



# St. Vrain State Park Ponds

## FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

Benjamin Swigle - Aquatic Biologist (Fort Collins/Boulder)  
ben.swigle@state.co.us / 970-472-4364

**General Information:** St. Vrain is a perfect destination for anglers, campers, birders, photographers, and just about anyone who enjoys nature. A total of 10 ponds offer angling for rainbow trout, bass, crappie, perch, bluegill, walleye, catfish, and more. For more information visit the park's website:  
<http://parks.state.co.us/parks/stvrain/Pages/StVrainHome.aspx>

**Location:** I-25 and HWY 119 (east of Longmont)

**Recreational Management:** Colorado State Parks

**Fishery Management:** DOW; warm water angling with put and take trout

**Purchase a Fishing License:** <http://wildlife.state.co.us/ShopDOW/AppsAndLicenses/>

### Amenities

- Camping sites (tent, electric, full hook-up)
- Excellent wildlife viewing
- Universally accessible fishing piers and trail system
- Educational Kiosks
- Modern restrooms
- Picnic sites

### Regulations

- Statewide bag/possession limits apply (daily bag limit for trout is 4, see regulation brochure for more information).  
<http://wildlife.state.co.us/NR/rdonlyres/6DE0299B-B621-4248-B56A-00DF8A66BB3/0/fishing.pdf>

- Bald Eagle pond is catch and release only for largemouth and smallmouth bass. No bait fishing is allowed in this pond.

### Previous Stocking

2011

- Black Crappie
- Bluegill
- Channel Catfish
- Grass Carp
- Largemouth Bass
- Rainbow Trout
- Redear Sunfish
- Sauger
- Saugeye
- Smallmouth Bass
- Walleye

2010

- Black Crappie
- Bluegill
- Channel Catfish
- Largemouth Bass
- Rainbow Trout
- Redear Sunfish
- Sauger
- Smallmouth Bass
- Walleye
- Yellow Perch

