



THE TELLICO ANGLER
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GENERAL:

Tellico Reservoir was created in 1980 by the Tennessee Valley Authority. It is located at the base of the Appalachian Mountains in portions of Blount, Monroe, and Loudon Counties. The Tellico and Little Tennessee Rivers are the two major tributaries. The reservoir includes 373 miles of shoreline and contains 16,056 surface acres.

At full pool, the reservoir extends 33 miles up the Little Tennessee River to Chilhowee Dam and 20 miles up the Tellico River. Except during flood events, all outflow from Tellico Reservoir passes through a canal into Fort Loudoun Reservoir just above the Dam. For this reason, Tellico experiences the same water level fluctuations as Fort Loudoun.

Tellico is a cool water impoundment due to the cold water inflows from Chilhowee Reservoir and the Tellico River. Since the reservoir is relatively infertile, it does not support high densities of fish. Some of the most common game fish include largemouth bass, white crappie, bluegill, smallmouth bass, rainbow trout, and walleye. Due to PCB contamination the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation advises against the consumption of catfish.

Anglers should contact TVA (800- 627-7882) or The Map Store in Knoxville (888- 929-6277 , 865- 688-3608) for reservoir maps.

FISH HABITAT ENHANCEMENT:

◆ Water level fluctuations are minimal and shoreline vegetation is well developed. Therefore, traditional enhancement work using brush to concentrate fish for anglers is not needed reservoir wide. Some recent rebrushing work has been done to attract fish to the piers at Fort Loudoun State Park and Lotterdale Cove. Eighty-four smallmouth bass spawning benches were placed in the lower section of the reservoir in 1996.

BLACK BASS:

◆ Largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass are all present in the reservoir. Since Tellico is not very fertile, it can not support the number of black bass that the more fertile Cherokee and Douglas Reservoirs do.

◆ Largemouth are by far the most abundant of the black bass species in the reservoir. Tellico is known for its numerous, quality size largemouth.

◆ Usually, about half of the total fishing effort on Tellico is geared towards catching black bass.

◆ Spotted (Kentucky) bass make up a good percentage of the black bass population in Tellico. Unlike largemouth and smallmouth this species rarely reaches quality size in any east Tennessee reservoir. They also utilize the same habitat and compete with the more quality size smallmouth bass. As a result, anglers are encouraged to keep these fish for the table. There is no size restriction and the limit is 15 spotted bass per day.

CRAPPIE:

◆ Anglers catch almost as many crappie as they do bass.

◆ More crappie are taken home by Tellico anglers than any other game fish. The latest angler survey estimated that nearly 80% of the crappie caught were kept by anglers while only seven percent of the largemouth were kept.

WALLEYE: Stocking: **2000**-71,733, **1998**-162,991, **1995**-123,848 , **1994**-94,725 , **1993**-7,751,

◆ Tellico is well suited for supporting a quality walleye fishery because it has cool water temperatures and good oxygen levels throughout the summer. It does, however, have a limited food supply and can not support extremely high numbers of fish.

◆ Walleye have been stocked regularly into the reservoir since 1982. Sauger were stocked just once in 1986.

◆ Quality walleye are found in Tellico and fish in the 10 pound range are not uncommon. Over-harvest could quickly impact the quality of the fishery so strict compliance with regulations is important. The current regulation allows five walleye with a minimum length limit of 15-inches. Only one, however, may be 24-inches or larger.

MUSKY: Stocking: **1984** - 2,520

◆ Musky were stocked just once in Tellico. Although they are well suited to the conditions present, there have been only a few reports of anglers catching musky.

TROUT: Stocking: Rainbow: **2001-6,016, 2000-9,413, 1999-5,016, 1998-5,992, 1997-8,087, 1996-28,412**
Brown: **1999-13,960, 1998-4,797**

◆ The upper reaches of Tellico Reservoir in the Little Tennessee Arm below Chilhowee Dam can support trout due to the cold, well-oxygenated releases from the Chilhowee Reservoir.

FISHING TIPS:

◆ Spotted bass- Bridge riprap and similar rocky areas with small white spinners, plastic grubs on leadhead jigs, doll flies, and crawfish crankbaits.

◆ Largemouth bass- Spring: Bat, Clear, and Island creeks provide excellent pre-spawn bass fishing. Creek points and channels using shallow running crankbaits, spinner baits, buzz baits, Carolina-rigged floating worms, and Texas-rigged worms; Summer: River channel points and humps with Mann’s deep running crankbaits, Carolina rigs, and pig n’ jigs; Fall: Creek mouths and river channel points using shallow running crankbaits and topwater plugs; Winter: Creek mouths and river channels using crankbaits, jigs, and lizards.

◆ Smallmouth bass- Spring: Creek mouths and river channel points with shallow running crankbaits, pig ‘n jigs, and grubs; Summer: River channel points and humps and rip-rap banks using deep running crankbaits and pig ‘n jigs; Fall: River channels using shallow running crankbaits and topwater plugs; Winter: River channel near the dam and the Little Tennessee River section using jigs, grubs and shiners.

◆ Crappie- Spring: Creek channels in open water and brush with jigs, grubs, and minnows. The standing timber in the Tellico River also holds crappie; Summer: River channels at night with jigs, grubs, and minnows; Fall and Winter: In creeks with jigs, grubs, and minnows.

◆ Walleye and Sauger- Spring: Upper Little Tennessee River section trolling crankbaits or drifting with jigs, grubs, and minnows; Summer: Occasionally caught by bass anglers in river channels fishing deep running crankbaits; Fall and Winter: Same methods as in the spring with less success.

COMMON LENGTH AT AGE (inches)

AGE (years)	1	2	3	4	5	6
SPECIES						
Largemouth bass*	6.8	10.5	12.6	14.3	16.1	18.1
Smallmouth bass*	7.7	11.5	15.1	17.6	18.5	19.8
Spotted bass*	6.4	9.2	10.5	11.8	-	-
Striped bass	7.8	15.9	20.9	24.9	27.8	29.0
Walleye*	10.5	16.2	19.1	20.1*	21.3*	24.4*
Sauger	9.5	14.1	16.3	17.6	19.5	21.4
Crappie*	3.8	6.5	8.7	12.2	-	-
Bluegill	2.4	4.3	5.8	7.0	7.8	8.3

(*Tellico specific)