



The DAM NEWSLETTER

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Founded in 1996

PSBA Cooperative Nursery Has Successful Year

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The Pennsylvania Striped Bass Association (PSBA) is well on their way to aiding in the sustainability of the striped bass population in Raystown Lake. As some folks may not be aware, striped bass do not naturally occur in the man-made Raystown Lake, nor are they capable of natural reproduction. While the PSBA has been able to prove that there are both fertile female and male striped bass within the lake, the correct environmental conditions aren't present for reproduction. While Raystown has excellent water quality, striped bass require hard water with a

higher alkalinity than what is present in Raystown Lake.

As striped bass are a huge draw for fisherman, the pressure on the population is intense. Currently, the PA Fish & Boat commission is able to stock approximately 100,000 fry into the lake annually. The PSBA has a goal to augment that stocking by artificially reproducing striped bass or raising a portion of what is typically stocked at 1 inch in size to approximately 3 to 4 inches to improve the likelihood that they will survive.

Photo: Just one of the tank systems used to hold adult striped bass for spawning.



**AN ISSUE DEDICATED
TO THE LAKE
.....AND IT'S FISH!**

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Captain's Quarters

As the summer is winding down, FRL focused this issue on the fishing side of Raystown Lake. Some of the fun effects of fish stocking can be seen in areas of the lake where Bald Eagles reside. It is outstanding to watch them fish to feed themselves and their offspring. A lot of people boating on the lake enjoy themselves in spending a few hours fishing for bluegills. These panfish can give hours of fast action on a light rod and worms. At both marina's people enjoy feeding the schools of carp that reside there. FRL also builds fish structures that are placed in different areas of the lake to provide suitable habitat for young fish to have a safe place to mature. As the leaves start to turn there are plenty of opportunities to enjoy Raystown Lake when it is not quite so busy and spend a few hours as I say it "drowning worms." Enjoy the Fall!

Ron



Successful Year Continued.....

Beginning in 2016, the PSBA partnered with the Corps at Raystown and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission to launch their project. 2017 saw additional partner support through Juniata College, the Friends of Raystown Lake, the Huntingdon County Visitors Bureau and a Handshake Grant through the Corps to expand the project and the spawning/rearing options. This year, the PSBA was able to hatch their first live spawn. In addition, they successfully raised a small portion of the PAF&BC fry to almost 4 inches for stocking into the lake. The Friends of Raystown Lake want to CONGRATULATE the PSBA on their successful year and thank them for all of their support to the fishery of Raystown Lake!



Photo Above: Striped bass fry provided by the PAF&BC for the PSBA to raise to the larger size for increase survival rates.

Fishing Below the Dam

Have you ever considered fishing below the dam? Most people will say, “No”, they just heard the big fish are in the lake. If you are spending a few days at Raystown you may want to make the short drive to the area downstream of the Raystown Dam where walleye, lake trout, carp, channel catfish, muskie, and yes striped bass await.

A Few Tips From A Local Fishing Expert:

- 1 **Nighttime.** Go at night—especially during the summer. Warmer water temperatures during the day slow fishing activity, especially when the flow is low. The fish tend to become active at night and interested in your bait. 2
- 2 **Bait or Lure?** Both will work! If you are considering using some crayfish, make sure you are getting them local—we don’t want to spread the Rusty Crayfish—another invasive species. 3
- 3 **River Flows.** Fishing the river after a “high” flow usually increases activity and the fun. Just make sure it is safe to do so!



Common Carp



Photo Above: Members of the PSBA stock the striped bass from the photo above which were raised to almost 4 inches.



Walleye



Striped Bass (yes that big one is 36”!)

