



# SILVER SPRINGS STATE FISH & WILDLIFE AREA

## BIG (LOON) LAKE

### FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

**LOCATION** – Silver Springs is located in Kendall County, 5 miles west of Yorkville on Fox Road.

**DESCRIPTION** –A total of seven gravel pits are located at this state site and contain a variety of warm-water fish species, while the two largest, Beaver Lake (4.5 acres) and Big Lake, also known as Loon Lake (22.0 acres), are actively managed and will provide the most consistent action. Beaver Lake has a maximum depth of 14 feet and averages 8 feet, while Big Lake contains a maximum depth of 20 feet and averages 11.8 feet. A concession stand located at the park provides paddle boat rental, bait, food and drinks. A gravel boat ramp is available at Big Lake, with boats restricted to trolling motors only. A barrier-free fishing pier with access is also available at Big Lake. A one- lane concrete boat ramp on the Fox River is present as well.

**MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES** - To monitor the fish population, Big Lake is surveyed every other year. Aquatic vegetation is monitored annually and treated as required and fluridone has been utilized in early spring applications to arrest the growth of Eurasian milfoil and curleyleaf pondweed. These applications have generally provided control for multiple seasons. Aquatic habitat projects have included the introduction and establishment of selected emergent aquatic plants as well as man-made structures placed in mid-water locations.

**STATUS OF THE SPORT FISHERY** –Big Lake receives annual stockings of 8” to 10” channel catfish and catchable-size rainbow trout both spring and fall. *No special mercury advisory or other contaminant-related consumption advisories pertain.* Below is a brief description of the major sportfish species in these water bodies.

**LARGEMOUTH BASS** – Length frequency distribution from the 2016 IDNR survey suggests that bass are somewhat stock-piled just below the legal size limit of 15 inches. Weights for these fish was substandard, a consequence of foraging competition. The absence of smaller, younger bass may be the result of predation on these fish by larger bass. This was reflected by an increase in the overall average size bass collected. At the same time, the percentage of legal-size bass fell below the long-term average which may reflect angling mortality as these fish reach and exceed the legal size limit.

**BLUEGILL** – The number of bluegills collected in the 2016 survey declined with very few fish of quality size were present. Although the majority of the bluegills collected in this survey fell between 3 and 5 inches, body condition for those length groups was very good. Hopefully these fish will continue to grow to sizes more appealing to the angler. The decline of bluegills from 5 inches on may be a reflection of predation on this size group by largemouth bass.

**REDEAR SUNFISH** – This species was poorly represented in the 2016 survey. It is probable that redear sunfish are much more prevalent but the sampling methodology used may have been inadequate at providing an accurate sample. Early spring trap netting has historically provided a much better sample.

**BLACK and WHITE CRAPPIE** – Although both species of crappie are present, black crappie are presently the more common of the two. Large crappies are not common, but fish in excess of ten inches have been collected during IDNR spring trap net sampling. Very few crappies were collected during the 2016 survey on Big Lake.

**CHANNEL CATFISH** – Stocked annually in Big Lake, this population can provide fair angling opportunities with fish ranging in size and some exceeding 24 inches.

**ADDITIONAL FISH SPECIES** - The likely result of an unauthorized angler release, yellow bass have established a reproducing and recruiting population. Yellow bass collected from Big Lake during the 2013 survey averaged 7.8”.

**IDNR 2016 Survey Results**

Species	Number of Fish Collected in each Length Category (Inch)								
	0-5	6-8	9-11	12-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+	Total
<b>Largemouth Bass</b>	1	13	5	51	1	0	0	0	71
<b>Bluegill</b>	73	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	74
<b>Redear Sunfish</b>	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
<b>Black Crappie</b>	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	5
<b>Channel Catfish</b>	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Smallmouth Bass</b>	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
<b>Yellow Bass</b>	0	8	5	0	0	0	0	0	13

**FISHING REGULATIONS** – Statewide fishing regulations apply at this lake (see current Illinois Fishing Information booklet and IFISHILLINOIS website <http://www.ifishillinois.org/> for specific details).

Additional Site Specific fishing regulations:

Boaters – Electric trolling motor only

All fish species - Two pole and line fishing only.

Channel Catfish – 6 fish daily creel limit.

Largemouth Bass – 15” minimum length limit.

Rainbow Trout – Spring and fall closed season (Big Lake).

**CONTACT INFORMATION** – Silver Springs State Fish and Wildlife Area: 630/553-6297.  
IDNR Fisheries County Fish Biologist: 630/553-6680.

**Big (Loon) Lake Map**

