

have depleted nutrients in the lakes, which is harmful to the

## Restoration continues at Possum Kingdom Reservoir

**WICHITA FALLS, Texas —**

Both the largemouth and striped bass fisheries at Possum Kingdom Reservoir continue to improve, according to 2016 survey results from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD).

Largemouth abundance was higher in both 2012 and 2014, and body condition was good, reported biologist Robert Mauk. "There are plenty of bass just under the legal length [16 inches] that will grow into keepers in the near future, so things are looking up," he said.

Striper numbers were the highest they've been since the golden alga fish kills of 2001 and 2003.

"We didn't stock striped bass in 2016, so it was somewhat of a surprise to find quite a few striped bass belonging to that year-class in our survey work," the biologist said. "We've seen evidence of natural reproduction in the past, although not to the extent we've seen it in 2016. But conditions were right for spawning to occur with a high, unimpeded flowing Brazos River.

As with the largemouth, stripers also showed good body condition, with lengths ranging from 8 to 30 inches and many more than the legal length limit of 18 inches.

Shad survey findings, meanwhile, suggest bass, as well as catfish, likely will grow larger faster. That's because gizzard shad sizes were smaller than in the past, meaning more of them are vulnerable to predation.

Smaller threadfin shad were found to be near historical averages and in "decent numbers."

Possum Kingdom bass also will benefit from recent habitat enhancement projects. Nearly 400 structures of various types have been placed in the lake courtesy of the cooperative efforts of TPWD, Brazos River Authority, Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership, Mineral Wells Bass Club, and Hell's Gate Bass Club.

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