

# El Dorado Wildlife Area News



Area News – Spring 2017

## Creel Survey Results Revealed

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism (KDWPT) monitors the success and satisfaction of anglers by conducting creel surveys on many of its public waters. El Dorado Reservoir was surveyed in 2015. These surveys are designed to estimate angler use, demographics, harvest and release, and preference and satisfaction. Detailed findings include total number of anglers, hours of shore and boat fishing, number and pounds of fish harvested and released by species and angler, age and sex of anglers, species sought, and angler satisfaction.



Creel surveys provide managers with important insight to better meet the needs of the fishery and anglers at El Dorado Reservoir. Results have been used to evaluate the success of management actions and will be used as comparison following the completion of future surveys. Results from the most recent survey that collected data at El Dorado Reservoir from March through October 2015 are presented:

- More than 118,000 hours of fishing were computed to have taken place.
- An average of about 1.5 fish were caught per angler. About 40% of the fish caught were harvested, the other 60% were released.
- White crappie were the most sought species by anglers and were harvested more than any other fish.
- Catfish (to include channel, flathead, and blue) were the 2<sup>nd</sup> most sought species by anglers and channel catfish were the 2<sup>nd</sup> most harvested species.
- More pounds of white crappie were harvested than any other species.
- Channel catfish were the most released species followed by walleye and white crappie.

Department clerks conduct surveys on waters throughout the state. If you are approached by a clerk while fishing your favorite lake this year, please help KDWPT to better manage our public waters by providing them with the requested information. Help us to make the fishing better for you!

For more information about fishery management at El Dorado Reservoir, contact District Fisheries Biologist Craig Johnson at #316/322-7513 or [craig.johnson@ks.gov](mailto:craig.johnson@ks.gov).



## **Are You and Your Boat Safety Ready?**

It won't be long before temperatures warm enough to encourage lake visitors to slip the boat in to enjoy a favorite pastime on the water. Whether fishing, swimming, cruising, paddling, skiing, tubing, or just relaxing, every vessel utilizing Kansas waters must have certain safety equipment on board. Do you have what you need to insure a safe and lawful visit to the lake this summer? Vessel owners should be familiar with regulations pertaining to equipment and education requirements. Does your vessel require a registration and decals, life jackets, fire extinguishers, sound producing device, navigation lights, skier down flag, wide angle mirror, muffler, or capacity plate? Do you have to have boater education? If you aren't sure, the KDWPT wants to help insure that your next trip is a safe and enjoyable one by providing boaters with access to a handy web page tool that can provide them with a list of requirements after they answer a series of questions about the vessel and the operator. Even veteran boaters may find the tool to be informative. The tool can be found at: <http://ksoutdoors.com/Boating/Required-Equipment-Checklist>. Additional boating information can also be found on the KDWPT website by visiting [www.ksoutdoors.com](http://www.ksoutdoors.com) and clicking on "Boating." Have a safe and enjoyable time on the water this summer!



KDWPT lake patrols help to insure safe vessel operation on our public waters.

## **Anglers and Boaters Reminded to Take Precautions to Control Aquatic Nuisance Species!**

Last summer, more Kansas waters were added to the growing list of those threatened by aquatic nuisance species (ANS). ANS waters are defined as those containing Asian carp, white perch, or zebra mussels.



Asian Carp



White Perch



Zebra Mussel

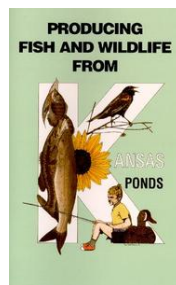
Regulations have been enacted to prevent the spread of ANS. Boaters and anglers are reminded to follow these regulations while visiting Kansas waters.

1. Livewells and bilges must be drained and drain plugs removed from all vessels being removed from waters of the state before transport on a public highway.
2. No person may possess ANY live fish upon departure from any designated ANS body of water.
3. Live baitfish may be caught and used as live bait only within the common drainage where caught. However, bluegill and green sunfish collected from non-designated ANS waters may be possessed or used as live bait anywhere in the state. Live baitfish shall not be transported and used above any upstream dam or barrier that prohibits the normal passage of fish.

Always remember to **CLEAN, DRAIN, & DRY** boats and equipment. Visit [www.ksoutdoors.com](http://www.ksoutdoors.com) for more information.

