

# MOUND CITY

## District Fisheries Newsletter

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Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism's Fisheries Division

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### Trout fishing at Ft. Scott's Gunn Park.

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Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

While some anglers are sitting in the house waiting for warm weather, others are taking advantage of the trout fishing at Gunn Park in Ft. Scott. This winter's trout fishery is the result of the KDWPT's Winter Fishing Opportunity (W.F.O.) program with the City of Ft. Scott. Trout are stocked every two weeks from the start of the season Nov. 1 through April 15. Overall, trout fishing has been good this year, and the trout pond was frozen over only a few times this winter. The City operates an air cannon that mixes water from the bottom to the top, which decreases the likelihood of the pond freezing over, thereby allowing more days of fishing action. Older anglers or families with younger children have easy access to this pond as the area provides excellent shoreline fishing. After April 15, the water temperatures can reach the upper limits for trout survival, so stockings are stopped. The required yearly trout permit costs \$12.50. Anglers 15 years of age and younger may trout fish without a trout permit if they adhere to a two-fish-per-day limit.



Trout stocking at Ft. Scott's Gunn Park. During the trout season 400 trout are stocked every two weeks. This 2-acre pond has excellent shoreline angling access.

## A.N.S.

What is A. N. S.? Why is it important to me as an angler or just a resident of KANSAS?

Aquatic nuisance species, or ANS, are foreign plants or animals that are not native to Kansas. Because they are not native, they may not have any natural predators that will balance or keep these nuisance species from becoming a big problem. While all ANS are bad, one of the worst is the zebra mussel. These mussels are less than one inch in size and can be sexually mature and ready to reproduce the first year. The zebra mussel is a multibillion-dollar threat to surface water suppliers for communities, electric power, industry and agriculture throughout North America. Once a body of water is infected with zebra mussels, eradication is almost impossible. This prolific invader deprives native fish and other aquatic life of food and habitat, and is a costly nuisance to boaters and anglers, as well. These mussels are yellowish or brownish with a "D" shaped shell, usually with dark and light colored stripes. These mussels can grow in clusters and are the only freshwater mussel in Kansas that can attach to solid objects such as rocks, water intake structures, boat hulls, dock pilings, etc. If you think you have found any aquatic nuisance species, note the date, specific location, take a picture to document the find, collect the mussel or plant, several if possible, in a container or plastic bag. Store the contents in rubbing alcohol. Do not place the ANS contents in another body of water and take care to not move or risk spreading. Contact your local fish biologist or our Emporia office toll free at 1-877-426-3843.

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In an effort to prevent the spread of zebra mussels and learn more about their ability to colonize new environments, KDWPT, Kansas City Power and Light, and Emporia State University teamed up to conduct zebra mussel research at La Cygne Reservoir. Zebra mussels are known to be in the upper parts of the Marais des Cygnes River and large volumes of river water was pumped into the reservoir to maintain lake levels and optimize power plant operations. Therefore sampling efforts to monitor the potential colonization of the lake by zebra mussels was warranted. Pictured here is Judith Bilyea of Emporia State University as she holds and explains the net device used to sample and locate zebra mussels. Bilyea and her team of assistants were at the lake several times each month throughout the 2013 summer and fall to collect information for the study. The good news is that zebra mussels have not been found as of yet in La Cygne Reservoir.



Pictured here is a view of the south dam of La Cygne Reservoir, where Emporia State student Judith Bilyea has one of many sampling stations established. Each time the sampling crew visited the lake these stations were checked for zebra mussel colonization.



As responsible lake users, it is imperative that we always “Clean, Drain and Dry” all boats, trailers or any equipment that has come in contact with lake water. Always walk around your boat and trailer, inspect and remove any plant leaves, stems, and mud. Dry out any water in your boat or outboard motor. Drill some holes in the boat trailer frame so water can easily drain out and not be moved to the next lake.

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## Paddlefish Season—starts March 15 through May 15

Southeast Kansas offers several areas where anglers can match wits and brute strength against one of our biggest sport fish, the paddlefish. One of the better paddlefish snagging areas in Kansas is Chetopa Dam on the Neosho River. A second area is owned by the City of Iola and located below the Neosho River Dam at Highway 54. The third area is on the Marais des Cygnes River, from the upstream end of Unit G of the Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area downstream through the Marais des Cygnes National Wildlife Refuge to the state line river bridge. This snagging area of the Marais des Cygnes River is 15.4 miles long, currently the longest area ever opened to paddlefish snagging in Kansas. Thanks to the cooperative effort by U.S Fish and Wildlife Service and KDWPT, the Marais des Cygnes River supports this paddlefish snagging area. Signs indicating the designated areas have been posted to assist anglers with boundary recognition. Although paddlefish exceeding 100 pounds are rare, paddlefish in the 30- to 50-pound range are fairly common, but even fish in this size range can generate a lot of excitement and will draw crowds where they are caught. Warm water temperatures and high flows excite spawning paddlefish as they concentrate below river dams. These conditions increase the chances for diligent paddlefish snaggers to be successful. Nonsport fish such as carp, drum and buffalo may be snagged and harvested in waters posted open to snagging during the paddlefish season. There are no limits on nonsport fish. A paddlefish permit is required and includes 6 carcass tags; the daily limit is two paddlefish. Paddlefish caught must be released or tagged immediately.

