



# Destination Lake Waccamaw

Forest Duncan  
Cape Fear Fly Fishers  
April 19, 2017



## Lake Waccamaw

- ▶ Shallow, sandy bowl except for Big Creek
- ▶ 9,000 acres of water and 14 miles of shoreline
- ▶ 6 miles long x 5 miles wide
- ▶ Average depth = 7 feet; maximum depth = 11 feet
- ▶ Little wind protection due to flat terrain



## Fishing Structure

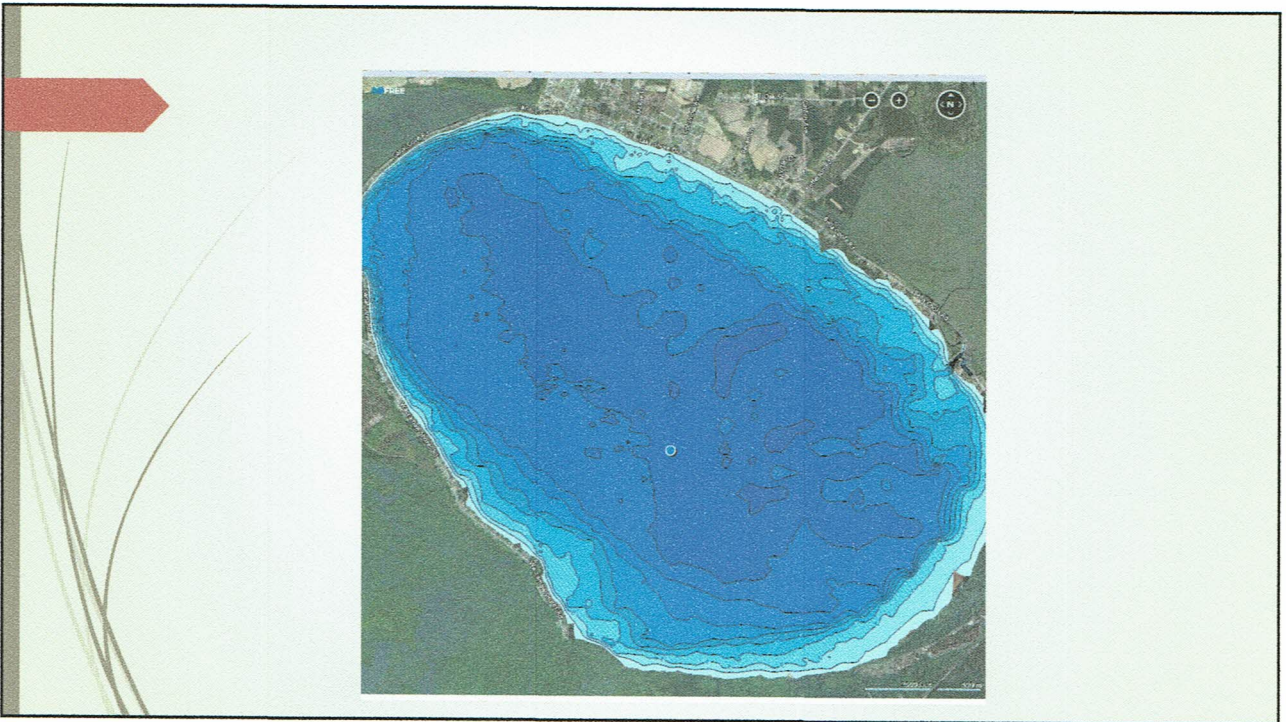
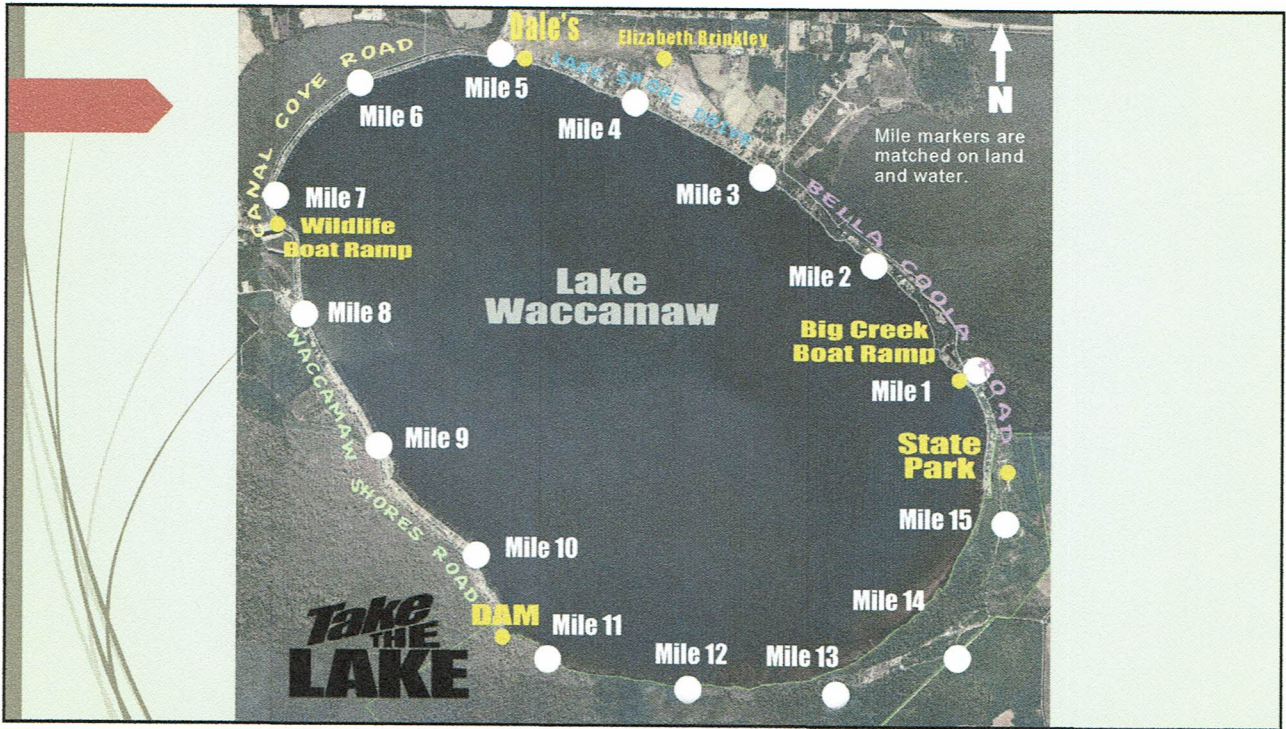
- Docks, mile posts, and no-wake zone markers
- Grass and lily pad beds
- Cypress trees and tree stumps
- Submerged vegetation beds
- Deep holes
- Drop-offs and springs
- Man-made - cedar trees, barrels, tires, etc.



