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The Sunfish Family

This month we picture a few members of the very large sunfish family. Some members of this family, particularly the basses and the crappie are rated by sportsmen as being glamorous, while the bluegill and green sunfish are looked down upon as the family "drips." Thereby an injustice is done.

The green sunfish, for example, is just as gamey if not more so than either the basses or the crappies. Neither is it solely a small boy's fish, as many anglers declare. The small boy gets a thrill out of catching them, yes. And so will you if you fish for them. Considering their size, they are far more active than the bass. They are willing to bite from dawn to dusk and are not at all particular of their diet. They will strike at artificial lures as well as at worms, minnows, meat, grasshoppers or whatever is offered them, with a greediness scarcely excelled by any other member of their family.

Since these fish are very prolific they are to be found in great numbers in most of the waters of Kansas. When fully grown they seldom attain a size greater than your hand. They are a good pan fish, and when fried to a rich brown in butter or clean bacon grease, have a flavor that is equal to that of any other fish.

Blue Gills

As a pan fish the bluegill is not excelled by any other fish. Its flesh is firm, flaky and delicious. The anglers who are bluegill enthusiasts prefer using fly rods, but the bluegill can be taken on a variety of baits. Considering their size, the bluegills put up a stiff fight when such equipment is used. Although they bite at all times of the year they are particularly voracious from July to September. Look for bluegills in water from five to fifteen feet in depth.

The Drum

This fish, known by such other local names as Sheephead, Croker, Thunderpumper, White Perch and Gaspergou, is an important member of the fish life of Kansas. It is common in the streams of southeast Kansas.

They are propagated successfully at the State Fish Hatchery, consequently many of the state lakes have been stocked with them.

This fish, aside from its economic value, is particularly interesting because of its peculiar exercise of voice. It emits a grunting or drumming sound, according to fish authorities, during the mating season. It is not a perch as one of its common names would imply, although its flesh is similar to that of many members of the perch family. The drum belongs to the Sciaenidae or croaker family. It is a bottom feeder and can be caught on shrimp, crawdads and like baits. Drum has been known to attain a weight of fifty to sixty pounds in many rivers of the south. Those caught in Kansas, however, only attain about half that size.
Blue Gill or Bream

Belongs to sunfish family.
Common names: Dollardee, Blue Jog, Blue Perch.
Feeds on: Worms, crickets, grasshoppers, insects, and flies.
Female carries from 1,000 to 2,500 eggs at spawning time.

Black Bass

Belongs to sunfish family.
Feeds on: Minnows, frogs, crayfish, night crawlers, Dobson, insects and flies.
Female carries from 2,000 to 10,000 eggs at spawning time.

Calico Bass

Belongs to sunfish family.
Common names: Bar Fish, Lamplighter.
Feeds on: Minnows, insects, flies.
Female carries from 3,000 to 10,000 eggs at spawning time.

What Value Fish and Game?

Not a day passes that we do not read or hear of plans to augment the nation's food supply by making a greater use of our fish and game resources. Snap judgments have given these resources a value out of all proportion to their actual worth. Have no illusions about this. Beyond the recreational benefits that we derive by harvesting the usual fish and game crops their value to us otherwise is almost negligible. For example. In 1942 the annual take of all game throughout the United States was estimated to be 250 million pounds, and the estimated take of fish was 300 million pounds—slightly more than three pounds for each person. That is indeed a very small contribution to our family larders.

Why not increase the annual take? That could be done, of course, but the gain would not be worth the sacrifice. The favorable supply of these resources of which we boast today is probably at its peak and represents more than twenty-five years of energetic effort on the part of sportsmen, conservationists and game officials, to say nothing of the vast amount of money expended during that time. The fish and game crops are now harvested on a sane "use the surplus" basis. To take more than the normal annual increase in any one year would be disastrous to our conservation program and to do so would mean the destruction of our foundation stock.