Know Before You Go

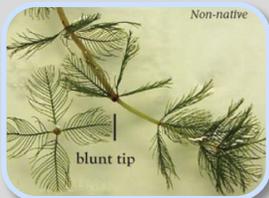
Now that you are surely tempted to try a new fishing spot, please know a few things before you go for your safety and to ensure that you are in line with the rules and regulations:

- 1 **Check Flows.** *You are fishing BELOW the DAM;* which means that there could be significant changes in flow from one day to the next. What might be “wade-able” one day, may have quite the current the next. Be sure to visit the Raystown Lake website at <http://www.nab-wc.usace.army.mil/nab/junipub.html> to see what the downstream flow is like before you go. While you are out there, if you should hear “the horn” you know that flows are going to change, please make sure to move to a safe location.
- 2 **Restricted Areas.** Know where you can go and where you can’t go. There is plenty of shoreline to fish downstream of the dam, just please make sure that you know and RESPECT the restricted areas around both the Raystown Dam outlets and the hydropower plant. If you are unsure, please contact the Ranger Office.
- 3 **Boating?** If you are planning on launching a kayak, canoe, or thinking about tubing, please know if you are required to have a permit or not. While you may launch from the Corbin’s Island Boat Launch without having a launch permit or registration for your canoe or kayak, you are NOT permitted to remove your vessel OR tube from the Point Access operated by the PAF&BC without one.

Aquatic Alien Invaders

Many folks are familiar with the term “Invasive Species” and we typically think of pests such as the gypsy moth, hemlock woolly adelgid, and the very destructive emerald ash borer. We might also be familiar with plants such as Japanese stilt grass or mile-a-minute as we can commonly see these around. However, the aquatic environment of Raystown Lake faces the same threat from invasive species as our land resources—folks are just less familiar with their damaging impact.

Eurasian Watermilfoil



This submerged aquatic invasive has stems that grow up to the water’s surface, usually 10 feet in length but potentially as much as 30 feet.



The delicate leaflets of the plant give it a feathery appearance. As in many aquatic invasive species, once this plant becomes established the dense

mats of leaves block light, leading to a decline in the abundance of native plants. Often, the dense mats result in reduced habitat for fish spawning and breeding and impact recreational uses for boating and swimming.

Hydrilla



It has been noted that Hydrilla should be considered nature’s “perfect weed” and one that unfortunately has become well established in Raystown Lake. Hydrilla is a submerged perennial aquatic plant that forms intertwined mats at the surface of the water from long and branching stems. These mats prevent the penetration of sunlight into the water and effectively shade out other species growing beneath. Additionally, these mats hinder flow rates, clog pipes in hydroelectric facilities, and impair recreational activities such as boating and swimming. To aid in slowing the spread, always remove all visible mud and plants before leaving a water body. Clean gear and equipment with either hot water (104°F), salt water, OR let dry thoroughly for 5 days. **Hydrilla is listed as a federal noxious weed in PA making it illegal to possess, distribute, or transport.**

Zebra Mussel



The zebra mussel is a small shellfish named for the striped pattern of its shell. It is typically found attached to objects, surfaces, or other mussels by threads extending from underneath the shells. So far, this mussel has not invaded Raystown Lake, however, it has been found in Pennsylvania in other Corps of Engineers lakes. **Zebra mussels can have profound negative effects on the ecosystem they invade, by consuming phytoplankton and filtering out beneficial bacteria which are critical parts of the food chain for many aquatic species.** Just as in hydrilla and Eurasian milfoil, properly cleaning vessels and equipment is the key to limiting the spread of the species.



Water Chestnut



We love Raystown and we know you do too! So while you are out there fishing and swimming—help Raystown by looking for the very invasive water chestnut. So far, this plant has not been found in Huntingdon County or in Raystown Lake, and **we DON’T WANT IT!**

This plant will have leaves that come in 2 distinct forms: floating and submersed. Floating leaves are triangular or fan-shaped with noticeably toothed margins on the outer edges. **Black nut-like structures have 4 spiny projections that are so sharp they are capable of penetrating shoe leather!**

Water chestnut has a high reproductive rate, with each plant producing up to 15 nuts per season. **Each nut can sink to the bottom and remain viable for up to 12 years.** It can also be spread when portions of the floating leaves break apart and fragments attach to boats and trailers or float to new locations.

The dense floating mats of water chestnut can choke a water body, limiting light and oxygen, and impede boating and other fun recreational activities. Also, colonies of this plant can outcompete native organisms for nutrients and space, while they offer little nutritional value for wildlife.