## “Dissecting the Lake”

- Northwest side – dock and lily pads from Dale's to Wildlife ramp
- Wildlife ramp to spillway dam – docks, lily pads, grass beds
- Spillway dam – grass beds, cypress trees, tree stumps, Waccamaw River
- Southeastern side, State Park – shallow, clear, and barren bottom
- Eastern side - mouth of Big Creek, grass beds, lily pads, docks
- Mileage posts and no-wake zone markers around lake










## Species

- Largemouth Bass
- White and Yellow Perch
- Shellcracker
- Pumpkinseed
- Crappie
- Bluegill
- Catfish



## Largemouth Bass Spots

- On the eastern shore, the mouth of Big Creek, the lily pads 50-1,000 yards out from the mouth, and the grass beds on either side
- Mileage posts and wake markers 100 yards from shore
- Edges of the lily pads and grasses out front of Dale's Seafood restaurant
- Docks and lily pads, especially NW side where water is deeper and bottom is softer and darker
- Reed grass along shoreline, especially near spillway dam
- Cypress knees and tree stumps along shoreline near the spillway dam



## Largemouth Bass Gear and Technique

- Use 8-wt rod with a 6 to 8 foot leader (8-10 lb test) and a 4 to 6 foot tippet.
- Vary retrieve to learn what works, using slow and fast retrieves.
- Don't fish too fast; make 3-4 casts to attractive structure.
- When fishing a popper, stop occasionally, giving a tracking bass time to look at – and eat - the fly.
- Keep rod low and pointed at fly throughout the retrieve.
- To set the hook, strip back hard while simultaneously giving the rod some side pressure.

