



# LAKE SHELBYVILLE

## FISHERIES FACT SHEET

**LOCATION:** Lake Shelbyville is located in Shelby and Moultrie Counties in east-central Illinois, with the dam situated on the Kaskaskia River, east of the City of Shelbyville, Illinois.

**DESCRIPTION:** Lake Shelbyville has a surface area of 11,100 acres, with a maximum depth of 67 feet, and an average depth of 18.9 feet. Numerous public boat launching facilities are available, with a fee assessed on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (217-774-3951) developed access area boat ramps, and free access on IDNR state park or USACE gravel boat ramps. All tournaments must be registered through [ifishillinois.org](http://ifishillinois.org).

**MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:** The fish community in Lake Shelbyville is surveyed annually, using multiple methods. Muskie, walleye, sauger, smallmouth bass, and striped bass are all stocked to create/maintain fisheries. Artificial fish attractors have been added thanks to a concerted effort by the USACE, IDNR, and the Lake Shelbyville Fish Habitat Alliance. Efforts to establish aquatic vegetation in the lake continue, with limited success. Research is underway to better understand the collapse of the muskie fishery, including methods to improve stocking survival.

**FISHERY STATUS:**

- **Largemouth Bass** Largemouth bass virus has had lasting effects on the population, as has the reduction of coarse woody debris and the lack of aquatic vegetation. Efforts to establish aquatic vegetation will hopefully improve the largemouth bass population. We are frequently asked about stocking of bass, however research has shown that stocked largemouth bass contribute very little to the population, especially in a reservoir this large.
  - **Smallmouth Bass** are low in abundance as we attempt to develop a population through stockings. Brood stock are from the Kaskaskia River. The occasional fish is reported caught by anglers. No evidence of natural recruitment has been observed. Catch and immediate release is encouraged.
  - **Crappie** Both white crappie and black crappie are abundant. Recruitment and growth rates have been good, in part due to recent flooding events. Anglers may catch crappie that are 15+ inches and 1+ lbs.
  - **Bluegill** fishing is fair. Few fish exceed 7 inches.
  - **Muskellunge** catch rates in the lake have decreased drastically from previous years. This has been compounded by issues with stocking survival, though progress has recently been made in improving initial stocking survival. A decent fishery still exists below the spillway, with decent densities of 30-40+ inch fish present.
  - **Walleye** are in high abundance, both due to stocking efforts as well as occasional (suspected) natural recruitment. Walleye up to 8 lbs. have been collected, as are good numbers of intermediate sized fish.
  - **Sauger** have been occasionally stocked since 2006 and are in fair to good abundance.
  - **Striped Bass** were stocked in 2018 and 2019 and are exhibiting exceptional growth rates. A new regulation is in place to help create a quality fishery. Please take the time to learn how to identify the difference between striped bass and white bass so that the striped bass can have a chance to grow to their maximum potential! A pocket-sized identification card will be available at local bait shops and businesses, or by emailing the IDNR biologist (see email below).
  - **White bass** numbers have been down for several years but a decent fishery still exists. Most fish range from ½ to 1 lb.
  - **Channel catfish** are fair in abundance, with 8+lbs. fish present.
  - **Flathead catfish** are low in abundance, but large fish are present. Fishing is better below the spillway.
- Common carp, freshwater drum, buffalo, redhorse suckers, carsuckers, yellow bass, longear sunfish, green sunfish, redear sunfish, orangespotted sunfish, and bullheads** are also present.

**REGULATIONS:** All statewide regulations are in effect. Refer to the Illinois Fishing Information Guide for special site and bait rigging regulations. Also see the guide for regulations below the dam. **Please note the new regulation for Striped Bass!**

Species	Daily Creel Limit	Length Limits
Large or Smallmouth Bass	6	14" minimum
Walleye, Sauger, or Saugeye	6	14" minimum
Muskellunge	1	48" minimum
White, Black, or Hybrid Crappie	5	under 10"
- crappie continued	10	10" or larger
<b>Striped Bass</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>32" minimum</b>

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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