



Giant City State Park - Deer Pond

2023 FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

LOCATION: Giant City State Park is located in Jackson and Union Counties south of Carbondale, IL. Deer Pond is located a short distance East of the Giant City Lodge.

DESCRIPTION: Deer Pond is a 1-acre pond managed for recreational fishing. Parking is available at the Giant City Lodge or in front of the cabins just south of the lodge. There are trails that lead to Deer Pond, one being a horse trail. The perimeter of the pond is clear of brush and mowed often to provide access for anglers. There are no docks or restrooms on site, although restrooms are available at the Giant City Lodge.

STATUS OF THE SPORT FISHERY – The following is a summary of game fish populations based on a fish community electrofishing survey conducted during May of 2021 by IDNR:

Bluegill – During the 2021 spring survey, 20 Bluegill were collected during 6 minutes of electrofishing. Bluegill in the sample ranged from 5 inches up to 8.75 inches in length. The larger Bluegill was 8.75 inches and weighed 0.65 lbs. Bluegill body condition was considered very good, indicating fast growth. In summary, the Bluegill fishery in Deer Pond is considered excellent, possessing both good numbers and size. Habitat enhancement projects (brush piles and gravel beds) planned for the winter of 2021/2022 should further improve the Bluegill population.

Redear Sunfish – A total of 21 Redear were collected during the spring survey. Redear in the sample ranged in length from 5.5 to over 9 inches. The largest Redear was just over 9 inches in length. Redear body condition was considered desirable, indicating good growth rates. In summary, the Redear population structure is very similar to Bluegill and compliments the panfish fishery well.

White Crappie – During the spring survey, a total of 13 White Crappie were collected. White Crappie are not a desirable species to have in a small pond environment, as they can easily become overpopulated and negatively impact other species. Therefore, the goal is to maintain a low population density of preferred (10 in.) and memorable-size (12 in.) crappie that will complement the fishery but will not negatively impact the fish community. Fortunately, this goal appears to be met, as most fish in the sample measured between 11 and 13 inches. In addition, the CPUE of 130/hour was much lower than it was during the prior survey in 2014, a good indication that White Crappie are not overpopulating.

Largemouth Bass – During the 2021 spring survey, a total of 38 Largemouth Bass were collected during 6 minutes of electrofishing. The majority of bass were between 9 and 12 inches in length. The largest bass was over 16 inches and weighed over 2 lbs. Body condition was relatively good in comparison to bass in other Giant City ponds. In summary, Largemouth Bass are abundant and demonstrate moderate growth potential in Deer Pond. The primary goal for the bass population is to maintain high bass abundance, which helps drive quality size structure for Bluegill and Redear.

Channel Catfish – No Channel Catfish were collected during the spring survey. However, the fishery for Channel Catfish is popular among anglers at Giant City State Park and is maintained by annual stockings.

Fishing regulations:

Species	Creel Limit	Minimum Length Limit
Channel Catfish	6	None
Bluegill or Redear Sunfish	15	None
Largemouth Bass	6	15 inches
All Fish	2 Pole and Line Fishing Only	

PHONE NUMBERS: Illinois Department of Natural Resources Fish Biologist – Nick Abell 618-967-0952.