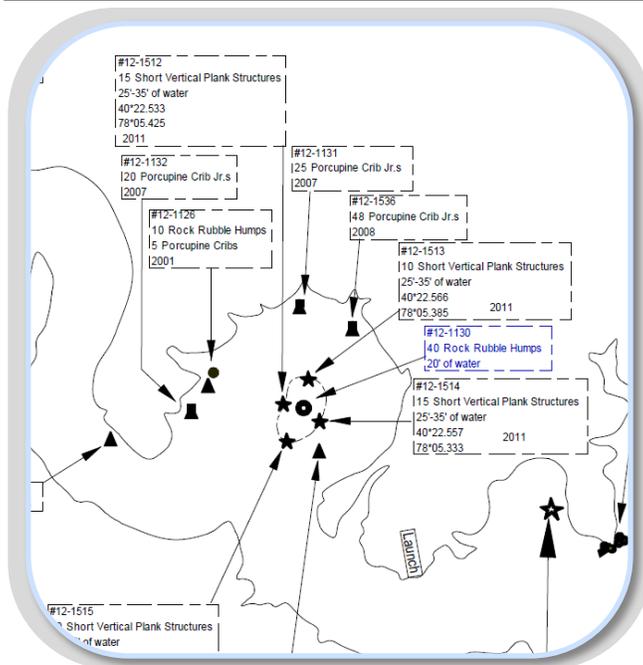
Upcoming Events

Fall is a busy season at Raystown Lake with plenty of things to do while enjoying the spectacular fall colors of the region. Here are a few upcoming events for your calendar:

- **September 14th: Friends of Raystown Lake Monthly Meeting.** Join the FRL for their monthly meeting held at Hoss's Steak and Sea House in Huntingdon. Meeting begins at 7:00PM.
- **September 23rd: National Public Lands Day.** Join the Raystown Lake Ranger Staff at the Visitor's Center for National Public Lands Day. Support and help YOUR public lands by participating in an event near you. The staff at Raystown will be eradicating invasive plant species and replacing them with native plant along the Hillside Nature Trail and Birding Area. Call the Ranger Office for more information!
- **October 12th: Friends of Raystown Lake Monthly Meeting.** See Above!
- **October 30th: Campgrounds Close.** It is that time of year where the campgrounds close for the winter....see you in the Spring!

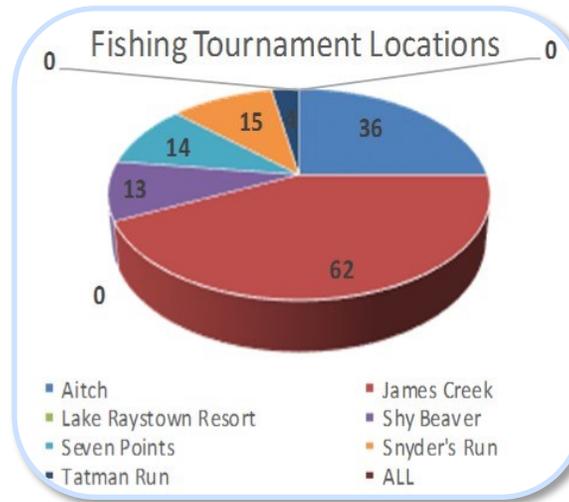


Building Fish Habitat



The Tournament Trail.....

Fishing can definitely be competitive. Sometimes you are just trying to match your personal best or sometimes you prefer to compete against others in that effort to land the next trophy fish of Raystown Lake. Each year Raystown is host to an average of 140 fishing tournament. These tournaments are classified as either "small" tournaments in which 49 boats or less will be competing (*of which over 90% of the tournaments on Raystown are considered small tournaments*) and "large tournaments in which there are 50 or greater boats competing. Often these tournaments are focused on fishing for largemouth, smallmouth, or striped bass; however, there is an occasional lake trout or carp fishing tournament. Raystown Staff also track which boat launches are most often used as the tournament launch and weigh in location. Since 1999, the James Creek Boat Launch has been the preferred location for nearly 50% (about 70



of the fishing tournaments held each year. On occasion both the Corps and the PAF&BC may use tournament results to aid biological data collection regarding the health of the fishery.

