

# KANSAS CITY DISTRICT FISHING NEWSLETTER

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## Special Points of Interest:

- *Fishing forecast helps anglers choose fishing locations*
- *Lake mapping a useful tool for biologists and anglers alike*
- *Great fishing opportunities await at Lake Lenexa*

## BIOLOGIST NOTES

Welcome readers to 2014! Warmer weather is upon us and it's time to wet a line again. To assist you in deciding where to wet a line this spring, I have included my 2014 fishing forecast for the Kansas City district waters in this issue. This information is based on data collected during spring electrofishing and fall test netting surveys. Fall test netting went pretty well last fall. It started out pretty warm, but it was pretty cold towards the end of sampling. Regardless, the numbers are in and hopefully this information will help you choose your fishing spots. If you want additional information, feel free to contact me at anytime via phone or e-mail. My seasonal employees and I wrapped up the 2013 aquatic education events last November. In 2013, we conducted 42 aquatic education events and we had just over 1,507 participants. The aquatic education events take up a lot of our time especially during the summer, but I am convinced this is time well spent. Since KDWPT has limited staff to conduct aquatic education events, a new program was started in 2013 to recruit additional fishing in-

structors for fishing clinics and other events. KDWPT partnered with the Fishing's Future Foundation to certify individuals interested in fishing and teaching fishing skills to children. The volunteer instructors go through a 4 hour course and must pass a background check. The instructors can then checkout fishing equipment and other teaching materials from KDWPT offices and teach aquatic education events on their own. KDWPT held three courses so far to certify instructors and one of them was held at the Olathe Bass Pro Shops last November. We intend to have more courses in 2014, so if you are interested in teaching fishing skills to children, be on the lookout for the next course. In addition to our standard fish population sampling, I volunteered myself and my seasonal employees to assist with blue catfish sampling last summer. Although I don't have any blue catfish in my district waters, my staff and I assisted the Lawrence District Fisheries Biologist, Richard Sanders, with his blue catfish sampling at Clinton Reservoir and Melvern Reservoir. Richard has some very nice blue catfish in his

waters including the one Amber is holding in the picture below. We also did some lake mapping at Louisburg City Lake last summer. You can read more about that project later in this issue. I am feverishly getting ready for spring projects. The walleye egg collection project and the early-spawn largemouth bass project will be continued at Hillsdale Reservoir this spring. I am also planning to make some habitat improvements at a couple lakes and hopefully another lake mapping project. Stay tuned for updates on those projects and more! Good luck and good fishing in 2014!



*My seasonal employee, Amber, with a nice blue catfish captured while assisting with blue catfish sampling at Clinton Reservoir.*





*Victor and Brian (Americorps volunteers) with a nice walleye from Hillsdale Reservoir captured during fall test netting.*

## 2014 KANSAS CITY DISTRICT FISHING FORECAST

**Lake Lenexa:** Spring electrofishing indicated that the largemouth bass population continues to excel at this location. Although the population is high density, some larger bass are available to anglers as our largest bass captured was 6.1 lbs. Catch rate of crappie continues to be low, however we captured more crappie in 2013 than in previous years. The crappie were all 8-10 inches in length. The bluegill population is dominated by many small individuals. There are some larger bluegill (8+ inches) and some nice redear sunfish in Lake Lenexa as well. Lake Lenexa would be a good location to take a kid fishing!

**Cedar Lake:** Catch rate of largemouth bass increased in 2013 to 84 fish/hr of electrofishing. Some large bass are available to anglers as our largest bass captured was 4.75 lbs. Crappie size structure was dominated by smaller individuals, but some larger crappie (12+ inches) are also available. Good numbers of channel catfish were also captured during fall netting and some larger catfish are available to anglers.

**Gardner City Lake:** Spring electrofishing indicated a high density largemouth bass population with a catch rate of 157 fish/hr of electrofishing. We observed an increased in the number of bass over 15 inches in 2013, so hopefully that is a sign of rebound from largemouth bass virus. Catch rates of channel catfish and saugeye were low in 2013, but size structure was dominated by larger individuals.

**Lake Olathe:** Catch rate of largemouth bass was 135 fish/hr of electrofishing indicating a good abundance of bass. Fall netting indicated a good abundance of wiper with a catch rate of 10 fish/net night. Some large (19+ inches) wiper should be available to anglers in 2014. The crappie population shows signs of improvement with 29% of the overall catch over 10 inches in length.

**Paola City Lake (Lake Miola):** A moderate number of crappie were captured during fall netting. Crappie size structure was dominated by individuals within the 8-10 inch length range, but 38% of the overall catch was over 10 inches in length. Good numbers of wiper and channel catfish were also captured during fall netting and good angling opportunities for wiper and channel catfish are expected for 2014.

**Middle Creek State Fishing Lake:** Catch rate of white crappie increased in 2013. Some large crappie are available to anglers as 6% of the overall catch was over 12 inches in length. Good numbers of channel catfish were captured during fall netting in 2013. A limited number of saugeye were captured during fall netting, but the size structure was dominated by large individuals.

