



Mermet Lake

Fisheries Fact Sheet

Mermet Lake is a shallow, 452-acre, IDNR-owned impoundment located in Massac County approximately 10 miles north of Metropolis. Mermet was originally built as a water supply for flooding adjacent wetland compartments for waterfowl hunting, but sport fish flourished when stocked, and the lake has been managed for fishing for more than 50 years. Curlyleaf pondweed, an exotic aquatic plant, invaded Mermet in 1999, and has caused occasional summer fish kills since then, but annual herbicide treatments have generally been successful at controlling the impacts of this plant in recent years, allowing the sport fish population to slowly recover.

Largemouth bass: Largemouth bass were collected at a rate of 45 per hour in fall 2021, up from last year. 96% of these fish were larger than 12 inches, which easily met the management plan goal. Bass larger than the old 14 inch minimum size limit made up 49% of the sample, while 26% exceeded the newly implemented length limit of 16 inches (April 1, 2016). Bass condition remained excellent.

Bluegill: Bluegill substantially more abundant in 2021 than in the previous year at 303 per hour of electrofishing, 18% were larger than 6 inches (within desirable management goals), with 3 percent of the sampled population exceeding 7 inches. Bluegill body condition was still excellent.

Redear: A decent number of Redear sunfish were sampled in 2021 (14/hr). The lake sustains a phenomenal Redear fishery but these fish can be difficult to sample at certain times of the year. Quality and condition of these fish were phenomenal, and 7% of the fish sampled were at least 10 inches long. Future surveys will be implemented to better survey Bluegill and Redear populations.

Crappie: Small numbers of White and Black Crappie were sampled in 2021. However, as a note, crappie weighing more than 2 pounds have been regularly reported by Mermet Lake anglers, and sampling techniques will be implemented in the future to more adequately sample them.

Channel catfish: Channel catfish are generally not a large component of the annual Mermet Lake electrofishing sample, and 2021 followed this trend. 2 fish were sampled. Annual channel catfish stockings help support a fishery which is very popular with the angling public.

Regulations in effect: Largemouth bass – 16" minimum length limit, 3 per day creel (effective 4-1-16). Black and white crappie – 25 per day creel. Channel catfish – 6 per day creel. Outboard motor limit is 10 hp, but boats with larger outboards are allowed to operate at no-wake speed. Mermet Lake is closed to fishing during the duck season. Consult the Illinois Fishing Information booklet for additional regulation information.

Additional Fisheries Information can be obtained by calling IDNR District Biologist Luke Nelson at 618-364-5381, or by contacting the site at 618-524-5577.