Sportsmen should bear these facts in mind when they are tempted to take game out of season or exceed the legal bag limits as a means of solving their meat rationing problems. You can’t eat your sport and have it too.

Good Fishing Spots

Increased fishing license sales would indicate that many Kansans are planning their first fishing trip. We welcome these new comers and novices to that ever-expanding group of Kansans who seek their fun and relaxation along the banks of our streams and lakes. For their information and to assist them in making the most of their efforts much of this issue of Kansas Fish and Game will be devoted to a description of the better known Kansas fish and to suggestions as to where they may be caught and the care of them after catching as well.

Clark County State Lake. The hottest fishing spot in Kansas today is the Clark County State Lake located fourteen miles south of Kingsdown and an equal distance north of Ashland. If you can bait a hook you can catch fish at this lake. This body of water was open for the first time to fishing May 8, and as is the case with all new lakes the hungry fish are biting as the lines and baits hit the water. It is not necessary to have a boat to fish there as many deep holes are within easy casting distance of the shore.

The lake appears to be heavily populated with bass, crappie, ring perch, channel cats and bullheads.

Ottawa County State Lake. This lake, located near Bennington, Kansas, although being one of our older lakes, was vastly improved during the past year and now supports an abundance of fish life. The species most frequently caught there are predominately crappie, channel cat and bullheads. Boats may be rented at the lake from the concession there.

Crawford County State Park No. 2. This lake, located near Farlington, Kansas, although being one of our older lakes, was vastly improved during the past year and now supports an abundance of fish life. The species most frequently caught there are predominately crappie, channel cat and bullheads. Boats may be rented at the lake from the concession there.
Leavenworth County State Lake. This lake, near Tonganoxie, Kansas, is especially recommended to the anglers of northeast Kansas. Lake Superintendent Van Dolsem, will point out to the visiting angler it's better fishing holes.

The water has been stocked frequently with fish from the Pratt hatchery and with large ones rescued in other years from drying streams in that section of the state. Boats and cabin accommodations are available at the lake.

Woodson County State Lake. We have been assured by knowing men that this lake near Toronto, Kansas, has no equal as a bass and crappie lake. Channel cat fishermen with as much enthusiasm, tell us it is a perfect lake for their favorite fish. We therefore recommend it to you. There is a caretaker residing on the park property who will be glad to render any assistance that you might need to locate fish or to otherwise make your visit enjoyable.

Kingman County State Lake. This is a small lake located about nine miles west of Kingman on US Highway 54. From the newspaper column of outdoor scribe Glenn Ferguson we learn that many fine strings of bass, drum, crappie and catfish have been taken there this spring by Kingman and Reno county sportsmen. Glenn generally knows whereof he speaks and on his authoritative word we recommend the Kingman county state lake to you as a likely fishing spot.

Finney County State Lake. This lake, conveniently located far off the beaten path in Finney county supports a variety of fish. Ben Grimsley, Raymond Stotts, Fred Shulman and many other Garden City sportsmen have reported the taking of many nice strings of fish there this year.

Other Fishing Reports

Bond Hale, Superintendent of the Scott County State Lake writes: “Even you could catch fish out of this lake, Dave.” If that is the case, fishing at Scott County State Lake must be very good and relatively simple.

“Channel cat fishing along the Solomon and Smoky Hill rivers was never better than it is today,” writes Game Commissioner Jay Owens from Salina.

Sportsman Fred Kahn, Lawrence, writes enthusiastically of the fine fish Douglas county sportsmen are taking from the Lone Star Lake near Lawrence.

Ray Pierson, Burlington, reports that many large fish are being caught from the Neosho river near his home town. Since similar reports have been received from other sportsmen at Emporia, Iola, Chanute and Parsons we have been forced to the conclusion that the fish are really biting along the length of the Neosho river.

A Word of Caution

The recently opened Clark County State Lake is a treacherous and deceiving body of water. Anglers fishing that lake with either waders or boats should provide themselves with life vests or other approved types of life preservers. Be extremely careful in wading the shorelines.

