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Angler Catches State-Record Redear Sunfish

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Congratulations to James Lucas on breaking the state record by catching a 1-pound, 1-ounce redear sunfish with a throwline.

O'Fallon, Missouri - The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reports James Lucas of O'Fallon became the most recent record-breaking angler in Missouri when he caught a redear sunfish on a private pond in Lincoln County. The new "alternative method" record fish caught by Lucas on March 24 weighed 1 pound, 1 ounce. Lucas' recent catch broke the previous state record of 6-ounces, caught in 1996.

"I was pretty excited when I pulled the redear sunfish out of the water because fishing that day wasn't easy," James Lucas said.

Lucas added the weather outside wasn't great for fishing when he caught the new state record.

"I'm just thankful my friend drove the boat and braved the conditions with me while I caught another state-record fish," Lucas said.

Lucas is pretty familiar with state-record fish, as he now holds two of them in Missouri.

"I caught this fish on purpose with my throwline because I want to break more state records," Lucas said.

Lucas caught the fish with a throwline. A throwline is a method for catching fish that involves lowering or throwing a fishing line into the water without the use of a rod and reel. The line can be anchored to an object on shore or held in hand.

“I choose to use a throwline because it is very challenging, and I enjoy a challenge!” said Lucas.

MDC weighed the redear sunfish on a certified scale in O’Fallon.

“This is the fourth state-record fish this year. 2017 is shaping up to be a year for state-record fish,” said MDC Fisheries Programs Specialist Andrew Branson. “The mild weather we have had this year means more anglers are fishing, and catching big fish.”

Lucas said he released the redear sunfish back into the private pond, and now plans to go after more state-record fish.

Missouri state-record fish are recognized in two categories: pole-and-line and alternative methods. Alternative methods include: throwlines, trotlines, limb lines, bank lines, jug lines, spearfishing, snagging, snaring, gigging, grabbing, archery, and atlatl.

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