

Fishing

Can I eat the fish?

The most accurate answer is this: if the water running into your lake is clean, then your fish will be healthy and safe to eat. If your neighbor is pouring toxic chemicals into the lake then your fish might have three eyes. Fish toxicology research throughout Florida demonstrated that most neighborhood ponds produce healthy fish. I recommend viewing the Florida Department of Environmental Protection or the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission websites for further information.

Children and supervision

Fishing can be a delightful activity shared between parents and children. Given the fact that we live in an area where alligators live, keep close supervision on children until you are confident that they are capable of taking care of themselves. This is usually when they are about 42 years old.

Falling in

Most lakes in the Sarasota / Manatee area are man-made stormwater ponds. The slopes along the shore are sometimes a little steep, but are usually manageable. The slope on newer ponds is usually less steep & easier to walk around. While millions of people fall in stormwater ponds every year, you don't want to be the one who falls in, on top of a big gator. So, please watch your step.

What fish live in our lake?

Sport fish

Most lakes larger than half an acre can support largemouth bass, bluegill, sunfish and catfish. This common grouping of sport fish compliments each other and often maintains healthy populations of each species. (An acre is about 210' x 210'.)

How big will the fish get?

Our lakes are very productive. Six to ten pound bass are common. A one-acre lake can produce well over 500 pounds of fish each year.

Little fish

Most ponds support mosquito fish (*gambusia*), sail fin mollies and killifish. These little fish are 1 – 2" long and control mosquitoes. They are prolific breeders and provide food for many of the birds that walk around your lake.

What do fish need to thrive?

Like any other animal, fish need protective shelter, a place to nest or breed and food. Aquatic plants like lilies and shoreline plants make your lake more hospitable for fish. Shoreline plantings such as Golden canna, Arrowhead, Pickerelweed & rushes fish as well as frogs & dragonflies. You will see herons and egrets more frequently if the shore is more natural.

Can I feed the fish?

Feeding fish usually doesn't make them grow faster, unless you follow commercial aquaculture guidelines. Feeding fish usually trains the fish to visit your part of the lake, especially if you feed them at the same time each day.

Use scientifically formulated fish food, such as Purina fish chow, available at feed stores. Please discontinue feeding if Mr. Alligator visits.

For more information about any lake or pond topic, contact Beautiful Ponds at (941) 488-1942 or ServiceBeautifulPonds.com. We manage lakes and stormwater ponds.

In general, stormwater ponds were not designed with fishing in mind. You need to make your own best judgment about fishing in the lake behind your home. Neighborhood lakes are community areas. Please respect your neighbors' desire for privacy.

For more questions about fish in your pond or fish stocking feel free to call our office.

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