This lake, we would remind you, was formed within deep canyons and your next step may plunge you into sixty feet of cold water. Don’t risk your life or that of your companions by overcrowding your boat or in using one that is not safe.

It has been estimated that carp will spawn one-half million eggs annually; a bass thirty-five thousand and a channel cat nearly fifty thousand.

BLACK BASS

Belongs to sunfish family.
Common names: Green Bass, Straw Bass, Trout.
Feeds on: Minnows, frogs, crawfish, crawlers, Dobson, insects and flies.
Female carries from 2,000 to 10,000 eggs at spawning time.

CRAPPIE

Belongs to sunfish family.
Common names: White Perch, Speckled Perch, Shad.
Feeds on: Minnows, insects and flies.
Female carries from 3,000 to 10,000 eggs at spawning time.

ROCK BASS

Belongs to sunfish family.
Feeds on: Minnows, worms, insects and flies.
Female carries from 1,000 to 2,000 eggs at spawning time.
State Lakes Open to Night Fishing

The commission has given its approval to the opening of all state lakes to night fishing. This action was taken in order that everyone might have an opportunity to fish this season.

There is no better tonic than the restful excitement afforded by night fishing trips for war nerves and overworked minds and bodies.

The Care of Your Fish

Fish should be cleaned as soon as possible after catching. It takes no more than a few seconds at the most to slit the underside of the fish from head to tail, remove its entrails and wash it out. A fish handled thusly will not spoil if wrapped in a damp cloth or wet grass.

To obtain the fullest flavor from the scaled fish they should be scaled and not skinned. Scraping of the fish from head to tail with a dull knife or fish scraping tool will remove all the scales in jig time. Catfish, of course, should be skinned for better and easier cooking. To skin a fish remove the fins, slit the skin lengthwise along the backbone and by using a pair of pliers with a quick jerk tailward the skin is easily separated from the flesh.

To bone a fish run a sharp knife close to its backbone from tail to head. Remove all the flesh from one side in a single piece and pick out any remaining bones with your fingers. That muddy taste so often noticeable in catfish can be eliminated by rubbing the dressed fish with iodized salt and soaking in water.

If fish thaw after being frozen they should be cooked immediately. To re-freeze them only spoils their taste and flavor.

Worms as Bait

For some unexplainable reason many of the present-day anglers do not consider the angleworm suitable as a fish bait. Its age-old name would imply that an early generation of anglers considered it suitable to that purpose. Not so many years ago a President of the United States (on second thought it must have been many, many years ago, as he was a Republican) caused a near split in his party councils because he fished a trout stream with worm-baited hooks. His unorthodox fishing methods may have cost him friends and even votes, but he did catch fish and that was the job at hand. A mighty fine and wise President he was, too.

You, too, can catch fish or even trout with angleworms if you handle them properly. One thing you shouldn't do is to thread the hook through the worm from end to end. That kills and renders the worm useless as a bait for the fish that prefers live bait. For best results insert the hook through the skin of the worm at several points. Then your worm will stay alive for a longer period of time. Its movements in the water will attract fish to it.

There is no good reason for foregoing a fishing trip for want of minnows. Worms are just as good and can usually be found near your back door step.

A Fine Vacationing Spot

The Scott County State Park of 1,200 acres, lying a distance of fourteen miles northwest of Scott City, presents the visitor one of the greatest of Kansas' surprises. Three hundred feet below the caprock of the wind-carved and water-torn canyon walls, sets the restful meandering lake, known far and wide for its fine channel cat. Along the floor of the valley, below the high bluffs, gush forth many springs which have been used by man for at least five centuries, both for consumption and irrigation. The boulder-strewn valley is threaded with well-maintained roads and picnic grounds. Rock gardens, foot trails, beautiful arch foot bridges, high points of vantage, and western hospitality make this park one long to be remembered by all visitors.