**Miami State Fishing Lake:** Spring electrofishing indicated a high density largemouth bass population with a catch rate of 208 fish/hr of electrofishing. The biggest bass captured was 3 lbs. A protected slot limit will go into effect in 2014. Good numbers of bluegill were captured during fall netting.

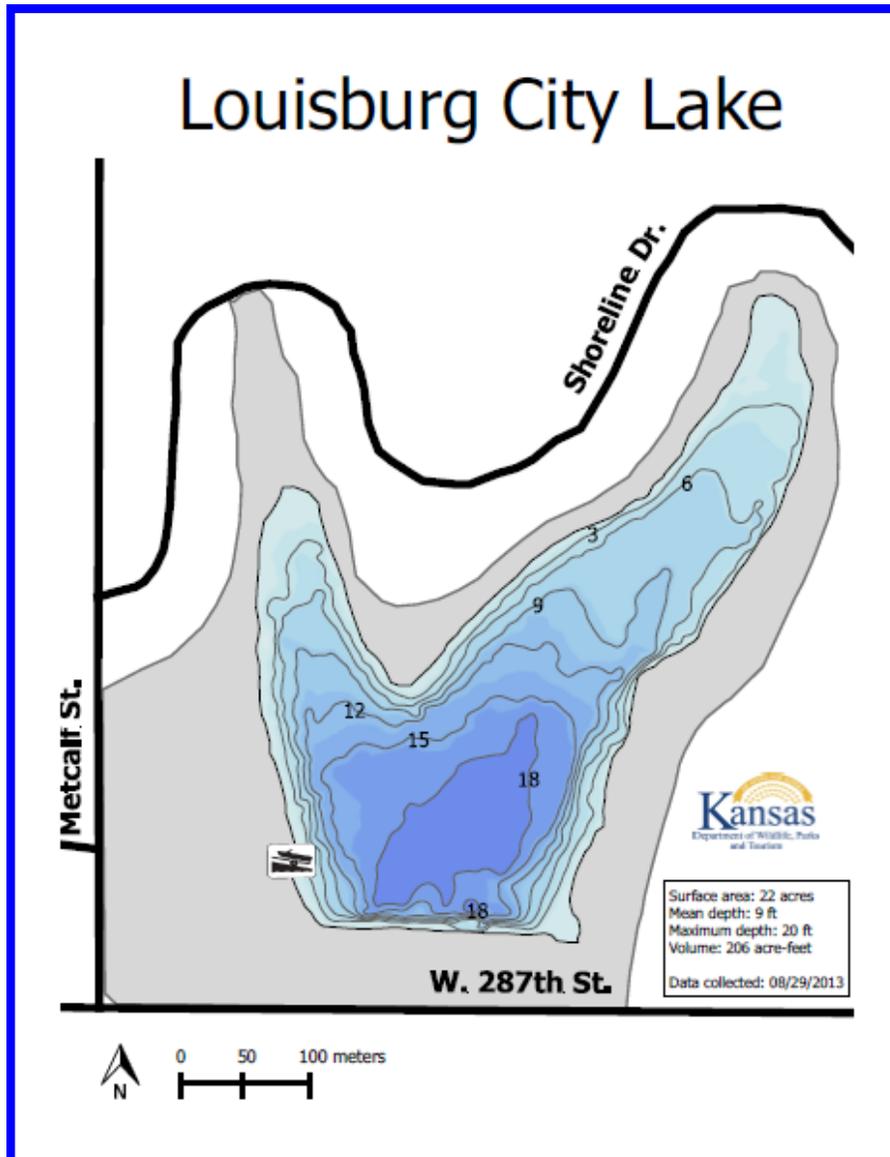
**Osawatomie City Lake:** Spring electrofishing indicated a very high density largemouth bass population with a catch rate of 370 fish/hr of electrofishing. A protected slot limit is in effect and harvest of bass <13 inches in length is encouraged. Good number of redear sunfish were captured during fall netting and some large (9-11 inches) redear sunfish are available to anglers.

**Hillsdale Reservoir:** Catch rate of white crappie was 52 fish/net night in 2013. Good numbers of white bass were captured during fall netting. Most of the white bass were 12-15 inches in length. Spring electrofishing indicated a low abundance of largemouth bass in 2013 (catch rate = 10 fish/hr of electrofishing). However, some large bass are available to anglers as our biggest bass captured was 5 lbs. A project aimed at improving the bass population will be continued in 2014. Disease testing was conducted on the fish population at Hillsdale during fall netting and all tests were negative for diseases.



