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## Carterville Fishery Resources Office

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

## Region 3 - Great Lakes/Big Rivers

*Leadership in Conserving, Enhancing, and Restoring Aquatic Ecosystems*



# Carterville Fishery Resources Office

Marion, Illinois



Series of photos depicting Carterville Fishery Resources Office activities: (Top Row, Lt. to Rt.) Nate Caswell and Greg Conover showing Regional Director Robyn Thorson a Mississippi River shovelnose sturgeon; Greg Conover holds a paddlefish collected in Pool 26 of the Mississippi River; Nate Caswell holds a shovelnose sturgeon collected in the Ohio River; (Bottom Lt. to Rt.) Mark Cornish, Rock Island District - Army Corps of Engineers, holds a silver carp collected from the Mississippi River; (top) Toddler pool at the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge Kid's Fishing Derby; (bottom) Fishery survey using a mini-fyke net set; Scott Schell, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, holds a shovelnose sturgeon collected by Carterville FRO staff in the Ohio River as part of a reintroduction effort in the Scioto River.

# Carterville Fishery Resources Office

Carterville Fishery Resources Office (FRO) was established in 1981 and is located at the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge in Marion, Illinois. The office provides fishery management assistance to other Fish and Wildlife Service offices, federal and state agencies, and Department of Defense military bases in Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Ohio. Carterville FRO accomplishes its mission of conserving, enhancing, and protecting fish and aquatic ecosystems by working with partners.

Carterville FRO, in partnership with the Columbia FRO, assists the 28 states of the Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association (MICRA) with a basin-wide paddlefish stock assessment. Carterville FRO has operated a processing center for coded-wire tags and assisted in database management for this national project since 1997. Twenty-three states depend upon these services and are using the data to develop 4 multi-jurisdictional plans to manage paddlefish with assistance from the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Carterville FRO was recently appointed as the Chair of a Work Group on Asian carp by the Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Task Force. The staff are leading a national effort to develop a Management Plan for four species of Asian carp: grass, bighead, silver, and black carp. The Asian Carp Work Group includes a wide array of partners and stakeholders with interests and expertise in Asian carp. They are charged with development of a collaborative, integrated plan to address the expanding Asian carp populations in our Nation's rivers. The Carterville, Columbia, and La Crosse FROs are currently working together to evaluate sampling gear efficiencies and develop standardized methods for collecting Asian carp.



-USFWS

**This is a young-of-the-year invasive silver carp collected from the Illinois River.**



-USFWS

**Carterville Fishery Resources Office**

**Left to Right: Greg Conover, Judy Patrick, Colby Wrasse, Nate Caswell**

A high priority for the Carterville FRO is working with our partners to manage sturgeon populations in the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The station is assisting the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (DNR) with shovelnose sturgeon restoration in the Scioto River, a tributary of the Ohio River. Shovelnose sturgeon have not been seen in this portion of their range for more than 50 years. The Illinois DNR and Carterville FRO are assessing commercially harvested shovelnose sturgeon populations in the lower Ohio, Wabash, and middle Mississippi Rivers. Carterville FRO is assisting the Middle Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge to better understand the use of main channel border habitat by sturgeon. The study is important for developing habitat restoration and enhancement projects. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Missouri Department of Conservation, Southern Illinois University, and Carterville FRO are investigating population demographics and habitat use of the Federally endangered pallid sturgeon in the middle Mississippi River. The partners hope to identify critical habitats used by sturgeon for spawning and nursery areas during 2004.

For detailed information about the Carterville Fishery Resources Office, contact the office at (618) 997-6869 or visit the Regional website at:

<http://midwest.fws.gov/Fisheries/fisheryoffices.htm>