This area is not without historical interest and appeal. Legendary history reveals that as early as 1604 a trapper's outpost and trading point had been established here by French traders and trappers. Substantial evidence of an early Indian occupancy of the canyons is constantly being discovered and unearthed. The diligent, sharp-eyed visitors who explore the canyons are usually rewarded by discovering some valued Indian artifacts.

The spring-fed rifflets, the rugged depths, the peaceful valley and the ideal climate makes this area one long to be remembered by those who visit it.

Game Farms in Full Operation

The commission's three game farms we are happy to report have solved their labor problems and are now operating at full capacity. The labor problem was solved by employing women and men beyond the reach of the draft boards to do such routine work as bird feeding, egg collecting, and the care of brooder houses.

The game farms reported that adverse weather conditions somewhat delayed the start of this year's breeding season, but that delay is not thought to be serious enough to noticeably effect the production goal set for the current year.

Two of the game farms, one at Calista and another at Pittsburg, are devoted exclusively to the raising of Bobwhite quail. The third game farm located at the Meade County State Park, produces only ringnecked pheasants and chukar partridges.
TO KEEP THE RECORD STRAIGHT
“OLE DAVE” JOTS IT DOWN

Despite threatening weather and rain-chilled winds, anglers from 53 counties and four states fished the Clark County State Lake on opening day May 18. District Game Protectors reported that they examined over 400 resident and nonresident fishing licenses. It was a big day. If any angler left the lake without the legal limit it was because of intent and design, as the fish were striking as the lines hit the water. It was not an unusual sight to see anglers catching two fish at a time. Many anglers caught their legal limit within a short time after the opening gun was fired.

This is a story of a seven-year-old girl, a pin hook and a piece of raisin pie. Many of the readers of this column will doubt the story. In spite of the scoffers we give it to you as a fact.

A little girl who had accompanied her parents to the opening of the Clark County State Lake wanted to fish. The parents obliged her by fixing up a homemade line which she threw, unbaited into the water. This she soon deserted for a piece of raisin pie that had been offered to her by another camping party. The pie was too much for her and this was soon set aside for a look at the "fishing tackle." She was disappointed to find no fish on her hook.

Whatever influences inspire a child to do wise things took charge from then on. The little seven-year-old miss decided to take a few raisins from the almost forgotten pie and bait her hook with them. This she did, and to the astonishment of all the spectators, caught her first fish!

Fish do not breathe in the ordinary sense of the word. The oxygen required to sustain life in them is obtained from the dissolved air in the water. The water containing the dissolved air or oxygen is passed over a series of filaments called gills. The gills are in reality blood vessels so thin that the oxygen can pass from the water into the blood system of the fish. The blood containing oxygen is pumped through arteries throughout the body of the fish. The oxygenated blood is recollected in veins and returned to the gills.

The rate of normal breathing varies in different species, ranging from 12 to 150 respirations per minute. If there is a deficiency of oxygen in the water the breathing is accelerated to a point where the fish appears to pant.

The breeding habits of fish, it appears, is a matter of deep and sympathetic concern to many readers of this bulletin. In all but a few species of fish eggs are deposited and fertilized externally. With that exceptional few, the eggs are retained by the female and fertilized internally. The young fish of this group are born.

Fish fins serve a more practical purpose than merely “fanning” the angler’s hand and fingers. Fins function mainly as means of movement and stabilization. The principal fin of movement is the tail (caudal) fin, the top (dorsal) and rearward underside (anal) is thought to be the means of stabilizing or keeping the fish right side up. The paired fins serve the same purpose only in a minor degree and many others.

That slick slimy substance you find on your fish is not caused by the surrounding waters, but is being constantly poured on the fish from special glands. This mucous not only enables the fish to glide along freely in the water but minimizes friction from the surrounding water as well.

