

# **St James Plantation POA**

## **Resident Pond Fish Stocking Guidelines**

St James Plantation offers excellent fishing in numerous ponds throughout the community. Some of the ponds with community access have been enhanced through fish stocking and efforts to improve the habitat and health of the ponds. Information on the recommended fishing ponds and the rules for community pond fishing are available in the [St James Plantation Ponds Fishing Guidelines](http://www.stjamespoanc.org/) available at the St James POA office and online at <http://www.stjamespoanc.org/>.

The purpose of this document is to establish the guidelines for residents who wish to stock fish in a POA neighborhood pond or one that abuts their property. Adherence to these guidelines is necessary for the protection of the fish and community interests. The POA Ponds Committee will provide initial guidance on pond stocking and ongoing support to help maintain a healthy fish population.

Stocking fish in a pond provides both environmental and recreational benefits. Environmentally, fish can help control undesirable insects, snakes, mosquitos, and invasive plants, while attracting local and migratory birds. Recreationally, feeding or catching fish in your neighborhood pond can provide great enjoyment for residents, their families, and friends. Improper fish stocking practices presents significant risks to the fish and pond health.

### **Why are these Guidelines Necessary?**

These guidelines will help ensure residents have the information they need to successfully stock a pond. Adherence to these procedures will also greatly improve the prospects for the long term health and survival of the fish. Consider these points:

1. Some ponds may not be acceptable for fish stocking or conducive to maintaining healthy fish populations due to variables such as water quality, depth, habitat, and other factors.
2. Our community ponds are treated at times with herbicides and chemicals to control the growth of weeds and undesirable insects. While these treatments do not generally harm healthy established fish, they could be harmful to newly stocked juvenile fish.
3. Simply adding fish to a pond without understanding and adhering to some basic requirements can be harmful to the fish and the pond. For example:
  - An appropriate balance of forage fish and predator fish is necessary to maintain a healthy fish population. Adding predator fish such as bass without providing the proper balance of food sources, including forage fish, could result in undernourished and unhealthy fish.
  - Introducing fish from outside sources, including local lakes, can be harmful to the pond and fish population by introducing diseased or invasive species.
  - Some species of fish are not suitable for our local waters and will not survive or may be detrimental to desirable game fish.

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## **Procedures for Resident Fish Stocking**

Residents adding fish to a St James POA pond should adhere to the following procedures.

### **Step 1**

A notification should be sent to the POA Ponds Committee at [POA@stjamespoa.net](mailto:POA@stjamespoa.net) advising them of an interest in stocking fish in a specific pond.

- Residents are encouraged to consult their neighbors around the pond before stocking. This provides a means of gaining support and possibly sharing in the costs.
- Residents should choose a contact person to facilitate communications with the POA Ponds Committee and POA's pond management personnel.

### **Step 2**

The POA Ponds Committee will provide the following:

- An onsite visit and general assessment of the pond for fish stocking, including a water quality analysis
- Information and reference material on fish stocking practices
- Recommendations for fish stocking, fish habitat, and water quality considerations
- A list of local suppliers that provide fish stocking services

### **Step 3**

Residents desiring to stock fish will be responsible for the following:

- Select a local fish stocking service supplier
- Review the fish stocking plans with the POA Ponds Committee prior to stocking
- Arrange for delivery of the fish stocking services with payment direct to the supplier
- Notify the POA Ponds Committee when the stocking is complete
- Provide initial fish feeding following the stocking, if recommended

### **Step 4**

The POA Ponds Committee will notify POA management and the POA pond maintenance company that fish have been stocked in a particular pond.

- The pond maintenance company will treat the ponds as required, while taking into account the newly stocked fish.

It should be noted that fishing in neighborhood ponds stocked by residents is subject to the *St. James Plantation Ponds Fishing Guidelines*. This includes catch and release practices, adherence to prohibited areas of access, and compliance with North Carolina fishing regulations.

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## Resident Pond Fish Stocking Guidelines

### Fish Stocking Recommendations

Acceptable Fish: Largemouth Bass, Bluegills, Red Ear Sunfish (Shellcracker's), Fat Head Minnows, \*Channel Catfish and \*Sterile Grass Carp.

Unacceptable Fish: Any fish species not listed above as acceptable and any fish caught outside of St James. Examples are Crappie, Bull Head Catfish, non-Sterile Carp and Goldfish.

For more stocking guidance, reference the NCSU Pond Management Guide:

<https://appliedecology.cals.ncsu.edu/extension/fisheries/pond-management-guide/>.

#### **St James Ponds Stocking Recommendations, Ponds **without** Predator Fish (Bass)**

##### **Largemouth Bass and Sunfish Fingerlings in a 1-to-10 Ratio per acre**

Species	Quantity	Size	When Stocked
Blue Gill	350	1 to 2 in.	Oct. to Nov.
Redear Sunfish	150	1 to 2 in.	Oct. to Nov.
Largemouth Bass (hybrid)	50	2 to 4 in.	The following June after sunfish have been established

#### **St James Ponds Stocking Recommendations, Ponds **with** Predator Fish (Bass)**

##### **Largemouth Bass and Sunfish Fingerlings in a 2-to-10 Ratio per acre**

Species	Quantity	Size	When Stocked
Blue Gill	70	3 to 5 in.	April
Redear Sunfish	30	3 to 5 in.	April
Fat Head Minnows	5 lb.		April

\*Catfish and \*Sterile Grass Carp **SHOULD NOT BE STOCKED** by homeowners but will be stocked as necessary by the POA at the recommendation of the pond maintenance contractor.

