

STATUS OF THE MUSKIE FISHERY IN ILLINOIS

REGION III
DISTRICT 11

Michael J. Mounce

PANA LAKE - Located approximately two mile east of Pana, in Shelby and Christian counties, this lake has a surface area of 205 acres, with a maximum depth of 36 feet, and an average depth of 14 feet. Public boat launching facilities are available.

This lake was stocked initially to take advantage of the abundant prey population in the lake and diversify the fishery. Tiger muskies were stocked in this lake from 1985 to 1997. During a 1993 angler creel survey no muskies were reported caught. One 30 inch tiger muskie was collected in 1.5 hrs of electrofishing in September, 1999. Five tiger muskies were collected in the 1994 and two in the 1998 fall population surveys, ranging from 18.5 to 20 inches. None were collected during the 1996 survey. One angler reported catching a 21 inch fish in 1994, while no other angling reports have been received. Home owners on the lake have reported observing individual muskies over 30 inches.

Statewide regulations of a 36 inch minimum length limit with a one (1) fish per day creel limit are in effect. Tiger muskie fishing prospects are rated as poor to fair.

LAKE PARADISE - Located approximately four miles south of Mattoon in Coles County, this lake has a surface area of 138 acres, with a maximum depth of 16 feet, and average depth of 8.5 feet. Public boat launching facilities are available, but are in poor condition.

This lake was stocked initially to take advantage of the abundant prey population in the lake and diversify the fishery. It has been included in the muskie stocking evaluation study conducted by the Illinois Natural History Survey. Tiger Muskies have been stocked in this lake since 1985, often a high rates. In addition to the tiger muskies, true muskellunge were stocked from 1993-1995. Angling reports on this fishery have been poor. Fish population surveys by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Fisheries and the Illinois Natural History Survey have yielded poor results, however in 1998 four muskies (25-32") and two tiger muskies (22-23") were collected.

Statewide regulations of a 36 inch minimum length limit with a one (1) fish per day creel limit are in effect. Muskie and tiger muskie fishing prospects are rated as poor to fair.

PARIS EAST LAKE - Located on the north edge of Paris, along Route

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1, in Edgar County. This lake is a sister lake of Paris West Lake and covers 163 surface acres with a maximum depth of 21 feet and average depth of 8.0 feet. Public boat launching facilities are available.

The primary purpose for stocking this lake was to diversify the fishery. Tiger Muskies were stocked in this lake from 1985 to 1997, often at high rates. Angling reports indicate that muskies have been caught occasionally as an incidental fish, but few if any large tiger muskies have been caught. No tiger muskies were collected in a supplemental survey in September, 1999 or in the 1998 fall population survey. Three 19-20" tiger muskellunge were collected during the fish population survey in 1997.

Statewide regulations of a 36 inch minimum length limit with a one (1) fish per day creel limit are in effect. Tiger muskie fishing prospects are rated as poor to fair.