## Bass Flies

➤ Bass Popper



➤ Woolly Bugger



➤ Deer Hair Bass Bug



➤ Sunfish Imitation



➤ Wilson's Bass Bully



➤ Dancing Frog





## Bobby Sands Bass Flies

Pencil Popper, Wooly Bugger, Wobble Bug, Seducer



## Tips for Catching Trophy Bass

- Scale up the size of your flies – leave your mountain trout flies at home.
- Fish patterns in the 4-6" range; 2-4" in shad and bluegill patterns. Never fish anything smaller. Move up to 8" for true trophy bass weighing ten pounds.
- Cast to structure - weeds, trees, anything these ambush predators can find to stage up on, under, or behind. Fish topwater tightly to the shore and weed lines.
- If structure is not available, bass hug the bottom. So, either put the fly around structure or near the bottom.
- A 7 or 8-wt rod is mandatory along with a large arbor reel with solid drags (think saltwater).
- Tackle along a rod with a mid-depth sink tip line to use when topwater fishing with a floating line is poor.



## Bream Spots

- On the eastern shore, the mouth of Big Creek, the lily pads 50-1,000 yards out from the mouth, and the grass beds on either side
- Mileage posts and wake markers 100 yards from shore
- Edges of the lily pads and grasses out front of Dale's Seafood restaurant
- Docks and lily pads, especially NW side where water is deeper and bottom is softer and darker
- Reed grass along shoreline, especially near spillway dam
- Windward edge of the lake in May as wind blows mayflies out of the trees into the lake


## Bream Gear/Presentation

- Use 8-9 foot , 6-7 weight rod with 6-7 weight fly line; a 7 1/2 – 9 foot, 6 lb test leader tapered to a 3x (4-6 lb test) tippet.
- Let popper sit 15-20 seconds; twitch; make a few quick strips; let it sit; strip again.
- Fish popper in early morning; then, switch to a sinking fly with a strike indicator
- Use large popper to fish for bream and bass at the same time.
- Cast a pencil popper or a wooly bugger for bigger bream.



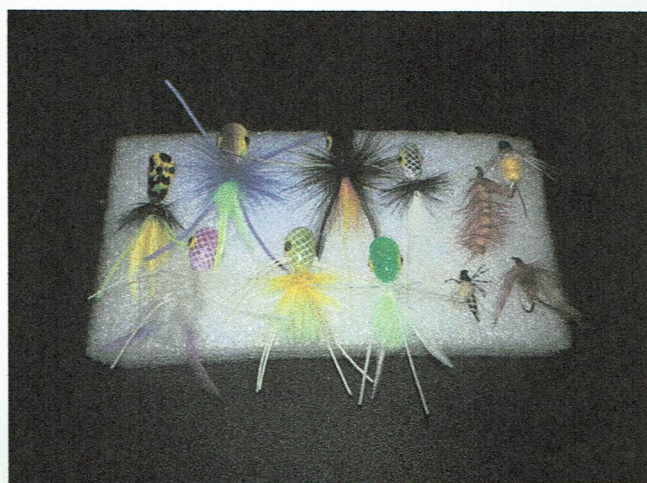
## Bream Flies

- ▶ Mini Pop Popper
- ▶ Slim Pencil Popper
- ▶ Billy Bluegill Spider
- ▶ Extended Body Eastern Green Drake
- ▶ Bead Head Hare's Ear Nymph
- ▶ Murray's Wasp Dry



## Bobby Sands Bream Flies


Poppers and Wasp Patterns





## White Perch Spots

- ▶ White Perch are schooling fish that inhabit open water a few hundred yards off the shoreline.
- ▶ Find depths of at least eight feet to catch white perch.
- ▶ If launching from Big Creek, look for white perch on your depth finder within a few hundred yards of where the creek enters the lake.
- ▶ Another option is to head for the grass line near the dam. Back off the grass line to a water depth of 6-8 feet and drift with the wind.
- ▶ They move constantly — never in one place very long. If you want to keep up with them, you have to keep moving, too.



## White Perch – Spin Fishing

- ▶ Look for fish marks on your GPS screen and splashes at the surface.
- ▶ Troll with small crankbaits to locate fish. When you get a strike, toss out a marker float, head back, and anchor about 40 feet away.
- ▶ Use medium-action spinning rod with 6-10 lb test monofilament line for casting small spinners, crankbaits, spoons, or jigs.
- ▶ Excellent lures for trolling and casting include ¼-ounce Rat-L-Traps, No. 2 or No. 3 Shad Rap in black/silver, and Rebel crankbaits.



