

fish, because the phytoplankton is unable to produce oxygen, via photosynthesis, due to lack of sunlight. If you have a fertilization program for your lake, the lake should be checked every two weeks during the warm season to monitor if more fertilizer is necessary, or as mentioned, to make sure too heavy a bloom has not formed.

The last thing to look at is fish habitats. A pond devoid of cover will not be as fun to fish as one with some known cover for you to fish around. Also, you might be missing some habitat components required to grow certain species. If the habitat is lacking, the lake might not produce the quality of fishing you desire. For example, too much weed growth can provide excess hiding places for bluegill, which can result in a decline in the growth of the bass. The bass just cannot get to their groceries. What we are finding out, however, is that if you can maintain aquatic vegetation at a minimal level, it is beneficial to the fishery. However, no cover at all makes it difficult for smaller bluegill to survive to a more preferred size for bass. We will discuss some easy-to-install fish habitats in our next article.

Give it some thought, and figure out what you desire from your lake. Is it slab bluegill, a mix of fish for kids fishing or rod-ripping bass action? If you have multiple ponds, you might just want to manage each in a different manner. For example, a monster bluegill fishery is easy — keep it bass heavy and set-up a feeder. However, most fishermen seem to want quality bass fishing, and this requires a little more attention to detail, and that is one thing we will focus on next month.

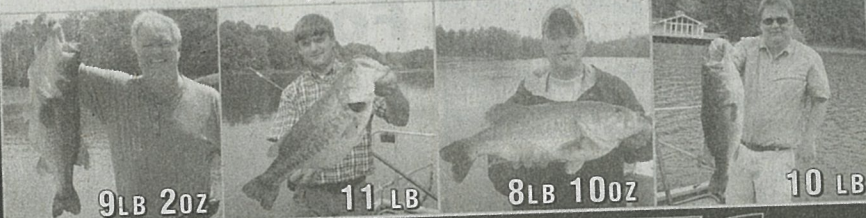
We hope that with this knowledge, this spring you will start doing your own lake study or hire a biologist. Water is now one of the most important amenities to any piece of property. This is even more obvious when in the middle of a drought. Why not take the time to make your lake as good as it can be? Get ready to find out next month how to fatten your bass, improve the fish habitats and save your fish in a drought. The road to your big bass pond is not going to be paved nor straight — more a like a curvy dirt road — but it should be a fun journey.

Finding out what is going on in the lake is just the first step in this improvement process.

Editor's Note: For more information, contact Greg Grimes at <greg@lakework.com>.

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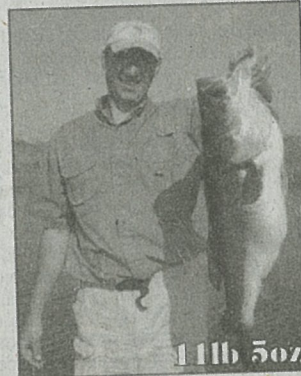
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