

# Tishomingo National Fish Hatchery

## Monthly Report



### Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Staff from Tishomingo NFH and Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) conducted a study to investigate the efficacy of light traps in capturing larval paddlefish in a hatchery-controlled environment. The study indicated that larval paddlefish were significantly attracted to light in a controlled environment. No published research exists on using phototaxis to capture paddlefish larvae or evaluate potential recruitment in the wild. ODWC hopes to use these techniques to evaluate spawning success in the wild.



*Paddlefish rearing tanks used in light study.*

Tishomingo NFH staff conducted a study to explore the influence of tank design on feed training success of larval paddlefish. Three round tanks were compared to three rectangular tanks. Day One old paddlefish fry were stocked into both groups of tanks at equal densities. Water source, water exchange rates, and diets were identical among the study tanks for the 21 day study period. Preliminary results suggest that no significant difference could be attributed to tank design for either survival or growth rate. Tishomingo NFH staff plan to continue similar studies next year in an ongoing effort to refine paddlefish culture techniques and practices.



*Paddlefish fry during feed training.*

## Volunteers

A new volunteer, Matt Lyons, has been assisting staff at the Tishomingo NFH during April. Matt graduated from Stony Brook University with a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies. He spent five years as the First Mate/Captain on the "Celtic Quest", a fishing boat out of Port Jefferson, New York. Currently, he lives in Noble, OK, and works for the WildCare Foundation for injured or orphaned wildlife.

*Volunteer Matt Lyons assists with alligator gar spawning.*



## Visitors and Outreach



*Aaron White presents program to area 4<sup>th</sup> graders at Natural Resource Day.*

- Aaron White, fish biologist from the Tishomingo NFH, participated in the annual Love County Natural Resource Day at Lake Murray State Park. Youth spent the morning visiting exhibits from several natural resource agencies to learn about the different ways that the agencies protect the environment. Live alligator gar and

alligator snapping turtles were on display at the hatchery exhibit in addition to common fish hatchery culture equipment. Following Mr. White's presentation, the children were encouraged to ask questions and responded with great enthusiasm.

- The Tishomingo NFH participated in the 6th Annual Earth Day Texas Event, the largest of its kind in the world. Over 130,000 visitors came to Fair Park in Dallas to attend the three-day free event which focused on bringing together environmental organizations, businesses, academic institutions, and government agencies to generate awareness and inspire people to get involved and help make a difference in their own communities.



*Tishomingo NFH exhibit at Earth Day Texas.*

Hatchery staff set up an informational and educational booth displaying live alligator gar and alligator snapping turtles for event visitors to view and discuss. The event afforded hatchery staff the opportunity to educate the public about seldom seen species and talk about the mission and programs of the Tishomingo National Fish Hatchery.

### ***Other Scheduled Outreach Events***

- Presentation for the Garvin County Conservation Board's Natural Resource Day with alligator snapping turtles used as exhibits during the seven classes for Middle School students;
- Presentation at the Arbuckle-Simpson Nature Festival held at the Tishomingo National Wildlife Refuge with a display of alligator snapping turtles drawing the interest of about 450 elementary-aged children in attendance;
- About 30 At-Risk teenage students from the Take Two Academy in Ardmore visited the hatchery, and were shown paddlefish eggs and alligator snapping turtles.
- To celebrate "Month of the Child", the Chickasaw Head Start from Tishomingo brought about 40 children, age 3 – 4, and parents to the hatchery to see fish and turtles raised here.

### **Work Force**

Kerry Graves and Ralph Simmons completed their EEO Training by attending a presentation at Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge.

All staff successfully completed the required FISSA Training.



*Alligator gar in pond at Tishomingo NFH.*

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**U.S. Department of the Interior U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/tishomingo/index.html>

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