



Raccoon Lake

Fisheries Fact Sheet

Raccoon Lake was constructed in 1942 to serve as a water supply reservoir for the city of Centralia. Annual boat stickers and City tournament permits are required.

Location: Raccoon Lake is located in Marion County on the East side of Centralia, Illinois approximately 1 mile north of Route 161.

Area: Raccoon Lake has a surface area of 970 acres, a maximum depth of 17 feet, and a mean depth of 3.9 feet. The lake has 16.4 miles of shoreline.

Status of the Sport Fishery: The sport fish population in Raccoon Lake is comprised primarily of largemouth bass, bluegill, white and black crappies, and channel catfish. Other common species include common carp and yellow bullheads. The fish population is surveyed annually, and summaries below are based on the results of the most recent population survey and four-year trends in the population indices.

Largemouth Bass: Data from the 2021 population survey showed that all of the population indices met or exceeded the target goals. The average body condition of all sizes of fish remained very good. Approximately 34% of the adult bass exceeded the 15” minimum length. Poor bass reproduction and recruitment continue to be a major concern in this lake. Following significant improvement in 2012 and 2013, bass CPUE plummeted in 2014 to 37 per hour and had remained below the target of 60 per hour ever since. To help improve numbers, over 35,500 largemouth bass fingerlings were stocked in the lake in June of 2017. This helped the 2017 CPUE improve to 78 per hour, well above the target level for the first time in 5 years. Despite dropping to just 31 bass per hour in 2018, the bass catch rate in the 2019 sample improved to 82 bass per hour. In 2020, the catch rate improved again to 104 bass per hour. In 2021, bass were collected at 67 per hour. Hopefully these improvements will translate to more consistent and successful reproduction and recruitment in the coming years. For 2022, most keeper fish will range from 15” – 20” and weigh from 1.7 – 5 lbs.

Bluegill: The size structure of the bluegill population remained stable. Approximately, 55% of the adult bluegill exceeded 6” in length but only 11% exceeded 7” in length. Despite the poor size structure, growth rates remained good and condition was very good. If these fish continue to grow in the coming years, the size structure of the bluegill population could show some improvement but will likely always be hindered by the presence of gizzard shad. Anglers can expect to catch an abundance of fish 5” – 7” in length weighing 0.1 to 0.3 pounds.

Crappie: Both black and white crappie are present in Raccoon Lake, but white crappie comprised nearly 83% of the sample. Data collected from the annual population survey indicated 17% of the adult white crappie population exceeded 10” in length and an additional 47% of the adult population were between 8” – 10” in length. Average body condition declined to just below target. Catch rate also declined but remained high. Black crappie were much less numerous in the sample, but their population was in good shape too. Nearly 42% of the adult black crappie in the sample exceeded 10” in length and they had good average body condition. This lake should provide good crappie fishing in the coming year.

Channel Catfish: Catfish in Raccoon Lake should provide good fishing opportunities in the coming year. Average body condition was just over the lake management plan target and the electrofishing catch rate was high. Most fish in the population are older and nearly 75% of the adult channel catfish sampled were 18” or longer. Supplemental catfish stockings, along with the elimination of trot lining and jug fishing, should help to improve the size structure of the channel catfish population in the coming years.

Fishing Regulations: Two pole and line fishing only

Species	Daily Creel Limit	Minimum Length Limit
Largemouth Bass	6	15"
Channel Catfish	6	

Additional Regulations: City boat and tournament permits are required and may be purchased at the City Clerk's office at 101 S. Locust, Centralia.

Contacts: Centralia City Clerk's office 618/533-7625; IDNR Fisheries 618/393-6732

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