### **Pond Management Assistance Available:**

Want some advice to better manage your pond and improve the fishing? An excellent reference is available on the KDWPT web site to help with many common pond management questions. "Producing Fish and Wildlife From Kansas Ponds" can provide readers with an array of information to assist with everything from pond site selection and construction to pond ecology, stocking, and fish population management. This handy booklet can answer questions about how water quality impacts fish populations, the value of shelter to fish and the angler, when spawning habitat should or should not be added, species to stock, how many to stock, and when and how stockings should take place. Want bigger bass, bluegills, or channel catfish? Several fish population management options are also outlined providing pond enthusiasts with recommendations about when, what, and how many fish should be harvested to produce desired population characteristics. Other topics address common pond problems such as muddy water, aquatic vegetation, leaky ponds, old filled-in ponds, and fish kills. Some productive pond fishing techniques are also discussed to improve the likelihood of success for the angler. This reference is of value to anyone with an interest in ponds and fishing! "Producing Fish and Wildlife From Kansas Ponds" can be found on the KDWPT web site at: <http://ksoutdoors.com/Fishing/Special-Fishing-Programs-for-You/Pond-Management-Program/Producing-Fish-and-Wildlife-in-Kansas-Ponds>. Additional fisheries related assistance can be provided by contacting the District Fisheries Biologist assigned to your county. In Butler and Chase Counties, contact Craig Johnson at #316/322-7513. In Morris County, contact John Reinke at #785/461-5095.



### **How Does Your Gobbler Measure Up?**

Ever wonder how the wild turkey that you tagged this spring compares to the one that a family member or friend was fortunate to harvest? Was it big enough to be recognized as a "trophy?" Want a neat keepsake from that memorable hunt? For those with an interest in placing a number on their harvest, information about scoring your Kansas wild turkey can be found on the KDWPT website. Birds that meet minimum scoring requirements of 65 points are eligible to receive a "Trophy Turkey Award" from KDWPT. Scoring your Kansas bird is a simple process. Simply visit the KDWPT web site at: <http://ksoutdoors.com/Hunting/What-to-Hunt/Turkey> to download an application and instruction form. A bird's score is reached by adding measurements of weight, beard, and spur lengths. Instructions from the form indicate that weight must be determined from an accurate scale and verified by two witnesses. Beard and spur lengths must be measured to the nearest eighth of an inch. Each beard is measured at the point of protrusion from the skin to the end of the longest bristle. Each spur is measured to its longest straight or curved length from a point where the hard spur protrudes from the scaled leg skin. The total score is arrived at by adding the weight to the sum of the beard lengths multiplied by two and the sum of the spur lengths multiplied by ten. Separate records are kept for typical and non-typical gobblers. A gobbler is considered non-typical if it has multiple beards or spurs. For those interested in viewing scores from some of the biggest gobblers taken in Kansas, the website also maintains a listing of the Top 20 reported to the program. If you haven't harvested yet, there's still plenty of spring season remaining!



## **Morel Mushroom Hunting Tips**

Spring is morel mushroom time! Increasingly more visitors to public lands surrounding El Dorado Lake are seeking this delicious member of our Kansas flora. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP) remind hunters of a few tips for a legal, safe and fun mushroom hunt:

Hunters should do their research prior to consuming any mushrooms as some forms found in Kansas can be toxic.



Stick to parks and wildlife areas surrounding the lake. Nearby Walk-In Hunting Access (WIHA) areas are not open for mushroom hunting. These lands are private property and accessing them for anything other than hunting game during the identified access period is trespass unless hunters have the appropriate landowner permission.

Be prepared to walk. The use of motorized vehicles on public lands is restricted to maintained roads only, so if your mushroom honey-hole is off the beaten-path, strap on those hiking boots.

Be aware of your surroundings. Public lands are open for many types of hunting and fishing activities. This time of year, mushroom hunters can expect to encounter turkey hunters and anglers looking to lure in white bass and crappie. There's plenty of space for everyone, so when in doubt, move to another spot.

Enjoy your harvest. Mushrooms found on public lands may only be harvested for personal consumption and selling mushrooms harvested from USACE or KDWP-managed lands is against federal and state regulations (see Title 36, Section 327.18 and K.A.R. 15-8-20). You've worked hard for your harvest, so enjoy the fruits of your labor and heat up a frying pan.

Visitors interested in learning more about recreational opportunities at El Dorado Lake can contact the El Dorado State Park at #316/321-7180 or El Dorado Wildlife Area at #620/767-5900.



Get some kids outside and explore the natural wonders of spring in outdoor Kansas!

Would you like more information about the El Dorado Wildlife Area?

Please contact:

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