

# New Strawn District Fisheries News

Summer 2013

Woodson Wildlife Area, 738 Fegan Rd., Toronto, KS 66777  
www.kdwpt.state.ks.us justin.morrison@ksoutdoors.com Office: 620-637-2748

## Springtime Electrofishing

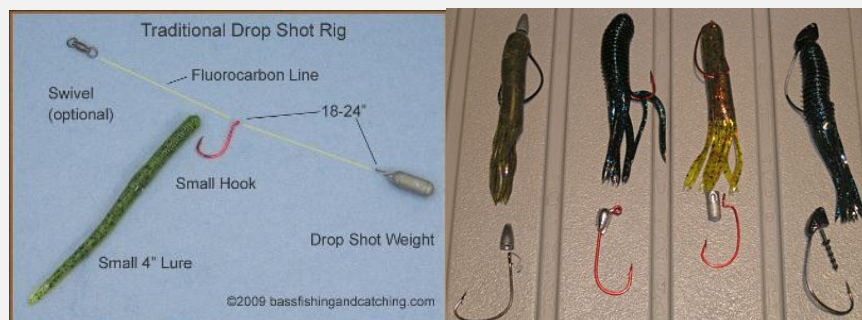
### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Coffey County Electrofishing Results
- 2 Woodson State Lake
- 3 Garnett Cedar Creek Reservoir
- 4 Summertime Cats
- 5 John Redmond Reallocation
- 6 John Redmond Paddlefish

This spring was my first opportunity to sample my district lakes for largemouth bass, since I was hired last year as the district fisheries biologist for this district. Luckily we had some good springtime rains that filled the lakes up and I was able to get a boat on every lake I wanted to. In the following section I will talk about a few of the lakes that I feel have the best bass fishing.

### Coffey County Lake

The smallmouth bass are doing excellent at Coffey County. We caught a total of 95 smallmouth which resulted in a catch rate of 66 stock sized fish or larger per hour. A seven inch long smallmouth is considered stock size. This is the highest catch rate and total catch we have seen in a five year span. The largest fish we sampled weighed 2.62 lbs. and was 18" long. The sample indicates that there is approximately an equal distribution of stock size fish (7"), quality size (11"), and preferred size (14") with all three size classes contributing 31-32% of the sampled population. The rest of the sampled population (3.66%) was represented by memorable size fish (17"-18"). The highest catch rate of the sample occurred at the southern end of the lake along the rip rap of the dam. We also had a good catch rate along the long baffle dike.



Finesse rigs such as the drop shot rig (above left) and a 4" tube jig (above right) should be go to baits at Coffey County for good smallmouth fishing when they are not hitting spinnerbaits or jerkbaits.



Both of these fish were sampled at Coffey County Lake. The smallmouth was the largest of the day, and the wiper was just an overall nice fish about 5 lbs.

## Woodson State Fishing Lake

The largemouth bass at Woodson continue to improve even though the electrofishing data does not suggest that. This year only one netter was available to assist me with the sample which resulted in several bass being missed. Those bass that got away really hurt the catch rate. However, from the data we got and the observation of all the fish we missed, I can confidently say that the bass numbers are remaining consistent and slightly improving. The largest fish of our sample was just over 4 lbs. The majority of the fish we sampled were 12-15", but there was an increase from the previous sample of 15-20" fish. With the heavy rains in late July and early August the lake has completely filled up. If the lake level can stay up and maximize the available shoreline habitat, the YOY largemouth should grow well and contribute to the population.



This was the largest bass of the day at Woodson it weighed 4 lbs.



My lure choices for fishing flooded vegetation, such as the water willow at Woodson State Fishing Lake. These lures are very weedless and allow you to fish some real heavy cover.

