

2005 GA-AFS Awards

Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society Annual Awards Presentations January 25-27, 2005

Awards presented at this meeting were the Fishery Worker of the Year Award, Certificate of Appreciation, the Past President's Plaque, and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place student paper awards.



Dr. Bill Davin (right) receives the Past President's plaque from incoming president Steven Patrick.



Anthony Rabern (left) receives the Fishery Worker of the Year Award from GA Chapter Awards Committee Chair Scott Hendricks.

Anthony has led Region 2 efforts to estimate forage abundance and biomass in five northeast Georgia reservoirs by coordinating through the coordination of hydroacoustic sampling with Georgia Power and data analysis with a private consultant. With the ability to estimate forage densities, Anthony and other biologists have been able to formulate predator stocking rates that can be supported by reservoir forage populations. These research and management efforts have helped to establish the Lake Burton put-grow-take trout fishery, which now provides a reservoir trout fishery with trophy size brown trout. His stocking recommendation was also based on input from Burton anglers, who supported the stocking of trout into Lake Burton.

Anthony also initiated an experimental walleye culture and stocking program. Under Anthony's leadership, walleye spawning procedures were developed from recent experiments at the Burton and a number of other WRD hatcheries. Anthony also coordinated efforts to acquire additional walleye fry and fingerlings from other states so that reservoir stocking quotas could be met. More than 100,000 walleye fingerlings were stocked during 2004 and walleye fisheries are beginning to develop.

Anthony and his staff have worked cooperatively with Georgia Power Company to optimize fisheries restoration and enhancement efforts in those northeast Georgia reservoirs. He secured minimum flows for spawning, monitors those flow effects on fisheries, and encourages lake level stabilization to enhance sport fish reproduction. In 2004, he secured an agreement with Georgia Power to include fish habitat enhancements as a condition for new dock permits.

Anthony has been the lead technical specialist for DNR in the Lake Hartwell PCB damage assessment and compensation project. He led the multiagency technical working group in developing the aquatic resource and recreational fishing damage claim. He continues to advise WRD Headquarters staff and the Commissioner's office on the recommended direction for negotiations.

Anthony serves as co-chairman on the WRD education team that was formed to develop and implement a statewide education plan for the Division. This Team has produced a plan, support materials, and a tracking system for WRD staff. Anthony also served as President of the GA Chapter AFS for 2003-04 year, and led the planning for a highly successful annual meeting.

In summary, Anthony's collective efforts in education and reservoir fisheries management have advanced our understanding of aquatic systems, but also promoted the public's understanding as well. He has maintained, improved, and created new sport fisheries in northeast Georgia. His quality of work and commitment to teamwork enhance the results of any project that he is associated with. For outstanding achievements in 2004, including a Division education plan, reservoir trout and walleye fisheries, promising Lake Hartwell negotiations and other activities, the GA Chapter AFS proudly recognizes Anthony Rabern as the "Fishery Worker of the Year."

SCROLL DOWN FOR OTHER AWARDS



Wayne Barr (second from left) of the Lake Oconee Bassmasters received a Certificate of Appreciation from the GA Chapter, and BASS Conservation Patches from BASS. Also pictured (from left) Scott Hendricks, Awards Committee Chair, Chris Horton, Assistant Conservation Director BASS, and Scott Robinson, GA WRD Fisheries Biologist.

The Lake Oconee Bassmasters are an excellent example of a bass club that does much more than hold fishing tournaments. They serve as a very positive representation of anglers, contributing much time and effort toward fisheries habitat enhancement and youth fishing activities.

This Club has been instrumental in habitat improvement projects at Lake Oconee. In 2000-2001, they provided volunteer labor and equipment to place more than 100 concrete structures to provide deep water fish attractors and ambush points for predatory fish.

In cooperation with the WRD and Georgia Power Company, the Lake Oconee Bassmasters applied for and received a \$10,000 grant from the FishAmerica Foundation for shoreline habitat enhancement work at Lake Oconee. This grant, along with more than 200 hours of volunteer labor and the use of numerous personal boats, trucks, and tools provided by the club, were used to complete extensive shoreline and shallow water habitat enhancements. More than 2,000 native aquatic plant seedlings and tubers were purchased and planted in the lake. Thirty Berkley FishHabs and more than 100 PVC fish

structures were also purchased, assembled, and installed in the lake as a result of this grant and the Club's efforts.

The Oconee Bassmasters also sponsor at least one youth fishing event each year in the Lake Oconee area. The members often volunteer their time at other youth events and take kids fishing on an individual basis. For their dedication to fisheries conservation and youth activities, the GA Chapter AFS proudly recognizes the Lake Oconee Bassmasters with this Certificate of Appreciation

SCROLL DOWN FOR OTHER AWARDS

BEST STUDENT PAPERS



1st Place student paper; Robert DeVries and Doug Peterson, UGA. Preliminary estimate of shortnose sturgeon in the Altamaha River

SCROLL DOWN FOR OTHER AWARDS



[2nd Place student paper](#) - \$50; Anna Rahn and Bill Davin, Berry College. Early life history and development of the silver chub.

SCROLL DOWN FOR OTHER AWARDS



3rd Place student paper - \$50; P.C. Sakaris, E.R. Irwin, J.C. Jolley, and D. Harrison. Auburn University and GDNR. Flathead catfish on both sides of the Chattahoochee: Alabama natives versus Georgia fugitives.