

Fish Stocking

A basic overview

What use do you have for your pond?

What are your goals for fish?

- ▶ Depending on what you want from your pond, you can choose the appropriate stocking combination.
 - ▶ Sport fishing
 - ▶ Balanced sunfish / bass
 - ▶ Trophy bass
 - ▶ catfish
 - ▶ Swimming pond
 - ▶ Weed Control

Is the pond a new, renovated, or existing?

New ponds need to have at least 5' of water in them before stocking.

Always stock ponds with fish from a commercially licensed fish supplier.

Stock pond with appropriate mix of fish for what you want out of the pond.

Provide habitat for the fish you are stocking.

Existing ponds should be assessed before stocking.

- Use seine net to sample fish
- Utilize a angling log to record what is caught. Note species, size, condition



Figure 1. Drag seines along the shoreline then pull the seine onto shore to count the fish.

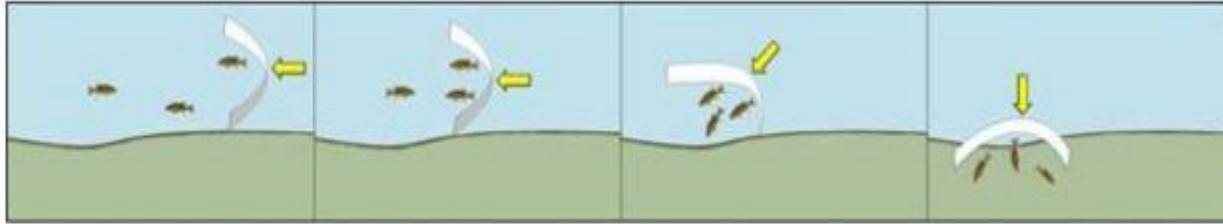


Table 1. Fish population status based on seine and angler catch data.

Population Status	Seine Data	Angler Catch Data
Balanced population	Many recently hatched bluegill (< 2 inches) Some intermediate sized bluegill (2 to 4 inches) Some recently hatched bass (1 to 4 inches)	Bass and bluegill of various sizes
Bluegill crowded	No or very few recently hatched bluegill Many intermediate sized bluegill No recently hatched bass	Bass average size is large (> 15 inches) but catch rates are low; numerous bluegill but most are small (< 6 inches)
Bass crowded	Many recently hatched bluegill No or very few intermediate sized bluegill No or very few recently hatched bass	Bass average size is small and thin (< 12 inches) but catch rates are high; bluegill are few but large (> 8 inches)

https://fw.ky.gov/Fish/PublishingImages/FPM_Seine_Fig1_Table1.JPG

When to stock?

Stocking should be done either spring or fall when the water temperatures are less than 65 degrees.

Handling stress is reduced with lower water temperatures and will result in less mortality



Species to stock in Ohio

Largemouth Bass

- ▶ Effective predator for warm water ponds
- ▶ Reproduce well in ponds, reducing the need for supplemental stocking
- ▶ Diet of mainly forage fish and crayfish

Bluegill sunfish

- ▶ Forage fish for largemouth bass as well as sport fish
- ▶ Reproduce well in ponds
- ▶ Can overpopulate if there are not sufficient bass and/or pond becomes choked with vegetation
- ▶ Young eat phytoplankton & zooplankton, adults eat insects, fish eggs, small fish

Redear Sunfish

- ▶ Alternative to Bluegill
 - ▶ Can grow larger than bluegill
 - ▶ Less likely to nip at swimmers
 - ▶ Produce fewer young, reduced probability of overpopulation
- ▶ Eat snails, phytoplankton, zooplankton, insects, small fish

Channel Catfish

- ▶ Grow well in ponds
- ▶ Can stir up sediment in shallow ponds
- ▶ Will not reproduce in ponds unless breeding containers are provided (no overpopulation)
- ▶ Eat insects, fish, crayfish

Fathead minnow

- ▶ Forage fish for larger predators
- ▶ Spawn multiple times a year between spring and fall once water temperatures reach 64F.
- ▶ Eat phytoplankton and zooplankton

Triploid Grass Carp

- ▶ Certified sterile by U.S. Fish & Wildlife
- ▶ Natural alternative for aquatic vegetation control
- ▶ May have to provide artificial fish habitat to provide cover if they eat all of the vegetation