



2008 FALL FISH SALE FISH FACTS



- ◇ The **Channel Catfish** is not only an outstanding food fish, it is an excellent sport fish. It is very popular because of its very fast growth rate when fed a commercial fish food. It is compatible in lakes and ponds with all species and works especially well with Hybrid Sunfish and Largemouth Bass.
Growth Rates: Up to 1 pound per year if fed a commercial feed.
- ◇ The **Hybrid Sunfish** is produced by crossing a male Bluegill with a female Green sunfish. This hybrid cross produces a 90% male, 10% female population. This makes the Hybrid Sunfish an excellent pond fish as it will not over populate. It also accepts artificial feed readily and grows to a much larger size than either parent, 1 – 2 pound fish are not uncommon.
Growth Rates: 1/4 – 1/2 pound per year if fed a commercial feed.
- ◇ The **Largemouth Bass** is one of the most popular sport fish in America. It is a predator and works well to help control stunted Bluegill and Crappie populations. By nature this fish will not accept artificial feed, but our supplying fishery does raise Largemouth that do accept the same feed that Channel Catfish and Hybrid Sunfish eat. This greatly increases their growth rates.
Growth Rates: 1/2 – 3/4 pound per year.
- ◇ **Fathead Minnows** should be stocked in new ponds. They should also be stocked prior to stocking Largemouth Bass so they have an opportunity to spawn and provide plenty of feed for the young Bass. Fathead Minnows should be stocked at 5 pounds per surface acre.
- ◇ **Bluegill** fit much of the description of the Hybrid Sunfish except they do not grow as quickly and tend to overpopulate much more rapidly than Hybrid Sunfish.
- ◇ **Redear** are recommended for deeper ponds and can be stocked along with Bluegill or Hybrid Sunfish. They are a deep water fish, feeding on snails or clams, and are usually harder to catch except during spawning season when they are in the shallows.
- ◇ **Hybrid Redear** is a cross between a male bluegill and a female redear. It DOES eat snails and clams and has a slightly higher reproductive rate than the Hybrid Sunfish.
- ◇ The **Triploid Grass Carp** is a viable alternative to using chemicals for weed control. This fish will not reproduce and when the proper numbers are stocked, will totally eliminate the need for ever using chemicals or mechanical weed cutters. However, Grass Carp will only eat pond weeds. Algae problems must be treated chemically, and cattails are best treated mechanically, either by digging them out by hand or with a backhoe or cutting them off in the late fall so ice will form over the surface of the stem which will cause the plant to die from lack of oxygen intake. Stocking rates for each lake will be different, depending on the amount of weed present. These Carp eat most aggressively in the hot, summer months, and good results are usually seen after a second season. Total eradication of plant cover in a pond is not a desired effect, as it's good to have at least 40% vegetative plant cover.

**NOTE FOR GRASS CARP ORDERS: It is very important to fill out the exact location of the pond on the order form under County, Township and Section, and return the order form by October 2nd, as the fishery must apply for permits from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.*

MANAGING AQUATIC VEGETATION

Aquatic vegetation becomes a problem when it takes up more than 20 percent of the water surface area. Excessive aquatic vegetation can quickly choke a pond, damaging it for both fish and fishermen.

When large numbers of small bluegill find protection in extensive beds of vegetation, bass growth can become slow and bluegill are subject to overpopulation and stunting. Extensive beds of aquatic plants are a nuisance to the angler and they cause fish kills when large amounts of vegetation decomposes or gets trapped under ice in the winter. Some kinds of vegetation emit offensive odors and give the fish a bad taste, and weed choked shallow bays spawn clouds of mosquitoes.

The results of a 1979 study to investigate the use of biological methods for the control of nuisance aquatic vegetation indicated that the reproductively sterile (triploid) grass carp could effectively control some types of aquatic vegetation. The triploid grass carp is nearly identical to the pure (diploid) grass carp in its physical appearance as well as in its ability to consume aquatic vegetation. The main difference between the two grass carp is that the triploid form of the grass carp is sterile and cannot reproduce in nature.

As with any method of nuisance aquatic vegetation control, results are not guaranteed. The private lake owner should give careful consideration before stocking triploids as results in other states have been variable. Potentially serious impacts to sportfish populations can result from overstocking of grass carp and the subsequent elimination of aquatic weeds.