\*see table below for specifics

### Sportfishing Notes

Rainbow Trout

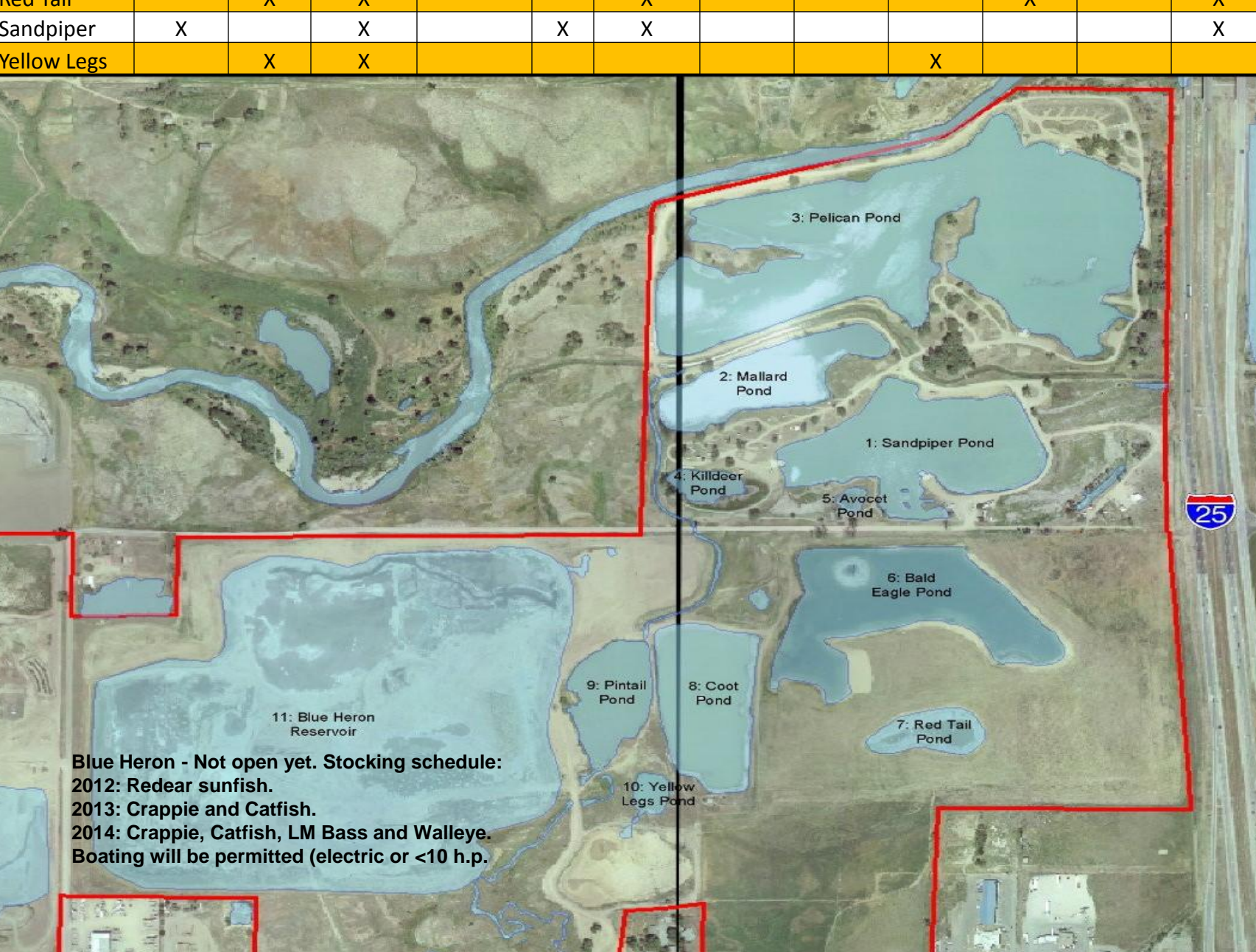
- Spinners, bait (powerbait & nightcrawlers), and flies are all productive tools. Fishing is typically best April-June and during the winter.

- At times the rainbows are so aggressive they often deep hook themselves while attacking bait. Anglers who encounter a deep hooked trout are highly encouraged to keep these fish. Trout hooked in this fashion will not survive.

- More than 40,000 ten inch rainbow trout are stocked annually to accommodate the heavy use. Trout are primarily stocked in Sandpiper, Mallard, and Coot Ponds. Trout are strategically stocked in the spring and fall when cooler water temperatures persist and to increase ice fishing opportunities.

**Table Below:** The 2010-2011 complete stocking by fish species for the individual ponds at St. Vrain State Park.

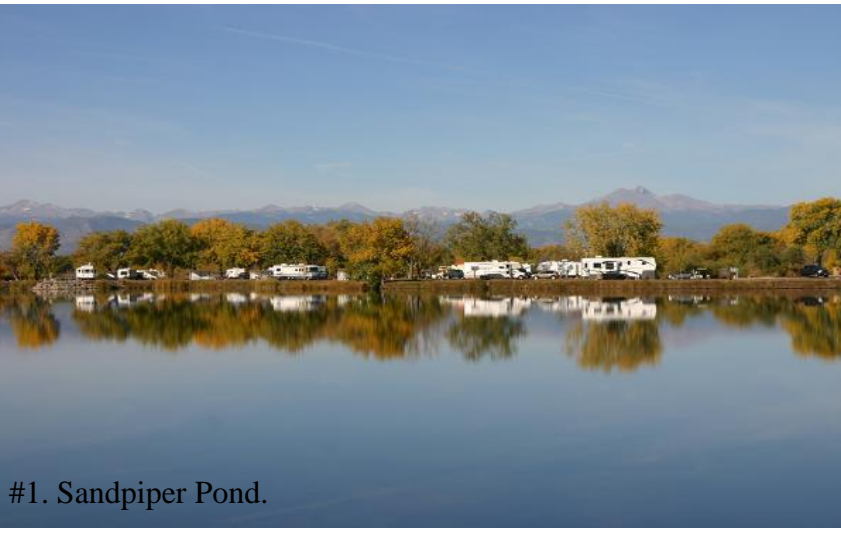
Pond	Black Crappie	Bluegill	Channel Catfish	Grass Carp (Sterile)	LM Bass	Rainbow Trout	Redear Sunfish	Sauger	Saugeye	SM Bass	Walleye	Yellow Perch
Bald Eagle		X	X	X	X					X		X
Blue Heron							X					
Coot	X		X			X			X		X	
Killdeer		X	X							X		
Mallard		X	X		X	X				X		X
Pelican	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				
Pintail	X		X						X		X	
Red Tail		X	X			X				X		X
Sandpiper	X		X		X	X						X
Yellow Legs		X	X						X			



