

Locust Lake

Schuylkill County

2023 Trap Net Survey



Area 6 Fisheries Manager Mike Porta with a large Bluegill (right hand) and Pumpkinseed (left hand) collected from Locust Lake during September 2023.

Locust Lake is a scenic 52-acre reservoir located in [Locust Lake State Park](#), Schuylkill County. The reservoir is an impoundment of Locust Creek and is located upstream of Tuscarora Lake. The lake is unproductive (i.e., nutrient limited) and supports a simple fish community. The PFBC primarily manages Locust Lake as a stocked trout fishery, so hatchery trout are stocked each spring and winter to provide fishing opportunities. In fall 2023, PFBC Fisheries Management Area 6 staff conducted a trap net survey to sample fish populations in Locust Lake.

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On September 28 and 29, 2023, five Pennsylvania trap nets were set at sites throughout the lake and fished for approximately 24 hours. A total of 49 fish were captured (Table 1). Bluegill (21 fish) and Pumpkinseed (16 fish) were captured at the highest numbers. Although the abundance was low, the size structure of these species was impressive. More than half (57%) of the Bluegills and most (94%) of the Pumpkinseeds were seven inches long or longer; with one Bluegill in the sample measuring over 10 inches. Other species encountered during the survey include Largemouth Bass, hatchery Brown and Rainbow trout, and hybrid sunfish. The capture of hatchery trout during this survey suggests that these fish are capable of surviving through the summer months in Locust Lake.

Table 1. Length-frequency distribution of species caught in trap nets at Locust Lake, 2023.

Length (in)	Species					
	Rainbow Trout <i>hatchery</i>	Brown Trout <i>hatchery</i>	Pumpkinseed	Bluegill	hybrid sunfish	Largemouth Bass
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	1	0	0
3	0	0	0	1	1	2
4	0	0	0	4	0	1
5	0	0	0	3	0	0
6	0	0	1	0	0	0
7	0	0	2	2	0	0
8	0	0	9	2	0	0
9	0	0	4	6	0	0
10	1	0	0	2	0	0
11	0	4	0	0	0	0
12	1	0	0	0	0	0
13	0	1	0	0	0	0
14	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3	5	16	21	1	3

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Locust Lake provides anglers with exceptional fishing opportunities for large sunfish and stocked trout. The winter stocking of Rainbow Trout may also provide ice fishing opportunities, depending on ice conditions. Anglers are reminded to check for adequate ice thickness before attempting to ice fish. Open shoreline access is limited to the eastern side of the lake near the dam; however, there are trails around the entire perimeter of the lake, giving anglers the ability to get off the trail and fish anywhere on the lake. There are two boat ramps, one each on the north and south sides of the dam, and boating is limited to unpowered- or electric motor-powered boats only.

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