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### Family Fishing Activities

Kid's fishing derbies, clinics, outdoor days, family fishing days -- whatever they are called these events are all conducted to encourage people young and old to start, continue or renew fishing as a fun activity. The Department has teamed up with Fishing's Future representative John Copple, to increase and improve these outdoor fishing events. Copple is an energetic person who loves to work with and teach fishing skills to young people. As biologists, we look to schedule or assist with these activities and now thanks to Copple and Fishing's Future, there will be more resources and opportunities. If our schedules allow, Copple or I will be there to manage or guide a kids fishing activity. Other times, we will loan fishing equipment, ready-to-go fishing poles, stocked tackle boxes, banners, bait, prizes and most importantly assist as guides to help a sponsoring party to "see" how they can do a fishing derby themselves. Church groups, school groups, organizations and sometimes just people who want to make their town days special will schedule a family or kids' fishing events. Currently I manage or assist with the Linn County Fair Fishing Derby, the Uniontown Days, Pleasanton Fourth of July activities, Friends of Mound City Lake fishing derby, Lola Hooked of Fishing with the Lola Police Department, the Richmond City Lake Fishing Day and a few others. So if you, or any group you're involved with is interested in sponsoring a kid's fishing event, call me and together we will make it happen.

This event was of the 2013 Friends of Mound City Lake at their annual Family and Kids Fishing Event. Here volunteer Gary Simpson hands out prizes to lucky anglers. Note all of the family participation in the picture.



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The lower picture is from the recent Linn County Fair Fishing Derby as a family cluster together and excitedly waits for a jiggle in their bobbers. Note their Fishing's Future T shirts.



The Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks Fisheries Division receives no General Fund money for any fisheries programs. The Division is a prime example of a user-pay program. Funds from fishing license sales are used to match federal Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) funds generally in a 75/25 cost share. It is surprising the number of nonanglers and anglers who don't know how our fisheries programs are funded or what the Sport Fish Restoration Program is.

Originally passed in 1950 with strong support from anglers throughout the nation, the Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell - Johnson Act) placed a 10 percent excise tax on fishing rods, reels, lures, fishing line, and related fishing equipment. In 1984 Congress passed the Wallop Breaux amendments to the Act, which included import duties on yachts and a motorboat fuel tax on gasoline.

As a result of important partnerships formed during the 1984 amendments, each state now spends at least 15 percent of SFR monies on boating access and up to 10 percent on aquatic resource education and fisheries outreach activities.



Monies are distributed depending upon the size of the state and the number of fishing licenses sold with no state receiving more than 5.0 percent or less than 1.0 percent. The program provides a valuable investment in the maintenance and enhancement of our natural resources and the tremendous economic benefits they generate for the future.

Kansas is recognized nationally by anglers and fisheries professionals for providing exceptional sport fishing opportunities. Over 217,000 recreational anglers fished Kansas waters in 2009, contributing an estimated \$242 million to the State economy. This high level of angler participation and satisfaction is maintained through the support of the Sport Fish Restoration Program.

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### ***Tight Line***

As the snow melts and the grass starts to green up many fishing opportunities are blooming. Try trout fishing at Ft. Scott's Gunn Park. For some real big game fishing try paddlefish snagging. Anglers can go to the Neosho River at the Iola dam, or the Chetopa dam on Highway 54, or the 15 miles of river along the Marais des Cygnes.

For those largemouth bass enthusiasts, bass fishing at La Cygne Reservoir really starts to pick up as this warm-water lake's bass move into shallower water to spawn. Some of the largest bass are caught this time of year. For anglers wanting to catch large bass, this is the time and place to go. Smaller lakes warm up quick and crappie anglers already have lakes like Critzer Lake, Mound City, Pleasanton East and Elm Creek lakes on their "lakes to fish list." Soon, the fish feeders will be filled and turned on and the channel catfish feeding frenzy will once again have many anglers excited.

This is a great time of year, and every day presents new fishing opportunities. Have fun and take a friend.

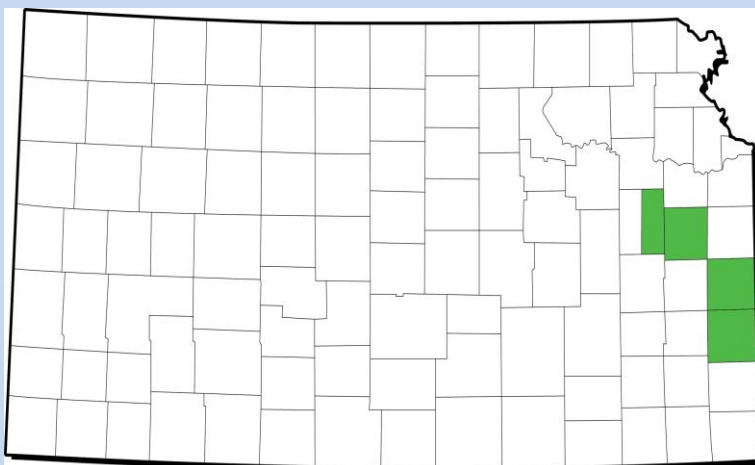


### **Parting Shot!**

I hope you enjoyed the first district newsletter. I hope to release three issues this year.

If you know someone who would like to subscribe to the newsletter, they can do so [HERE](#). If you would like to unsubscribe, please send your info to [Contact Us](#) with "unsubscribe Mound City District Fisheries Newsletter" and we'll get you taken off of the list. If you have any questions or comments feel free to send them in to [don.george@wp.state.ks.us](mailto:don.george@wp.state.ks.us).

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