



Otter Lake 2007



Otter Lake is a 7-acre impoundment located along the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway in Amherst County. The only facilities available at this lake are a handicap access fishing pier and parking. Anglers are prohibited from using live bait or boats.

The fish populations have changed dramatically with the introduction of largemouth bass in recent years. The only species of bass collected prior to 2000 were smallmouth bass and rock bass. Smallmouth bass are still present in the lake, but largemouth bass have become the dominant predator. Largemouth bass were collected up to 19 inches and were expected to do well since there was a very high density of bluegill providing abundant forage. The number of smallmouth bass is not expected to contribute substantially to the fishery given their past poor performance and the increased competition with largemouth bass.

Dam repairs requiring a lake drawdown in 2005 resulted in the removal of most adult fish. However, there are still adequate numbers young fish available to restore the fishery. It will be several years before this fishery produces good bass fishing again. Most bass collected in the spring of 2006 were 4-9 inches in length. The sunfish population is dominated by bluegill, but redbreast sunfish are also available in much lower numbers. Most sunfish in 2006 were 4-5 inches in length.

Bass are protected with a catch and release only regulation while the remaining species are governed by statewide regulations.

The lake can be accessed by turning north on the Blue Ridge Parkway from Rt. 501 in Big Island, Virginia. The lake will be on your right just after crossing the James River.