### #1. Sandpiper Pond 06/24/2010 Survey; 2 gillnets & 15 min. boat electrofishing.

2010 Survey Species	# Caught	% Total Catch	Ave. Length (Range) In.	Average Weight (lbs)
Black Crappie	20	11.7%	6.2 (2 - 8)	0.13
Bluegill	42	24.6%	4.2 (2 - 5)	0.05
Channel Catfish	37	21.6%	9.8 (7 - 15)	0.30
Common Carp	28	16.4%	18.7 (17 - 23)	3.04
Largemouth Bass	28	16.4%	11.5 (2 - 19)	1.04
Rainbow Trout	15	8.8%	10.6 (9 - 14)	0.40
Green Sunfish	1	0.6%	6.1	0.15

**Left:** The summary of the 2010 survey on Sandpiper Pond. This pond is primarily managed for 10-inch trout which are heavily stocked in the spring and late fall (ice angling). Roughly 25,000 catchable trout are stocked annually. Besides trout, good numbers of catfish and bass (up to 18") were present. Bluegill and crappie are present but are rather small.



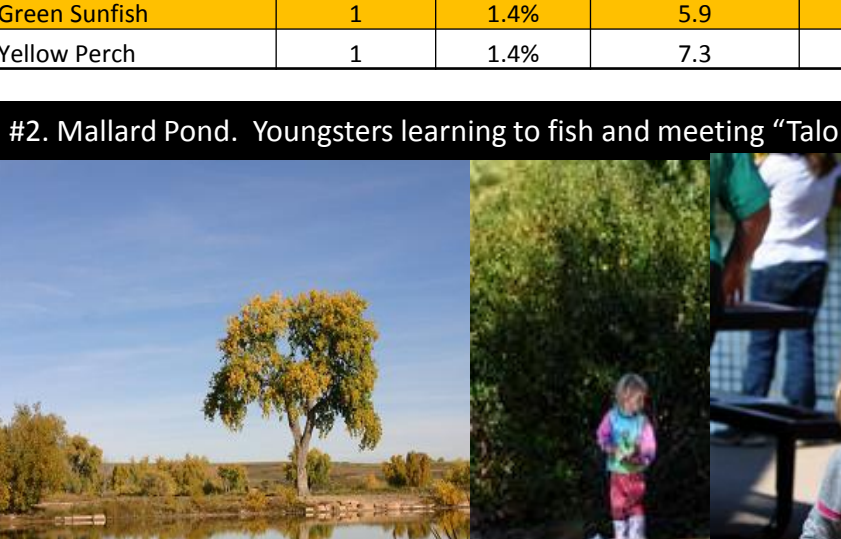
#1. Sandpiper Pond.



