

Dennis Wildlife Center Fish Hatchery is a key component of the SCDNR's Freshwater Fisheries Management program. Combined with regional biological survey offices, state public fishing lakes and four other hatcheries, the SCDNR is providing South Carolina's citizens and visitors with the best recreational fishing opportunity possible while protecting and conserving our aquatic resources.



### State Fish Hatcheries


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| <p>1 Walhalla<br/>198 Fish Hatchery Rd.<br/>Hwy 107N<br/>Mt. Rest, SC 29664<br/>864-638-2866</p> <p>2 Spring Stevens<br/>5290 Fish Hatchery Rd.<br/>Heath Springs, SC<br/>29058<br/>803-273-3306</p> <p>3 Cheraw<br/>433 Fish Hatchery Ln.<br/>Cheraw, SC 29520<br/>843-537-7628</p> | <p>4 Cohen Campbell<br/>2726 Fish Hatchery Rd.<br/>West Columbia, SC<br/>29172<br/>803-755-2070</p> <p>5 <b>Dennis Wildlife Center</b><br/><b>305 Black Oak Rd.</b><br/><b>Bonneau, SC 29431</b><br/><b>843-825-3387</b><br/>and<br/>Jack D. Bayless<br/>264 Platt Rd.<br/>St Stephen, SC 29749<br/>843-567-3286</p> |
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For Additional Information, Contact:  
**Hatchery Manager**  
**Dennis Wildlife Center Fish Hatchery**  
**305 Black Oak Rd.**  
**Bonneau, SC 29431**  
**Phone: 843-825-3387**  
 Please call ahead to schedule a tour.



**DNR**

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13-8491

# Dennis Wildlife Center

## South Carolina Fish Hatchery



**DNR**

<http://hatcheries.dnr.sc.gov>

## DENNIS WILDLIFE CENTER (DWC)

### What We Do

Operated by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), this fish hatchery is one of five in South Carolina serving a vital role in the management of our state's fishery resources. The DWC is a warm water fish hatchery, meaning it produces a variety of fish species that do best in summer water temperatures of 75 to 85°F. These species include striped bass, hybrid striped bass, bluegill and redbreast to help support recreational fishing. DWC also produces robust redhorse fingerlings for restoration stocking. DWC produces approximately 5 million fish annually for stocking in South Carolina's public lakes, reservoirs and rivers.

### History

Phase I of DWC construction was completed in 1973 with funds from the SC General Assembly and Anadromous Fish Funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The first phase included the administrative building, fish holding house and 35 half-acre ponds. Phase II construction was completed in 1978 and included an administration building enlargement and construction of a maintenance building, dormitory, 2 onsite residences and 20 additional one-acre ponds. In addition to the two major construction phases, facilities have undergone renovations when funds were available.

The DWC is the office headquarters for several SCDNR projects including regional



- fisheries management, wildlife management, diadromous fish project and DWC hatchery staff. Various agency functions are held at the DWC and facilitated in the 30-person meeting room located in the office complex.

Construction of rearing ponds at DWC made possible the rearing of juvenile striped bass fingerlings. Subsequent stocking of these fish created and continues to support a multi-million dollar striped bass fishing industry in South Carolina. The DWC produces approximately 3.5 million striped bass annually for stocking in South Carolina's public lakes, reservoirs and rivers. An inside fish holding facility is also located at DWC. This building contains fiberglass tanks and concrete raceways and is used to temporarily hold batches of fish prior to stocking, provide tank space for fisheries research projects and grow out various fish species to advanced sizes.

### Hatchery Facts

**Species Reared:** striped bass, hybrid striped bass, redbreast and robust redhorse

**Number of Ponds:** 55 production ponds comprised of 35 half-acre ponds and 20 one-acre ponds

**Fish Holding Facility:** 14 fiberglass tanks ranging from 4 to 8 feet in diameter and 6 concrete raceways

- **Water Source:** DWC ponds are supplied with water from Lake Moultrie. The fish holding facility can utilize well water or surface water from Lake Moultrie.

**Acres of Water:** 37.5 acres for production



### Hatchery Production Cycle

Ponds are filled within a week prior to stocking striped bass larvae at a rate of 150,000 per acre. Ponds are fertilized twice a week to develop microscopic food organisms for young fish. Striped bass larvae grow to a harvestable size in about 35 days. At harvest, ponds are drained into a basin where fisheries staff seine fingerlings and place them on a hauling truck for transport to stocking locations. Approximately, 75,000 fingerlings can be produced in a one-acre pond. Following harvest of striped bass ponds, adult bluegill or redbreast sunfish are placed in a number of ponds to spawn. Ponds are fertilized and fed a floating fish diet throughout the summer growing cycle. In the fall, ponds are drained and harvested. A one-acre bluegill pond can produce over 200,000 fingerlings. A portion of the ponds are used for robust redhorse production. These larvae are produced from artificially spawning adult robust redhorse collected from the Savannah River. When larvae reach 10 days of age, they are stocked in fertilized ponds and fed daily. At harvest, robust redhorse have grown to 5 to 6 inches and are individually tagged prior to transport to the stocking location. For all species reared, management of water quality is top priority. Daily monitoring of dissolved oxygen levels and manipulation with aeration is necessary to maintain optimum growing conditions. Control of nuisance aquatic vegetation is required throughout growing seasons and is accomplished through the use of registered algaecides and herbicides.

