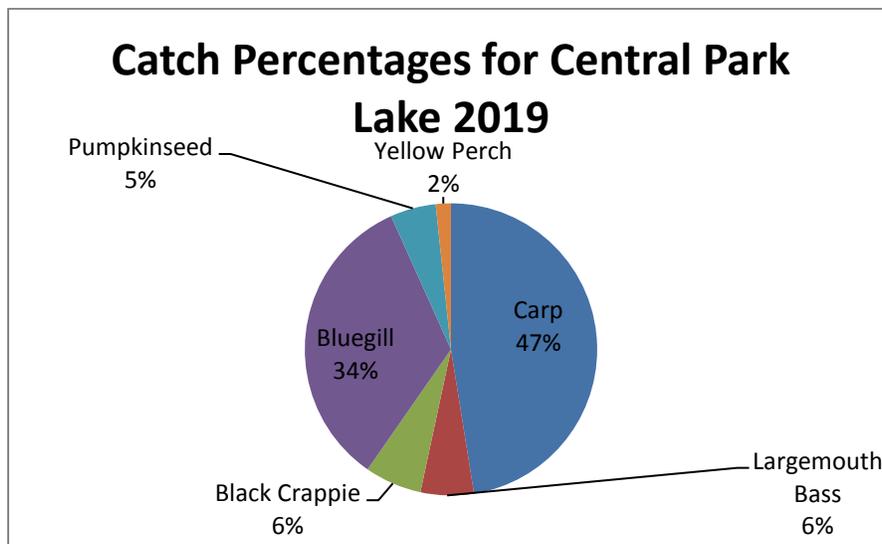
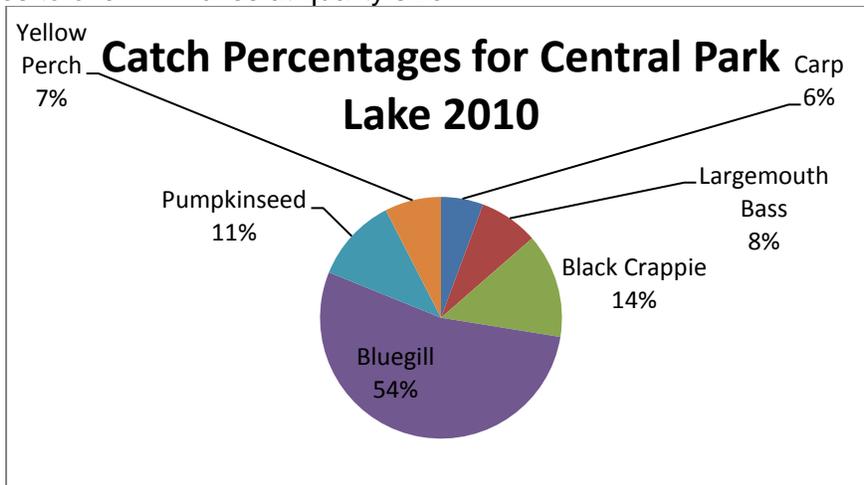


Central Park Lake (Survey #: 219001)  
Nikki Goodman, Region 2 Fisheries

05/18/2020

Nestled in Central Park in Manhattan, Central Park Lake provides a unique opportunity for anglers to catch a variety of fish species in an otherwise very urban area. This 18-acre lake boasts shoreline varying from grassy to rocky which provides ample habitat for its diverse population of fish.

An electrofishing survey was conducted at night on 4/30/2019 in accordance with the Black Bass and Sunfish Electrofishing Protocol to examine the population status of the lake (Brooking, et al. 2018). A total of 127 individual fish comprised of five different species were caught and measured. Additionally, a sixth species, common carp, was observed but not measured. 14 largemouth bass were caught ranging in size from 5 inches to over 17 inches at quality size.



**Figure 1.** Represented in the pie charts above, are the percentages of each species that made up the total catch for each electrofishing survey in Central Park Lake for 2010 and 2019. Note that carp are observed and not physically caught for further data on shore.



Over the past nine years the common carp population has spiked significantly from 6% in 2010 to 47% in 2019. Whereas bluegill, which used to make up a majority of the survey total catch, have decreased to 34% in 2019 from 54% in 2010. Every other species observed has decreased in their population percentage as well, but none as drastically as the bluegill.

**Table 1.** Spring night-time boat electrofishing catch from Central Park Lake in Manhattan, NY on April 30, 2019.

Species	Total Catch	Time (h)	All sizes	Catch Rate (fish/h; Standard Error)		
				YOY	≥Stock	≥Quality
Largemouth bass	14	1.05	14 (4)	5 (2)	9 (4)	5 (2)
Bluegill	80	1.05	74 (34)	3(2)	72 (33)	1 (1)
Pumpkinseed	12	1.05	11 (5)	3 (2)	9 (4)	0
Black Crappie	15	1.05	14 (5)	2 (1)	12 (4)	0
Yellow perch	4	1.05	4 (2)	0	3 (1)	1 (1)

Central Park is a unique freshwater fishing location in NYC because of its prevalence of carp anglers. A Creel Survey conducted in 2015 showed that over 70% of anglers fishing Central Park Lake were targeting carp. Along the Harlem Meer, located on the north end of Central Park, the majority of anglers were reported to be fishing for any species and 36% of anglers were targeting largemouth bass. Central Park Lake’s abundance of carp sets it apart from other NYC freshwater fishing sites. A total of 113 carp were observed from the electrofishing boat during the survey; nearly equal to the 127 fish that were caught and processed.

Continued monitoring of the changing make-up of the fish population in the Lake would be beneficial to better understand how the growing carp population is affecting the other species as a whole. Since the DEC was unable to perform electrofishing surveys at this site in close succession over the past decade, a year to year comparison of data may show trends that can be understood better.

### Literature Cited

- Brooking, T., Loukmas, J., Jackson, R., VanDeValk, T. 2018. Black bass and sunfish electrofishing protocol for lakes and ponds. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration, F-63-R, Study 2, Job 2-2.3, Albany, New York.
- Cohen, M. and J. Lee, 2017 Harlem Meer and Central Park Lake Angler Creel Surveys, 2015. Final Report, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Long Island City, NY.