### #2. Mallard Pond 06/23/2010 Survey; 13 min. boat electrofishing.

2010 Survey Species	# Caught	% Total Catch	Ave. Length (Range) In.	Average Weight (lbs)
Black Crappie	19	26.8%	6.6 (5 - 8)	0.15
Bluegill	9	12.7%	4.3 (3 - 7)	0.07
Channel Catfish	1	1.4%	21.5	4.72
Common Carp	23	32.4%	22.0 (17 - 24)	4.88
Largemouth Bass	17	23.9%	6.6 (1 - 14)	0.27
Green Sunfish	1	1.4%	5.9	0.15
Yellow Perch	1	1.4%	7.3	0.16

**Left:** The summary of the 2010 survey on Mallard Pond using electrofishing. Mallard is primarily managed for 10-inch trout; heavily stocked in the spring and late fall (ice angling). Roughly 16,000 catchable trout are stocked annually. By design, no trout were identified in the survey but good numbers of crappie and small bass were present. Smallmouth bass were stocked in 2010 in an attempt to make this species available to anglers at the park.



#2. Mallard Pond. Youngsters learning to fish and meeting "Talon", a Parks and Wildlife mascot.



### #3. Pelican Pond – all fish were eliminated September, 2010. Rebuilding has begun.

9 membrane aeration system; installed March, 2011.

A reclamation project completed in September, 2010 eliminated all fish in Pelican Pond (37 surface acres). More than 7,000 common carp (94% total fish killed) were eliminated. An aeration system funded in part by a Fishing is Fun grant has been installed to improve water quality and support better angling. Following the install of the aeration system the following fish have been stocked:

1. Black Crappie, 8,021 @ 1.5 inches, 430 @ 4.3 inches
2. Channel catfish, 1,600 @ 8.1 inches
3. Redear sunfish, 4,500 @ 1.7 inches
4. Largemouth Bass, 247 @ 20.0 inches
5. Grass Carp (Sterile), 250 @ 3.2 inches, 4 @ 18.3"
6. Sauger, 500 @ 1.3 inches



Illegally introducing fish into Pelican Pond will severely limit our ability to create a quality crappie/catfish fishery. Do not move fish or dump unused minnows in any of the ponds. Once the crappie/sunfish are established more bass will be stocked. Grass carp, a sterile vegetarian, were stocked to consume excessive vegetation which cause algal blooms can be reduced by the aeration system.

### #4. Killdeer Pond 09/20/2010 Survey; 10 min. boat electrofishing.

2010 Survey Species	# Caught	% Total Catch	Ave. Length (Range) In.	Average Weight (lbs)
Black Crappie	59	72.8%	4.4 (4 - 9)	0.04
Bluegill	2	2.5%	5.9 (5 - 7)	0.14
Common Carp	1	1.2%	27.2	11.07
Largemouth Bass	19	23.5%	8.0 (2 - 17)	0.82

**Killdeer Pond** – No trout are stocked in Killdeer. This pond is managed as a bass fishery but cannot sustain much harvest given its small size (0.8 acres). Anglers should consider catch and release practices or limit harvest to a single bass. Nearly 60 12-15-inch largemouth bass were stocked during the spring of 2010 to feed on the crappie. The brood size bass originated from a private lake near Loveland which was drained in 2010. Roughly 400 5-inch crappie from Killdeer were transferred into Pelican Pond during April, 2011.

### #5. Avocet Pond – This pond is not stocked, nor was a survey completed. The pond likely contains small sunfish.

### #6. Bald Eagle Pond 06/22/2010 Survey; 2 gillnets & 2 trapnets.

2010 Survey Species	# Caught	% Total Catch	Ave. Length (Range) In.	Average Weight (lbs)
Black Crappie	2	2.8%	6.0 (5 - 6)	0.15
Bluegill	15	21.1%	3.8 (3 - 5)	0.03
Channel Catfish	28	39.4%	13.6 (9 - 22)	0.85
Gizzard Shad	2	2.8%	19.6 (19 - 20)	3.38
Largemouth Bass	15	21.1%	12.4 (7 - 23)	1.56
Green Sunfish	2	2.8%	5.5 (5 - 6)	0.13
Yellow Perch	7	9.9%	7.8 (7 - 8)	0.2

Bald Eagle Pond – No bait fishing, flies and lures only. Catch and release only for bass.