All fisherman know that the key to great fishing is to have great habitat. What many visitors fishing Raystown don't know is that the staff at Raystown Lake work closely with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission to construct and create habitat within the water body. During construction of the lake during the late 60's and early 70's, all of the vegetation (trees) were removed within a minimum of 20' of the shoreline. Unfortunately this is often the zone which hosts the most aquatic life. Each year, the Friends of Raystown Lake support Fish Structure Building Days in which the Corps and the PAF&BC construct and place artificial habitat into the lake. These structures act as refuge for small fish and a food source once algal growth begins on the wooden structures. To find out more information on where structures have been placed and on where future construction projects will occur, visit the PAF&BC website under habitat improvement to find a map of Raystown Lake along with many other lakes in the state.





Action on the Allegrippis

Wild and wet

Article provided by Brent Rader, RMBA

describes our summer here at the Allegrippis Trails. The constant rains have made keeping the trails in top shape a challenge. We've devoted more time to trimming brush this year than we ever have. We've also had to deal with a few problem wet spots where the trail crosses springs. Even with the extra work, it's been a great year to ride the trails.

One of the best parts of riding the trails is catching a glimpse of the lake below at one of the vistas. The most popular one is at the intersection of Ridge Trail, Berry Patch, and Rays Revenge. The view out over the Hawn's Bridge Peninsula from here is striking. There is also a great vista at the end of Allegheny trail.

One of our favorite trails, and the only one that gets you down to the water level, is Hydro Loop. It's a great place to take a dip and cool off in the summer, or to drop a line and spend a few moments trying to catch dinner! The flow of the trail makes it a worthy ride even if there wasn't the opportunity to splash in the water at the bottom.

Be sure to check out the trails this fall as well. The foliage is spectacular, and once the leaves drop, there are even more opportunities for viewing the lake from atop the ridges. Watch for updates, as we'll be working on several projects this fall including dealing with a problem wet spot on Locomotive Trail.

Photos: Views of the lake from the Allegrippis.



2017

Membership Application

Please complete this application and send it along with a check payable to:



Friends of Raystown Lake
PO Box 87
Hesston, Pa 16647



New Member Renewal

- Special Friend \$500 (lifetime)
- Individual Friend \$10/year
- Family Friend \$15/year
- Club / Organization Friend \$25/year
- Business Friend \$50/year
- Corporate Friend \$100/year

Extra Embroidered Patches: _____ @ \$3.00 each

Extra Decals: _____ @ \$1.00 each

Pins: _____ @ 5.00 each

Donation: _____

Please send my quarterly newsletter by email!

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Thank you!



Membership Reminder

The year 2017 membership dues have started! Our memberships are set up on a calendar basis—January through December. As you may know, the bulk of our operating budget comes from membership fees. Please help to keep FRL strong and renew your membership today.



Boat Sober OR Get Pulled OVER!

We all want sober drivers on the road; well that goes for the water too! The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has primary jurisdiction on the water and provides a tremendous effort to keep the boating users of Raystown Lake safe. Each year, the PAF&BC conducts Operation Dry Water, usually during National Safe Boat Week, to raise awareness of boating under the influence (BUI) activities. The PAF&BC also shares with us the results of their efforts during the peak boating season. For example, during 2016, the PAF&BC made 17 BUI apprehensions. In addition, they issued 280 Title 20 Boating Code Citations (which are typically for boating operation infractions and/or safety equipment violations), along with 9 Title 18 Crimes Code Citations/Arrests which include activities such as disorderly conduct, possession and consumption, and criminal trespass. Finally, the PAF&BC are responsible for investigating all reportable boat accidents. During 2016, there were 9 reportable boat accidents, which unfortunately has been the average for the past 10 years. Want to make sure that you are up on the boating regulations/guidelines? Stop by the Ranger Office to pick up your copy of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Boating Handbook or visit them online. There is always something new to learn that can help you stay safe on the water!



Wanna Fly a Drone?

While we are on the topic of law enforcement, are you interested in flying a drone over the lake to capture all the Raystown has to offer? Please know that the Corps of Engineers has very specific regulations regarding the use and operation of drones of Corps property (which means over the lake too!). Overall, you must receive a permit from the Corps in order to operate your drone. Stop by or call the Ranger Office at 814-658-6809 for more information!

Friends of Raystown Lake
P.O. Box 87
Hesston, Pa 16647