## Garnett Cedar Creek Reservoir

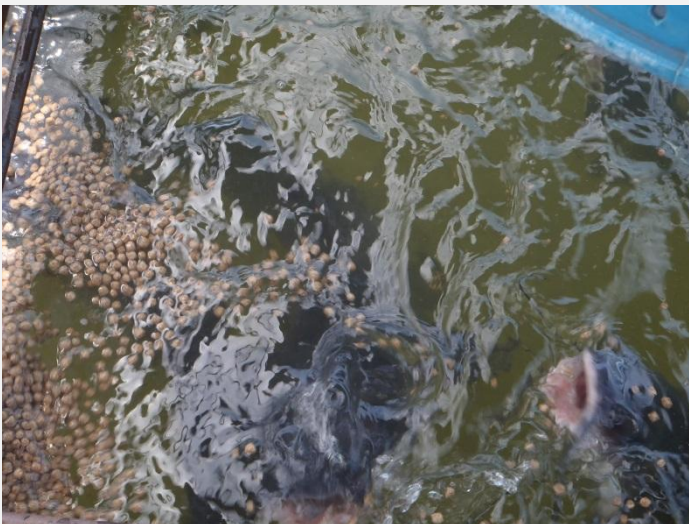
Cedar Creek Reservoir turned out to be a surprising sample. Our catch rate was not ideal for a spring sample and is indicative of a low density population of largemouth, but I was thoroughly pleased with the quality of the fish we did see.



As you can see from the pictures above, there are some nice fish in Cedar Creek. The bottom photo was the largest fish of the sample and tipped the scale at 6.35 lbs! The key to catching bass at this reservoir is timing. You will have the best luck if you can fish the lake when the water is not turbid, but this lake receives so much inflow from even small rain events the water is constantly changing from stained to turbid. Anglers seem to have the best luck fishing the creek arm in the upper end of the lake, but our biggest fish of the sample came from a small cove about mid lake.

## Summertime Cats

Summer is a great time to go fishing for some big channel cat. Channel catfish are one the most popular species of fish in the nation that people fish for. They are popular because they grow big, are easy to catch, and are great to eat. Many lakes in the state have fish feeders that help supplement the growth of channel cat, but they can also just be used for attracting fish. Fish feeders used as fish attractors dump small quantities of feed throughout the day to concentrate fish in one area providing the best opportunity for anglers to have a successful outing. If you have a lake nearby with a fish feeder go try your luck. All you need is some liver, dip bait, or other prepared bait, and I bet you will catch one in no time. If you don't like to fish for catfish, well it is still fun to watch them come in and feed. Here are some pictures I took at a fish feeder on Woodson State Lake.



The reallocation of the conservation pool of John Redmond from 1039 to 1041 was made official in May. This decision was made to help alleviate some of the water storage concerns that happened last year during the drought. The raising of the conservation pool two feet should benefit the fishery by providing necessary escape habitat to young sportfish.

## **John Redmond Paddlefish**

We stocked 2500 intermediate (10") paddlefish this summer above John Redmond at the Hartford boat ramp. This is a continued effort to maintain a paddlefish snagging area below John Redmond at the Burlington dam on the Neosho River. Paddlefish are a long lived species and it could take up to 10 years before a female paddlefish becomes sexually mature. Even when female paddlefish reach sexual maturity they do not spawn every year, instead it is thought they spawn every 2 or 3 years. A sexually mature female usually weighs around 30 lbs. Most fish that are caught around Burlington are still juveniles, but there have been a few reports of adult paddlefish being caught that weighed over 50 lbs. The last two paddlefish seasons have been poor due to almost no flow in the Neosho River impeding the usual spring migration of paddlefish upstream. Hopefully next spring will bring higher water levels and should produce better fishing opportunities. Below are pictures of the fish that we stocked.





Until next time! Now let's go fishing!

Questions or Comments?

Please contact Justin Morrison

Office: (620) 637-2748

E-Mail: [justin.morrison@ksoutdoors.com](mailto:justin.morrison@ksoutdoors.com)