Parasites and disease attack all species of fish, often killing or deforming them. The grub worms and other foreign life that paralyze fish will not live or cause infection in the human body. Therefore, if your fish are wormy and you’re finnicky about what you eat pick them out with your knife or fingers, but if you want additional and unrationed meat go ahead and eat them, as they will cause you no ill effects.

The term “game fish” is a misnomer. All fish are game fish unless the law designates certain species to that honor. Within recent year it has become the practice among anglers to refer to all fish that strike on artificial flies and lures as being “game fish.” The laws of Kansas are silent in this regard and for all intents and purposes the fish in Kansas streams are considered to be game fish.

The total length of a fish is determined by measuring from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail (caudal) fin. That is not the standard length of the fish, but it is the way to measure them when the questioning game protectors are about. Then every inch counts.

After June 30, next, sportsmen will be required to carry the 1944 licenses. The licenses, new in design, will go on sale at the offices of the County Clerks and at your sporting goods dealer about June 20.

The cover picture on this month’s issue of Kansas fish and game was taken at the Woodson County State Lake, where bass fishing is always good.
U. S. Urges Use of Carp as Food

As a part of its campaign to popularize varieties of fish which previously have been underutilized, the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, at this time calls particular attention to the carp as a food fish that deserves more use.

"This wholesome and nutritious fresh-water fish, widely and abundantly distributed, readily caught and low priced, can do much to fill a widening gap in our food economy," Service officials state.

"Just as we are learning to eat tripe, liver, brains and kidneys instead of our favorite sirloin, so must we learn to eat some of the good varieties of fish we have been largely ignoring, to replace the canned salmon and tuna needed for our fighting men and our allies."

The lower production of fish during 1942, coupled with the fact that lend-lease commitments have diverted a large proportion, is creating a market for species which previously were not greatly in demand, such as carp, buffalo, and suckers.

In this present conflict, as in every war, food is a raw material for victory, and to make the nation's total food a better weapon for war it is essential that our food fish resources be used to the utmost. As a food the carp is capable of rendering indirect supporting service to the war program.

Sportsmen throughout the carp belt can accelerate the Service's campaign and do a double service when they fish for carp. They can provide nourishing food for their families, and probably their neighbors, and at the same time assist in reducing carp population in their favorite fishing streams and lakes so as to avoid competition with more desirable game species.

The Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C., will provide recipes for cooking carp.

**Pickled Carp**

Clean the carp inside and out; split it the whole length; cut in pieces; wash, and cook it in water with salt, spice, onions and a few bay leaves. After it is cooked let it get cold in the cooking vessel. When cold put into a drainer or sieve to dry. Now pick to pieces, taking out all bones; mix with sauce consisting of Worcestershire sauce, vinegar, olive oil, and yellow mustard, according to taste, all well beaten and mixed, olive oil and vinegar being in preponderance. Serve with capers, olives, and mixed pickles.

**Stewed Carp**

Scale and clean the carp; dry with towel and season well with salt, pepper, and a little mace, which ought to be rubbed in thoroughly. Place in a sauce pan or stew kettle with some chopped parsley, sliced onion, celery tops, and a few potatoes and carrots if desired. Pour on sufficient water to cover and let stew until the flesh leaves the bones easily.

**Fried Carp**

Scale and clean the fish and make some slight incisions on both sides; if too large, cut in pieces. Wipe the fish dry, sprinkle slightly with flour, dip in beaten eggs, and roll in bread crumbs. Put the pieces in boiling lard, so as not to touch each other. When sufficiently brown, take them out and lay on a hot sieve to let the superfluous fat run off; sprinkle with salt and lay in a hot dish without cover. Serve very hot.

**Baked Carp**

Take carp of 1 to 2 pounds; scale and clean well; rub inside and out with plenty of salt; let stand an hour or two. Wipe dry with a towel, roll in well-beaten eggs and bread crumbs or meal, and bake in plenty of butter till nicely brown. If desired, the body cavity of the fish may be filled with stuffing prepared the same as for stuffing turkey. A quantity of dressing may also be packed around the fish.

