



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. Efforts to establish aquatic vegetation will hopefully improve the largemouth bass fishery.
 - **Crappie** (both white crappie and black crappie) are abundant. Anglers may catch crappie up to 14+ inches and 1.3 lbs, with a good number of fish over the 10-inch minimum for harvest.
 - **Bluegill** fishing is fair. Few fish collected during surveys exceed 7.5 inches.
 - **Walleye** are abundant with a very healthy population of young-of-year through 6+lb fish observed during our annual survey. Growth rates are great, with many of the fish at or above 14”.
 - **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. A fish kill affecting only white bass occurred during the summer of 2020, however the population will likely recover quickly.
 - **Hybrid striped bass** are stocked annually with population density varying with stocking density and emigration over the spillway. Numbers of hybrids are caught below the spillway in early spring, however they can be found in the lake by those who target them.
 - **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.
 - **Flathead catfish** are high in abundance with trophy size fish up to 60 lbs caught.
 - **Smallmouth bass, Rock bass, and Redear sunfish** are very rarely collected and are likely very rare in anglers catch.
 - **Common carp** are abundant with fish exceeding 11 lbs.
 - **Freshwater drum**, commonly called drum “perch”, are abundant with fish exceeding 10 lbs.
 - **Buffalo, redhorse suckers, and carsuckers** are abundant.
- Yellow bass, longear sunfish, green sunfish, orangespotted sunfish, and yellow bullheads** are also present.

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

Please Remove All Litter!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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

Jim Garavaglia - IDNR - james.garavaglia@illinois.gov