

Black and Bigmouth Buffalo Spawn in Brackish Water Ponds

Young-of-the-year black buffalo (*Ictiobus niger*) and bigmouth buffalo (*I. cyprinellus*) were found in brackish water ponds which had been stocked with adult fish at the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge, Grand Chenier, Louisiana. Sixteen 19-cm fingerling black buffalo were recovered from a 0.04-ha pond originally stocked with 10 2-yr-old buffalo (1.18 kg average) and 15 21.6-cm channel catfish. In another 0.04-ha pond stocked with 10 2-yr-old bigmouth buffalo (1.24 kg average), 139 15.2-cm fingerlings were recovered. Fish were removed from both ponds on 15 October 1974, 197 days after the adult fish were stocked.

Salinities for the two ponds ranged from 1.6 to 1.8 ‰ in the pond with black buffalo and from 1.4 to 2.0 ‰ in the pond with bigmouth buffalo.

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Spawning of buffalo in brackish water ponds has not (to my knowledge) previously been reported; however, laboratory studies by Hollander and Avault (1975) indicated that eggs hatch in up to 9 ‰, fry survive in 9 ‰ and fingerlings survive approximately 12 ‰ salinity.

Reference

Hollander, E.E., and J.W. Avault. 1975. Effects of salinity on survival of buffalo fish eggs through yearlings. *Prog. Fish-Cult.* 37(1):47-51.

— W. Guthrie Perry, *Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, Grand Chenier, La. 70643.*