**Deep Fat Frying**

Skin the carp and wash thoroughly in strong salt water. Allow the fillets to remain in the salt water for about two hours, drain and wash in clean water. Dry with a towel, roll in corn meal or flour. Fill frying pan with enough fat or cooking oil so fish when placed in the pan will be submerged. The fat should be very hot. Fry until golden brown.
"QUICKIES" FROM BULLETIN BOARD

The Commission meeting at Pratt May 6, took official action on many things of interest to the sportsmen, which will be duly announced in the next issue of Kansas Fish and Game. Our interest here is in action that they did not take. Because they did not close any counties to quail shooting during the next fall hunting season, sportsmen can look forward to quail hunting in the Western counties that have been closed for the past two years. Any reports from that are very encouraging.

There is an accurate shortage of bullfrogs in Kansas according to all indications. Therefore if you are a bullfrog "grabber" you should bear in mind that the next two months are their breeding season and that they should not be taken at that time. There is not now a law forbidding you to do so, but sound conservation policies would dictate that you refrain from taking them at this time.

The time for revising the mailing list of Kansas Fish and Game is near at hand. Many of you that were on the original list, have either moved to the defense areas, gone to war or neglect to call for your mail. The lists will be revised beginning with the new fiscal year July 1. If you want to continue receiving this publication regularly so express your desires to the Forestry Fish and Game Commission, Pratt, setting out in your communication to them your name and correct mailing address. A post card will do the business.

The Fish and Game laws, passed by the 1943 legislature and commission regulations, promulgated under the authority of those laws will become effective on publication in the statute books. As nearly as we can determine the publication date will be about July 1. In the meantime if any information is wanted regarding those laws sportsmen are urged to correspond with the Commission, at Pratt.

The floods of Eastern Kansas, are expected to do some damage to the 1943 game-bird crop, but early reports from that area would indicate that the damage will be slight.

For the past sixty days the state game protectors have been working the rivers in search of fish traps, unattended lines and other paraphernalia used ille-
One ostrich egg will make as large an omelet as three dozen hen eggs. “Ostrich fruit” average eight inches long, six inches in diameter and weigh about three pounds.

Kansas maintains three Game Farms, two devoted solely to the raising of native bobwhite quail and one to the propagation of Ringed-neck pheasants and chukar partridges.

Many a dyspeptic human might well envy the digestive apparatus of an alligator. Some queer things are found in the stomach of these animals recently a scientist unloaded the following—all found in the stomach of an alligator: 11 heavy brass rings three links of coiled wire one glass bead necklace 15 arm and leg bones of various animals three spinal columns and 18 stones of assorted sizes.

ARRESTS OF APRIL, 1943

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TOTAL LENGTH

SPINOUS DORSAL FIN  SOFT DORSAL FIN

PECTORAL FIN  LATERAL LINE
OPERCULUM
CHEEK

NOSTRIL
PREMAXILLARY

CHIN
MANDIBLE

MAXILLARY
INTERPERCLES
PREOPERCLES

ISTHMS
GILL OPENING
VENTRAL FIN

CAUDAL FIN

CAUDAL PEDUNCLE

ANAL FIN

* LARGE-MOUTHED BLACK BASS *
KANSAS FISHING LAKES AND STREAMS

State Lakes
1. Butler County State Park
2. Clark County State Park
3. Crawford County State Park No. 1
4. Crawford County State Park No. 2
5. Decatur County State Park No. 1
6. Decatur County State Park No. 2
7. Finney County State Park

City and County Lakes
8. Kingman County State Park
9. Leavenworth County State Park
10. Lyon County State Park
11. Meade County State Park
12. Nemaha County State Park
13. Neosho County State Park
14. Ottawa County State Park

River and Stream Fishing
15. Pottawatomie County State Park
16. Republic County State Park
17. Rooks County State Park
18. Scott County State Park
19. Sheridan County State Park
20. Woodson County State Park