

# Kansas City District Fisheries Newsletter

## Summer 2020

### Biologist's Notes

I struggle to find much about this past summer or the year 2020 in general that I would call typical. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed just about every facet of our normal lives. While society continues to adjust to social distancing and best practices to keep ourselves healthy, many individuals have turned to the outdoors as safe form of recreation and an escape to at least some form of normalcy.

This past spring and summer anglers flocked to our waterbodies and early anecdotal evidence indicates that angling pressure was high for many waterbodies in the state. Luckily, anglers were met with some fantastic fishing opportunities. At most of the reservoirs in the northeast part of the state, including Hillsdale, spring crappie fishing was phenomenal. Everybody was catching fish and many of the crappie exceeded 10 inches. At Hillsdale Reservoir the walleye bite was hot in May and June. I saw multiple social media reports of large walleye (> 20 inches) caught during that time. Channel catfish also provided great angling opportunities at numerous

waterbodies throughout the summer.

Some of this angling success can be attributed to more anglers and therefore more lines in the water, but a lot of it can also be attributed to the flooding this area experienced in 2019. Three major benefits that flood events provided fish populations were: flooded vegetation, which provided good habitat for spawning and survival for young-of-the-year fish, good growth and condition of fish due to increased nutrients fueling the bottom of the food chain, and decreased angling pressure that protected many fish from harvest allowing for another year of growth.

As we progress into the fall there are still many angling opportunities to be had. I hope everyone stays safe and healthy and is able to take advantage of some of these fall fishing opportunities. It can be good for both the mind and body to escape to a waterbody and spend some time fishing.



*Enjoying some of this year's great crappie fishing with the family.*

**"takemefishing"**

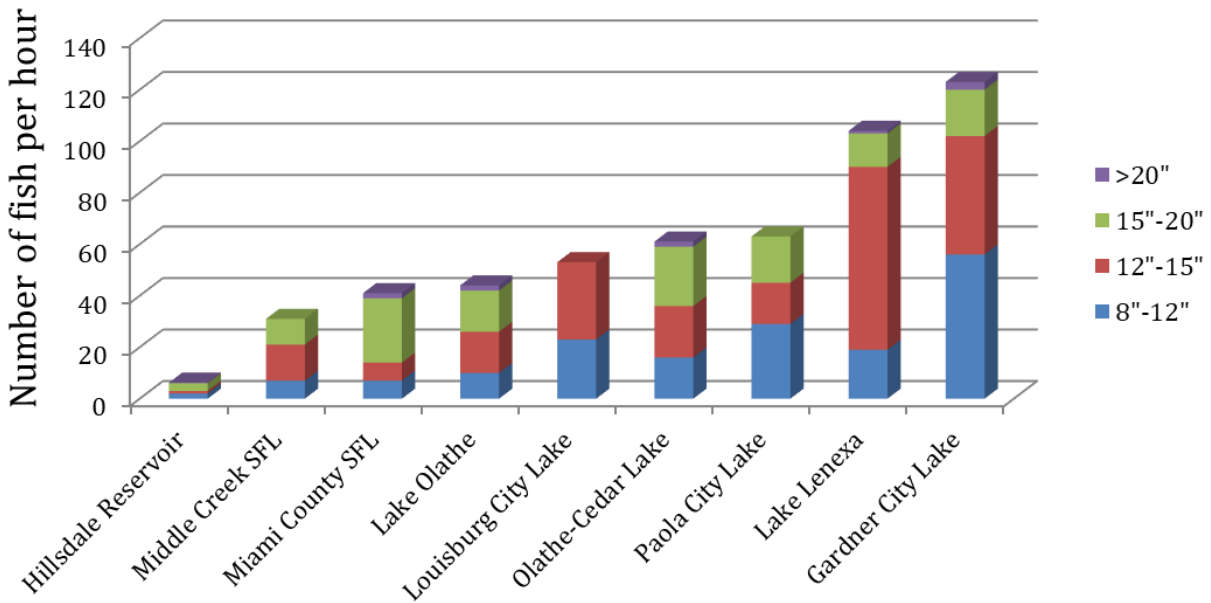


### Inside this issue:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Biologist's Notes   | 1 |
| 2020 KC District Largemouth Bass Sampling Summary               | 2 |
| Koi Herpes Virus Causes Common Carp Kill At Hillsdale Reservoir | 3 |

# 2020 Kansas City District Largemouth Bass Sampling Summary

Fisheries biologists use a variety of gear to sample fish depending on species, season, and environmental conditions. Every spring, district fisheries biologists around the state use electrofishing boats to assess black bass populations. Black bass sampling is conducted during the spring when the bass are in shallow waters and can be caught more efficiently. This sampling allows biologists to assess relative abundance, length structure, and condition of black bass populations. Below is the largemouth bass sampling summary for the Kansas City District in 2020. This information is a good guide to current largemouth bass populations at some area waterbodies. Gardner City Lake had the highest abundance, with a good distribution of sizes of largemouth bass available to be caught. Lake Lenexa currently has a great largemouth bass population, with a really high abundance of 12-15 inch fish. If you are seeking lunkers Olathe-Cedar Lake or Miami SFL would be your best bets. We sampled an impressive amount of fish > 15 inches, and several fish that exceeded 20 inches at Miami State Fishing Lake.



Healthy largemouth sampled at Miami SFL



20 inch largemouth bass sampled at Gardner City Lake

# Koi Herpes Virus Causes Common Carp Kill at Hillsdale Reservoir

Some of you may have observed the large-scale common carp die-off that occurred at Hillsdale Reservoir this summer. The first reports of dead carp were reported in late May, although field surveys were never able to confirm those reports. Further, a very high abundance of common carp was observed during spring sampling which coincided with the peak of common carp spawning. The next report occurred on June 7th and upon investigation on June 8th a large-scale common carp die-off was confirmed. Given that common carp appeared to be the only species affected by disease, Koi Herpes Virus was a suspected potential cause. Tissue samples were collected from live common carp on June 29th and sent to the Aquaculture and Fisheries Center at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff for testing. On July 24, test results arrived confirming the presence of Koi Herpes Virus. The die-off at Hillsdale Reservoir subsided around July 1st. Given the extended duration of the fish kill it is difficult to calculate the actual number of common carp killed, but it is estimated that >5,000 carp perished.

Koi Herpes Virus has been suspected in Kansas before, however this is the first time its presence has been confirmed through testing. Koi Herpes Virus is a DNA-based virus that stays with the infected fish for the duration of its life. Physical symptoms that can manifest in infected fish include patches of red, white or pale discoloration, bleeding gills, sunken eyes, or blistering. Transmission occurs from contact with infected fish, fluids from infected fish, contact with water or sediment that have come into contact with infected fish. Likely due to the timing of the die-off, the spawning season added stress on the fish and potentially made the fish more susceptible to the disease. The virus only affects Koi and common carp, with no documented effects on other fish species, mammals, or humans.

A substantial number of common carp were affected by this virus although subsequent sampling has revealed that a viable population of common carp is still present at Hillsdale. Future population monitoring efforts will help determine large-scale effects of the virus on the carp population.



*A diseased common carp used in tissue sampling at Hillsdale Reservoir*

**We're on the web!**

[www.ksoutdoors.com](http://www.ksoutdoors.com)



**KDWPT**  
Fisheries Biologist  
Luke Kowalewski  
8304 Hedge Lane Terrace  
Shawnee, KS 66227  
Phone: 913-422-1314