## White Perch – Fly Fishing

- Use up to a 7-weight rod and intermediate or floating line.
- Cast an intermediate line to allow the fly to sink slowly; intermediate line works better in windy conditions.
- Use a floating line to cast a sinking fly; floating line is easier to pick up.
- Cast towards feeding white perch schools of baitfish to the surface.
- Strip the streamer across the surface mimicking panic. If no strike, use a sinking tip fly line or add split shot to drop the fly down the water column.
- For catching bigger fish, allow the fly or lure to sink deeper before starting the retrieve.

## White Perch Flies

- Freshwater Clouser
- Muddler Minnow
- Gray Ghost
- Bead Head Caddis Pupa





## TIPS


- ▶ Fish *early* in the morning (and later in the evening). Just before dark can be fantastic if the wind is down.
- ▶ Big Creek looks very fishy but you will fare better at the mouth of it and in the lake.
- ▶ If you can't smell fish, they aren't on a bed, and if you don't catch a couple within the first few casts, leave and try elsewhere.
- ▶ Fish in waders on the edge of the lily pads and grass beds, especially between the Wildlife ramp and the dam where docks and grass beds become more prominent.
- ▶ Wade out enough to cast to the grass beds. Don't go all the way to the grass, or you'll risk spooking fish. (Caution: gator mating season; May-June)



## Getting There Lake Waccamaw State Park Boat Ramp

- ▶ (Set GPS to 1866 State Park Drive, Lake Waccamaw, N.C.)
- ▶ From Southport, head north on NC-211 N; turn left onto 214-W
- ▶ Turn left onto State Road 1757/Jefferson Road
- ▶ Continue onto Bartram Lane; turn left onto Bella Coola Road
- ▶ Cross the bridge over Big Creek; the boat landing is just past the bridge on the right





## Getting There Wildlife Commission Boat Ramp (Presently Closed for Repairs)

- (Set GPS to 2402 Canal Cove Road, Lake Waccamaw, N.C.)
- From Southport, head north on NC-211 N
- Turn left onto 214-W
- Turn left onto Flemington Drive
- Continue right onto Canal Cove Rd.
- (Kayaks can launch from dam parking lot at end of Waccamaw Shores Road)




## Local Amenities

- Waccamaw Outdoors: Tues–Fri, 9 - 6:30 p.m.; Sat. 9 - 12 p.m.
- Lake Waccamaw State Park: 7-10:00 p.m.
- Dale's Seafood: Mon–Thurs, 11 - 9:00 p.m.; Fri-Sat, 11 - 9:30 p.m.
- Subway: Mon-Fri, 6:30-9 p.m.; Sat, 7-9 p.m.; Sun, 9-9 p.m.
- Hardee's, McDonald's, and Subway: 211 and 17



## Schedule A - Ideal

- ▶ 5:30 a.m. Meet at St. James Community Center Parking Lot
- ▶ 5:45 a.m. Depart
- ▶ 6:00 a.m. Breakfast at Hardee's, 211 and 17
- ▶ 6:30 a.m. Leave for Lake Waccamaw
- ▶ 7:30 a.m. Launch at Lake Waccamaw State Park Boat Ramp
- ▶ 1:00 p.m. Return to Lake Waccamaw State Park Boat Ramp
- ▶ 2:00 p.m. Optional Lunch at Dale's Seafood
- ▶ 3:30 p.m. Return Home



## Schedule B – Manageable

- ▶ 7:30 a.m. Meet at St. James Community Center Parking Lot
- ▶ 7:45 a.m. Depart
- ▶ 8:00 a.m. Breakfast at Hardee's, 211 and 17 intersection
- ▶ 8:30 a.m. Leave for Lake Waccamaw
- ▶ 9:30 a.m. Launch at Lake Waccamaw State Park Boat Ramp
- ▶ 3:00 p.m. Return to Lake Waccamaw State Park Boat Ramp
- ▶ 3:30 p.m. Return Home



## Schedule C – Evening Option

- 1:30 p.m. Meet at St. James Community Center Parking Lot
- 1:45 p.m. Leave for Lake Waccamaw
- 2:45 p.m. Launch at Lake Waccamaw State Park Boat Ramp
- 7:30 p.m. Return to Lake Waccamaw State Park Boat Ramp
- 8:00 p.m. Return Home



















QUESTIONS?