

CLINTON LAKE

LAKE STATUS SUMMARY

One of the responsibilities of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources is to provide outdoor recreation opportunities to the residents of Illinois. One means of increasing this opportunity has been through the leasing of valuable recreation land and water from utility companies. The Clinton Lake State Recreation Area is operated by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources with the cooperation of Exelon Corporation. This site has greatly increased the fishing opportunity, as well as other major water recreational activities, for residents of Illinois.

LOCATION: Clinton Lake is located in DeWitt County 10 miles east of Clinton, IL.

DESCRIPTION: This 4,895 acre lake was constructed to serve as a cooling reservoir for the Clinton Nuclear Power Station. The lake has a maximum depth of 60 feet and an average depth of 15 feet. Clinton Lake is No Wake for all boats from 1/2 hour after sunset to 1/2 hour before sunrise with the exception of waterfowl hunters. Various portions of the lake are designated as no-wake, electric motor only, or no boat areas for safety and security reasons. All IDNR ramps are now equipped with wheelchair accessible boat docks. There are 17 Class AA campsites, 286 Class A campsites and 5 Class B/S campsites at Clinton Lake with showers and almost all are adaptable to either tents, trailers or motor homes. Bowfishing is allowed on certain areas of the lake.

STATUS OF THE SPORT FISHERY: The IDNR Division of Fisheries has been active in the management of the fisheries in Clinton Lake since the lake opened in 1979. The lake receives stockings of walleye, hybrid striped bass, blue catfish, and crappie. The following information is a summary of the major sport fisheries based on periodic fish population surveys.

Largemouth Bass - The most recent survey resulted in a catch rate of 75.1 bass per hour and was below the management objective of 80 bass per hour. The average catch rate since 2011 is 90.2 bass per hour. There are good numbers of quality bass in the lake, with 70% being over 12 inches in length and 31% over 15 inches. Clinton Lake has an excellent bass population.

Walleye – The catch rate for Walleye during the most recent survey was 4.3 Walleye per hour. The average catch rate since 2011 is 5.3 walleye per hour. Of the Walleye collected over 10 inches, 62% were longer than 15 inches and 15% were longer than 20 inches. The fishery is maintained from annual stockings.

Hybrid Striped Bass - Hybrid Striped Bass were first stocked in Clinton Lake in 1978. During the last spring gill netting survey, Hybrid Striped Bass were collected at a rate of 12.3 per net. The average catch rate is 16.7 hybrids per net. The hybrid striped bass ranged in size from 14.5 inches to 27 inches. The heaviest hybrid weighed 13.84 pounds and the average weight was 5.54 pounds. Clinton Lake has a good Hybrid Striped Bass fishery and is maintained by annual stockings.

White Bass –The catch rate in the most recent survey was 5.1 White Bass per hour and was below the management objective of 10 to 20 White Bass per hour.

Crappie –During the most recent survey, the catch rate for Black Crappie was 8.6 Black Crappie per hour and the catch rate for Blacknose Crappie was 0.6 per hour. The White Crappie catch rate during the most recent survey was 34.6 crappie per hour. The catch rate objective is 25 per hour for White Crappie and 15 per hour for Black Crappie. Approximately 12% of the White Crappie were longer than 10 inches and 8.6% of the Black Crappie were longer than 10 inches.

FISHING REGULATIONS FOR CLINTON LAKE

Fishing Regulations:

1. **Largemouth Bass** - 16" minimum length limit and 3 per day harvest limit (4/1/99)
2. **Hybrid Striped Bass and/or White Bass** - 10 fish limit of which only 3 may be over 17" in length (4/1/99)
3. **Crappie** - 15 Fish Daily Harvest Limit with no more than 5 Fish < 10" and 10 Fish ≥ 10" (4/1/23)
4. **Walleye** - 18" minimum length limit and 3 per day harvest limit (4/1/17)
5. **Channel and Blue Catfish** - 10 per day harvest limit (4/1/17)
6. Two pole and line fishing only, except above Davenport and Parnell bridges where trotlines, jugs and bank poles are permitted; except bowfishing is allowed across the lake with a safety distance.
7. From 10 Oct through 31 March the area between the DeWitt and Rt 48 bridges are closed to fishing.

For other species, statewide regulations are in effect. For further regulation information, please consult the current Illinois Fishing Regulation Booklet.

For further information:

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