



Good Record Keeping Means Better Fishing



For better fishing in your farm pond or lake, the Missouri Department of Conservation suggests you establish a good record-keeping system which tallies the number and size of fish caught. Anglers' catch data can provide insight into the health and well-being of the fish community in a pond or lake. Catch data can also help pond owners and Missouri Department of Conservation biologists diagnose problems and determine the best course of action to take in managing fish populations.

For example, knowledge about largemouth bass numbers, size, and growth is helpful for managing a pond or lake because these important predator fish help control populations of other fish. On the other hand, the numbers, size, and condition of the sunfish caught provide valuable clues to the relative condition of the bass population and the fish population as a whole. Tracking the size and numbers of channel catfish caught from a lake or pond will help determine the best stocking rates for continued fishing success.

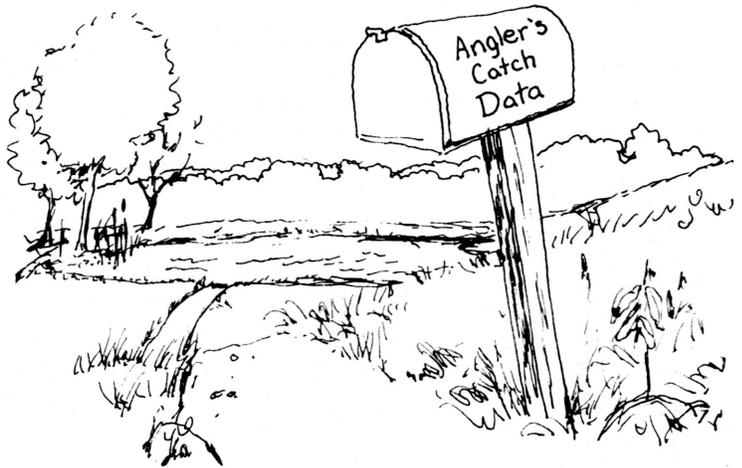
Keep It Simple

Most anglers are more interested in fishing than in recording the size of fish caught, so collecting information must be made as easy as possible. The following suggestions should make this task relatively painless.

Select a spot along the most common angler path to the water and erect a waterproof container. A standard-size mailbox is relatively inexpensive, is easy to attach to a post, and makes a good storage area for the rest of the materials needed.

A clipboard should be available for each angler who is fishing. Purchase several standard-sized clipboards and trim them to 7 ½ inches wide. Attach a large snap swivel to each board with a short length of line for anglers to attach the board to a belt loop or some other convenient place. Attach a pencil to the board with a second, longer string.

A cheaper alternative to commercial clipboards



would be to construct several boards from masonite or plywood with a hole drilled in the top center to attach a swivel and pencil. The catch data sheets can be held in place with binder clips.

A plastic stick-on ruler available from the Missouri Department of Conservation should be placed across the back of the board for measuring fish.

Use Convenient Forms

Daily Fishing Report data sheets (see page 2) should be clipped onto the boards. Extras can be stacked in the mailbox.

It will normally take an angler 15 – 30 seconds to measure a fish and to record it with a hash mark in the appropriate column. All anglers should record all information requested on the Report sheets.

It is important to know the total number and size of fish caught throughout the year, so everyone must record their catch—no excuses. Anglers should be instructed to return the boards and completed Daily Fishing Report sheets to the mailbox at the end of their fishing trips. The Reports can be collected later.

Please contact your local Missouri Department of Conservation fisheries management office for help in interpreting data from the Report sheets.

DAILY FISHING REPORT

DIRECTIONS: Please record information about each fish caught (including species, fishing method and length) by making a hash mark in the appropriate box. **Circle the hash mark of each fish you keep.** Please fill in all blanks at the top of the sheet. This information is vital for interpreting your angling results. A separate sheet should be kept by each angler. Return all material to box at end of each trip.

Angler Name: _____

Landowner Name: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Total Time: _____

Please circle the number which best represents your fishing ability:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Beginner — — — — — — — — — — → Expert

Species	Bass		Bluegill		Green Sunfish	Channel Catfish	Other Fish
Method	Bait	Artificial	Bait	Artificial			
3.0 - 3.4							
3.5 - 3.9							
4.0 - 4.4							
4.5 - 4.9							
5.0 - 5.4							
5.5 - 5.9							
6.0 - 6.4							
6.5 - 6.9							
7.0 - 7.4							
7.5 - 7.9							
8.0 - 8.4							
8.5 - 8.9							
9.0 - 9.4							
9.5 - 9.9							
10.0 - 10.4							
10.5 - 10.9							
11.0 - 11.4							
11.5 - 11.9							
12.0 - 12.4							
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18.0 - 18.4							
18.5 - 18.9							
19.0 - 19.4							
19.5 - 19.9							
20.0 - 20.4							
20.5 - 20.9							
21.0 - 21.9							
22.0 - 23.9							
24.0 - plus							

LENGTH IN INCHES

MAKE COPIES OF THIS FORM TO USE.

ATTENTION ANGLERS

All anglers please fill out a **DAILY FISHING REPORT** for each trip. Please check mailbox before fishing and return materials before leaving.

Thank you.

Your cooperation will help improve fishing.