**Bald Eagle Pond** is managed as a trophy largemouth bass fishery. All bass should be returned to the water immediately. Bait fishing is not permitted in this pond. Bald Eagle is heavily stocked with bass. To increase growth rates, this pond receives thousands of bluegill each year which the bass find appetizing. Anglers may keep species other than bass, provided such fish are caught using artificial flies or lures.

### #7. Redtail Pond 09/20/2010 Survey; 1 gillnet & 10 min. electrofishing.

2010 Survey Species	# Caught	% Total Catch	Ave. Length (Range) In.	Average Weight (lbs)
Bluegill	4	7.3%	4.6 (3 - 5)	0.09
Largemouth Bass	41	74.5%	4.8 (3 - 6)	0.07
Rainbow Trout	8	14.5%	12.9 (11 - 14)	0.80
Yellow Perch	2	3.6%	9.3 (9 - 10)	0.42

**Red Tail Pond** is managed for bass and bluegill. A small number of catfish will be stocked in 2011.

### #8. Coot Pond 09/20/2010 Survey; 2 gillnets & 2 trapnets, 15 minutes boat electrofishing.

2010 Survey Species	# Caught	% Total Catch	Ave. Length (Range) In.	Average Weight (lbs)
Black Bullhead	4	3.4%	10.8 (10 - 13)	0.80
Black Crappie	7	6.0%	5.6 (3 - 9)	0.11
Bluegill	31	26.5%	4.1 (3 - 6)	0.04
Common Carp	13	11.1%	17.3 (11 - 22)	2.60
Gizzard Shad	19	16.2%	9.9 (3 - 17)	0.58
Largemouth Bass	34	29.1%	8.0 (4 - 18)	0.50
Rainbow Trout	1	0.9%	9.3	0.27
Saugeye	1	0.9%	8.6	0.18
White Sucker	2	1.7%	13.6 (10 - 17)	1.22
Yellow Perch	5	4.3%	3.4 (3 - 5)	0.01

**Coot Pond** has quality bass and receives trout during the spring and fall (about 4,000 10-inch trout annually). Saugeye were stocked for the first time in June, 2010. Management will attempt to establish a saugeye/crappie fishery in the future with gizzard shad serving as the forage base.

### #9. Pintail Pond 09/20/2010 Survey; 2 gillnets, 1 trapnets, 15 min boat electrofishing.

2010 Survey Species	# Caught	% Total Catch	Ave. Length (Range) In.	Average Weight (lbs)
Black Crappie	1	0.6%	8.7	0.31
Bluegill	33	20.6%	4.5 (4 - 6)	0.07
Channel Catfish	6	3.8%	14.6 (12 - 24)	1.73
Common Carp	22	13.8%	18.3 (9 - 24)	3.44
Gizzard Shad	37	23.1%	5.7 (2 - 16)	0.24
Largemouth Bass	29	18.1%	6.8 (4 - 17)	0.25
Rainbow Trout	1	0.6%	13.1	0.37
Saugeye	4	2.5%	8.3 (8 - 9)	0.16
White Sucker	2	1.3%	8.1 (7 - 8)	0.18
Yellow Perch	25	15.6%	6.0 (2 - 7)	0.12

**Pintail Pond** needs some management direction. Saugeye and other predators were stocked in 2010 to get a handle on overabundant carp, shad, and stunted bluegill.

### #10 Yellow Legs Pond – We surveyed only 6 fish total in the pond. This pond has limited potential for a quality fishery. In the future look for a small number of catfish to be stocked. No trout are stocked in this pond.

Based on the 2010 survey results, specific management strategies for each of the ponds at St. Vrain State Park are now in place. To accommodate the various strategies do not move fish among the various ponds (illegal activity). Trout fishing will generally be limited to Sandpiper, Mallard, and Coot Ponds. The remaining ponds will focus on management for warmwater species.