



LAKE DECATUR

FISHERIES FACT SHEET



LOCATION: Lake Decatur is located on the east side of the City of Decatur, in Macon Co.

DESCRIPTION: The lake covers 3,093 surface acres with a maximum depth of 22 feet and average depth of six feet. Several public boat launching facilities are available with the City of Decatur (217-424-2837) collecting boating access fees. All tournaments must be registered through ifishillinois.org.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES: The fish population in Lake Decatur is intensively surveyed every two years. The fish are measured, weighed, and scales collected before releasing them alive. Hybrid striped bass and walleye populations are surveyed annually and are usually maintained by annual stockings through IDNR hatcheries.

FISHERY STATUS: **Largemouth bass** are moderate in abundance due to a lack of aquatic vegetation for nursery habitat. Bass from ½ - 4 lbs. have been collected in surveys with fish over 5 lbs. caught by anglers on occasion. Body condition is good. Recruitment in 2013 and 2014 was slightly improved, although the collection rate was poor in 2016 for all sizes of bass. Fishing quality for 2018 is rated as fair-poor.

Crappie, both white and black crappie are abundant. Growth rates are good. Anglers may still catch crappie up to 14+ inches and 1.3 lbs. Surveys in 2014 and 2016 indicated that good numbers of legal fish are present. Fishing prospects for 2018 are rated as excellent!

Bluegill fishing is fair. Few fish collected exceed 7.5 inches, but most have a heavy body weight.

Walleye are very abundant, with catch rates in 2016 and 2017 late fall surveys of 60 and **170/hr.**, respectively. A very high percentage (49%) of the fish collected in 2017 were 14" or longer. Fishing quality is rated as good to excellent for 2018 and should improve significantly in 2019. This will fishery will be the best since stocking was initiated on the lake.

White bass are usually very abundant in Lake Decatur. They have excellent growth rates and fish exceeding 2 lbs are routinely collected in IDNR surveys. Late fall surveys of 2016 and 2017 indicate that good numbers and size structure are present. Fishing quality is rated as good - excellent for 2018!

Hybrid striped bass are stocked annually with population density varying with stocking density and emigration over the spillway. Good numbers of hybrid striped bass have been caught by a few fishermen in recent years with some exceeding 8 lbs. Numbers of hybrids are caught below the spillway in early spring. Fish up to seven pounds were caught during the 2016 late fall survey. Fishing quality is rated as fair for 2018.

Channel catfish are abundant in the lake through natural recruitment. The average catch goes from 1 - 4 lbs., with the occasional fish over 10 pounds caught. Fishing quality should be good to excellent!

Flathead catfish are high in abundance with trophy size fish up to 60 lbs caught recently. Fishing quality is rated as good.

Common carp are abundant with fish exceeding 11 lbs. Fishing quality is rated as good.

Freshwater Drum, commonly called drum "perch", are abundant with fish exceeding 10 lbs.

Buffalo, Redhorse suckers, and Carpsuckers are common, but few are caught by fishermen.

Yellow bass, Longear sunfish, Green sunfish, Orangespotted sunfish, and Yellow bullheads are collected, but are seldom harvested by fishermen due to the small size attained by these species.

Smallmouth bass, Rock bass, and Redear sunfish are very rarely collected and are likely very rare in the anglers catch.

REGULATIONS: All statewide regulations are in effect. One-half hour after sunset the entire lake is no wake.

Species	Daily Harvest Limits	Length Limits
ALL	2 pole and line only with no more than 2 hooks or lures per pole	
Largemouth or Smallmouth Bass	6	14-inch minimum
Walleye, Sauger, or Saugeye	6	14-inch minimum
White Bass and Hybrid Striped Bass	No limit less than 17 inches	Only 3 fish 17 inches or larger
White, Black, or Hybrid Crappie	10	10-inch minimum

COOPERATIVE SPORTSMEN + STRUCTURED HARVEST = OPTIMAL FISHING QUALITY!

Please Remove All Litter!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Joe Nihiser, Lake Decatur Lake Patrol Office. Phone: 217-424-2837

or

Mike Mounce, IDNR, Phone: 217-345-2420, or visit ifishillinois.org