*Crappies captured at Lake Lenexa during fall test netting in 2013*

## Tools of the trade: Lake mapping is a useful tool for biologists and anglers



*Louisburg City Lake*

In the fisheries profession, we have to use a variety of tools to perform our job duties. I became more familiar with lake mapping applications this past summer as we mapped Louisburg City Lake. The process was much simpler than I had anticipated. I invited the Independence District Fisheries Biologist, Ben Neely, up to my district to show me how he uses a depthfinder and lake mapping software to map the lakes in his district. We used a Lowrance® HDS-5 depthfinder that continuously takes a depth reading with a corresponding GPS location. We drove slowly around the lake a couple of times to get the outline of the lake and then we drove transects back and forth across the lake until we covered

the entire lake. It took us about 2 hours to complete the data collection. Ben went back to his office and downloaded the data from the depthfinder into a mapping software program. As you can see above the product of this is a very nice depth contour map of Louisburg City Lake. So, what is the benefit of having a depth contour map? As a biologist, the map helps identify areas of lake for concern such as sections of the shoreline that are getting very shallow. We can look at these areas and determine if measures to prevent shoreline erosion need to be enacted to prevent the lake from filling in. We can also identify areas of the lake that would benefit from a dredging project. Dredging projects are very expensive and it is important to have baseline data to gain support and potentially financial assistance for a lake dredging project. Lake maps can also be useful to anglers. In reservoirs and some large impoundments, lake maps can help identify locations of creek channels, humps or ledges along the bottom of the lake where fish may hide. In smaller water bodies, lake maps may help identify deep areas of the lake where fish may hide during particular times of the year such as the summer. I'm glad Ben took the time to teach me more about lake mapping and I am hoping that I can create more lake maps of some of the waters in the Kansas City District. Some locations have already been mapped for different purposes by other agencies and some of these lake maps are available to anglers. There are some lake maps available from the Kansas Biological Survey/University of Kansas's Applied Science and Technology for Reservoir Assessment website at [astra.ku.edu/reservoirs](http://astra.ku.edu/reservoirs).

## CFAP STORIES: GREAT OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT AT LAKE LENEXA

Lake Lenexa is a 35-acre lake located within the 160-acre Black Hoof Park in western Lenexa. The park is located on Monticello Road between 93rd St and Monticello. Lake Lenexa was opened to fishing in May 2009 and it has developed into a great fishery within the past five years. If you like to fish for largemouth bass, you better make Lake Lenexa one of your fishing destinations in 2014. There are good numbers of largemouth bass in Lake Lenexa. There are many small bass, but there are some good-sized bass as well (See picture of 6 lb. Lake Lenexa bass at right). In addition to the bass population, the bluegill population is also thriving. There are many bluegill less than 6 inches making this lake a great place to take a kid fishing. The small bluegill will provide lots of action for a young angler and there is a chance to catch some bluegill over 8 inches. Lake Lenexa is also included in KDWP's urban fishing program. Under this program, the lake is stocked with 0.75-1.5 lb. channel catfish twice per month from April to September. Black crappies were also stocked in this lake, but the population has been slow to develop. The lake is open to boating, however, gas powered motors are prohibited, so be sure to charge up the battery for the trolling motor. Lake Lenexa is also listed as a "family friendly facility" since the park has security lighting, restroom facilities, and playground equipment for when the fish won't cooperate. The park and lake were designed with great innovation. One of the impressive features of the lake design is the dam and outlet area. Check out this video filmed using a drone that provides a birds-eye view of the lake and highlights the unique dam and spillway <http://vimeo.com/82990417>



*A 6 lb. largemouth bass captured during spring electrofishing at Lake Lenexa.*

## ZEBRA MUSSELS ON THE MOVE IN 2013

It is unfortunate news that four lakes were discovered to contain zebra mussels in 2013. Zebra mussels were found in Lake Shawnee, Lake Wabaunsee, Glen Elder Reservoir (Waconda Lake), and Clinton Reservoir in 2013. This increases the zebra mussel infested lake list to 22 Kansas lakes. The close proximity and high use of Clinton Reservoir to the Kansas City metropolitan area increases the risk of Kansas City waters becoming infested. Zebra mussels are a serious threat to aquatic wildlife. There is no known method to rid a lake of zebra mussels once it becomes infested. Prevention is the best method to avoid spreading zebra mussels and other aquatic nuisance species (ANS). Some simple precautions include:

- Clean, Drain, and Dry all boats and equipment after use. Keep your boat in dry storage for 5 days between use. If you wish to use your boat within five days, wash the boat in 140 degree Fahrenheit hot water or in a 10% chlorine solution to kill any potential zebra mussel larvae.
- Use wild caught bait only on the lake where it was caught.
- Do not move live fish from waters containing zebra mussels or other aquatic nuisance species.
- Drain all livewells, bilges, and remove drain plug from your boat before traveling on a public highway.

Remember that there are additional regulations for ANS designated waters. Be sure to consult the *2014 Fishing Regulations Summary* for a list of these regulations.



*Zebra mussels from Wyandotte Co. Lake. These were discovered in the fall of 2012.*



*Zebra mussels attached to a prop of an outboard motor.*