an orphanage, or returned to the reservoir from which they were caught. Fish can only be moved legally from one reservoir to another if they are transported by boat through a navigable lock.

CATCH-AND-RELEASE

Access area creel surveys conducted by Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries biologists have revealed a significant decline in bass harvest rates, statewide. In 2009, nearly 100% of all bass caught from public waters were released.

As the catch-and-release ethic has evolved during the last 20 years due to intense promotion by tournament organizations and participants, many well-intentioned anglers have become so passionate about this angling ethic that they feel a moral obligation to release every bass they catch, which often leads them to make some poor choices with regard to the handling of their fish.

An unfortunate consequence of catch-and-release is that tournament anglers are often so focused on releasing their fish alive, that they sometimes fail to recognize when a fish is too far gone to survive the stress. Making this mistake can result in numerous dead fish floating in the water around the boat ramp on the following day. The number of complaints received by ADCNR accusing tournament anglers of killing and wasting fish during organized bass tournaments is on the rise, so please encourage your anglers to be aware of this growing problem, and consider adopting tournament rules that discourage the release of fish in poor condition following bass tournaments.

Tournament Website

<http://www.outdooralabama.com/tournaments/>

Type the above link into your web browser to access the page below and post your tournaments or view those posted by other organizations. This feature is available for all 45 of Alabama's public reservoirs and signs are being placed at each ADCNR public access area to inform anglers of the new interactive website.

The top screenshot shows the 'View Freshwater Tournaments' page. It features a calendar for June 2010 and a list of upcoming tournaments. A red circle highlights the 'Upcoming Tournaments' section, and a red arrow points to the 'Post a Fishing Tournament' link. Another red circle highlights the 'Month and Year' dropdown menu, and a red arrow points to the 'Click on dates below for events' text.

The bottom screenshot shows the 'Post Freshwater Tournament' form. It includes fields for First Name, Last Name, E-mail Address, Phone Number, Organization, Target Species, Water Body, Boat Ramp, Start Date, End Date, Start Time, End Time, Estimated Number of Boats, and Tournament Overview. A red circle highlights the 'Post a Fishing Tournament' link, and a red arrow points to the 'Click on dates below for events' text.

Select from these options to see when and where tournaments are being held, or . .

Click here to bring up the page below and post your own tournament.

On this page, you can post specific information about your tournament and include contact information, a link to your website, or even a copy of your tournament registration form.

Please let other tournament fishermen know about this website, and if you have questions or comments call 334-242-3471. This website exists for your convenience and we welcome any suggestions you might have that would improve this valuable tool.

Boating Access

The Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries maintains 118 public boating access areas statewide. Several of these facilities received upgrades during 2011.

Tornado Clean Up

Six boat ramps received direct hits or major damage during the April 27th tornadoes. Much of the boating access effort during 2011 was directed at clearing downed trees and repairing other storm-related damage.

Wetumpka City Ramp (Coosa River)

This is a new facility constructed on land leased from the City of Wetumpka, which is responsible for the daily routine maintenance of the area. Construction began in Fall 2010, but was completed during Spring 2011. It includes a 20 foot wide launching slab, paved parking for 20 trailers, and a gravel overflow parking area more than an acre in size. Tornado clean-up and high water levels delayed the completion of the courtesy pier, which will be added during Summer 2012. This facility is located on the west side of the river in downtown Wetumpka.

South Sauty (Lake Guntersville)

With the popularity of Lake Guntersville during the past several years, existing public access has not been adequate during peak fishing seasons. To help remedy this problem, South Sauty was chosen for a major renovation and expansion. This site was selected because it was located in an area of the lake that offers excellent fishing and had particularly limited public access. This site was also desirable because it included several acres of undeveloped property that was suitable for parking lot expansion. This access area was originally constructed during the mid-1960's, and had received only minor upgrades since that time.

Prior to renovation, it was a primitive facility with a single lane launching slab, a small courtesy pier, and dirt parking for about five rigs. Upon completion, it will include a large, three-lane launching slab, ample security lighting, two 40-ft. courtesy piers, and parking for 75 rigs. The entrance will also be relocated to accommodate better traffic flow within the project boundaries, and all aspects will be fully ADA compliant.

Construction was initiated during the fall of 2011, but will not be finished until April, 2012. Once completed, South Sauty will have the distinction of being the largest public access area on Lake Guntersville and should help to take some of the pressure off of the other boat ramps throughout the lake.



Construction of the South Sauty Public Boat Ramp, Lake Guntersville.

Spann's Landing (Pea River)

This access area has been in existence for a number of years, where constant use and undermining from water currents had caused serious damage to the launching slab. The old launching slab was demolished and a new one constructed during Fall 2011. Construction timing was perfect and allowed the slab to be built during very low water levels, which allowed the toe of the slab to be positioned in the deepest water possible. This ramp had traditionally been difficult to use during low water periods, which should no longer be an issue.

Other Projects (Statewide)

Due to the extensive damage caused by tornadoes, no other significant projects were completed during 2011. However, a number of parking lots were re-stripped, courtesy piers repaired, and signage replaced, as needed.

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