



Raccoon Lake

Fisheries Fact Sheet

Raccoon Lake was constructed in 1942 to serve as a water supply reservoir for the city of Centralia. Annual boat stickers and City tournament permits are required.

Location: Raccoon Lake is located in Marion County on the East side of Centralia, Illinois approximately 1 mile north of rt. 161.

Area: Raccoon Lake has a surface area of 970 acres, a maximum depth of 17 feet, and a mean depth of 3.9 feet. The lake has 16.4 miles of shoreline.

Status of the Sport Fishery: The sport fish population in Raccoon Lake is comprised primarily of largemouth bass, bluegill, white and black crappies, and channel catfish. Other common species include common carp and yellow bullheads. The fish population is surveyed annually, and summaries below are based on the results of the most recent population survey and four-year trends in the population indices.

Largemouth Bass: Data from the 2019 population survey showed that all of the population indices met or exceeded the target goals. The condition of all sizes of fish remained very good ($W_r = 97$). Approximately, 22% of the adult bass exceeded the 15" minimum length, a decrease from 35% in 2018. However, there was an increase in the percentage of 12" – 15" bass in the 2019 sample. Poor bass reproduction and recruitment continue to be a major concern in this lake. Following significant improvement in 2012 and 2013, bass CPUE plummeted in 2014 to 37/hr. and had remained below the target of 60/hr. ever since. To help improve numbers, over 35,500 largemouth bass fingerlings were stocked in the lake in June of 2017. This helped the 2017 CPUE improve to 78/hr., well above the target level for the first time in 5 years. Despite dropping to just 31 bass per hour in 2018, the bass catch rate in the 2019 sample improved to 82 bass per hour. For 2020, most keeper fish will range from 15" – 20" and weigh from 1.8 – 5 lbs.

Bluegill: The size structure of the bluegill population has been relatively stable and fair at best. For the first time in eight years, some bluegill collected were $\geq 8"$ in length ($RSD-8 = 1$). Approximately, 56% of the adult bluegills exceeded 6" in length but only 10% exceeded 7" in length. In spite of the poor size structure, growth rates remained good and condition was very good ($W_r = 101$). If these fish continue to grow in the coming years, the size structure of the bluegill population should show some improvement. Anglers can expect to catch an abundance of fish 5" – 7" in length weighing 0.1 to 0.3 pounds.

Crappie: Both black and white crappies are present in Raccoon Lake but white crappies comprised nearly 83% of the sample. Data collected from the annual population survey indicated 10% of the adult white crappie population exceeded 10" in length and an additional 32% of the population was between 8" - 10" in length. Nearly 85% of the adult population was in the sample between 6" – 9" in length. Condition was good ($W_r = 90$) and growth rates were average. Catch rate declined, but remains very high at 132 per hour. This lake should provide some good crappie fishing in the coming year.

Channel Catfish: Catfish in Raccoon Lake should provide fair fishing opportunities in the coming year. Average body condition improved ($W_r = 96$) and the electrofishing catch rate increased to 25/hr. Most fish in the population are older and will range from 3 – 5 pounds. Supplemental catfish stockings, along with the elimination of trot lining and jug fishing, should help to improve the size structure of the channel catfish population in the coming years.

Fishing Regulations: Two pole and line fishing only

Species	Daily Creel Limit	Minimum Length Limit
Largemouth Bass	6	15"
Channel Catfish	6	

Additional Regulations: City boat and tournament permits are required and may be purchased at the City Clerk's office at 101 S. Locust, Centralia.

Contacts: Centralia City Clerk's office 618/533-7625; IDNR Fisheries 618/393-6732

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