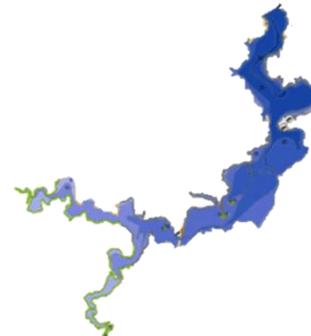




## IDNR – Fisheries

### 2016 Lake Status Summary

# Lake Springfield



**Location:** Southeast edge of Springfield  
**Area:** 3866 acres



**Lake history and characteristics:** Lake Springfield was constructed in 1931 by the damming of Lick and Sugar creeks. It has a maximum depth of approximately 30' and average depth of 13'. The Division of Fisheries entered into a formal Cooperative Management Agreement in 1984 with the City of Springfield to manage the sport fishery. Lake Springfield has a small power plant on the lake that keeps the southern end of the lake open to fishing year round. It also boasts four concrete boat ramps for easy access. Below is a list of the fish species that are doing well in Lake Springfield.

**Largemouth bass:** Lake Springfield is one of the better largemouth bass lakes in the state. It has shown consistent balance over the last two decades. It has a high density population with electrofishing surveys routinely surpassing 100 bass per hour (147/hr in 2016). In addition, thanks to a strong shad forage base, the bass are very heavy bodied. They typically are 25% heavier per length than the statewide average. For example, a 15" bass averages 1.75 lbs statewide while in Lake Springfield it weighs 2.25 lbs. The only downside to the population is the apparent lack of fish over 18" and 3.5 lbs. There are excellent numbers below that, but above, the numbers drop off significantly. The 2016 fall fish survey showed only 1.5% of the catchable population to measure over 18". The lack of fish over 18" is however normal for this lake. Anglers can catch largemouth bass on points, deadfalls, and stickups within the entire lake in the warmer months of the year with plastic worms, jigs, spinners, crank baits, minnows, crayfish and worms. The largest largemouth bass ever collected by electrofishing on Lake Springfield measured 22" and weighed 6.5 lbs.

**Crappie:** Both black and white crappie are present in Lake Springfield. The black crappie are a strain originally brought in from Arkansas in 1985 that have a ¼" wide black stripe running from just under the chin up over the nose to the dorsal fin. They are called blacknose or black-striped crappie by anglers. This genetic morph of black crappie were stocked in Lake Springfield beginning in 2006. The 2016 fall fish survey showed a catch rate of 14 black crappie/hour of electrofishing. White crappie in Lake Springfield are native. The 2016 fall fish survey showed a catch rate of only 15 white crappie/hour of electrofishing. In general, crappie numbers have been lower than desired, therefore a crappie stocking program was implemented in the mid-2000's and will continue indefinitely or until the population is strong enough to sustain itself. About 800 black crappie measuring 5.3" were stocked into Lake Springfield from the rearing pond in the fall of 2016. Dense aquatic vegetation inhibited a more successful harvest. Around 10,000 black crappie measuring 2-4" were also stocked into the lake in fall 2016 through the IDNR state hatchery system. Brood black crappie will be stocked into the rearing pond in spring 2017 and their young will be stocked into the lake after two growing seasons in fall 2018. Anglers can catch crappie around submerged structures within the entire lake, but particularly in the southern 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the lake, with spinners, jigs and minnows in the spring and fall. The largest white crappie ever collected by electrofishing on Lake Springfield measured 15" and weighed just over 2 lbs!

**White bass:** The white bass population remains very good. Historically, fall electrofishing surveys did not produce adequate sample sizes to assess the population, but our catch rates have increased over the last few years. All population indices were within the desired range in 2016. The 2016 fall fish survey showed a catch rate of 35/hr of electrofishing, which is the highest catch rate of white bass in more than 10 years. The lake is noted for both the size and numbers of white bass. Fish up to 15" are common. Anglers can catch white bass within the entire lake, using minnows, small spinners, and small jigs.

**Channel catfish:** The channel catfish population is excellent both in quantity and quality. Lake Springfield is one of the best channel catfish lakes in the state. Anglers can catch channel catfish in the warmer months of the year using bottom fishing techniques with cut bait, shrimp, chicken livers or night crawlers within the entire lake. The largest channel catfish ever collected during a fish survey measured 27.5" and weighed over 13.5 lbs.

**Flathead catfish:** Lake Springfield has earned a reputation for producing large numbers of nice flathead catfish every year. The largest reported was over 60 pounds. Anglers can catch flathead catfish using live bait such as minnows, sunfish, shad, or crayfish around submerged logs and deadfalls in the warmer months and deep holes in the colder months.

**Blue catfish:** The Division of Fisheries working with the City and the local catfish club began a blue cat stocking program in 2006. Approximately 150 fish ranging from 3-57 pounds have been transplanted from the Mississippi River near Alton. Fingerlings have also been stocked from the IDNR hatchery system and through purchases from a private fish hatchery in Kentucky since 2006. Approximately 13,296 – 5.9” blue catfish were stocked into Lake Springfield in fall 2016. Blue cats will grow quickly and provide an excellent trophy fishery to anglers. Anglers can catch blue catfish in the warmer months using crayfish, shrimp, large shad, or stinkbait around submerged logs and deadfalls.

**Bluegill:** Lake Springfield has a surprisingly good bluegill population, which is uncommon in a large impoundment. The fall fish survey showed that 55% of the catchable population is composed of 6-7” fish, while 9% is composed of 7-8” fish. Anglers can catch bluegill in the warmer months of the year using worms, crickets, or night crawlers along structured shorelines.

**Other fish species:** A total of 45 fish species have been collected in Lake Springfield since 1984. While their numbers and potential for successful angling are low, anglers may catch green sunfish, green sunfish x bluegill hybrid, freshwater drum, redear sunfish, or yellow bullhead.

**Fishing Regulations:** see the Fishing Regulation Booklet or [IFISHILLINOIS.org](http://IFISHILLINOIS.org) for updates

Two pole and line fishing only, no commercial devices such as trot lines, jugs, or bank poles.

Largemouth bass - 15” minimum length limit with a creel limit of 6 per day.



Crappie - 10” minimum length limit with a creel limit of 10 fish per day.



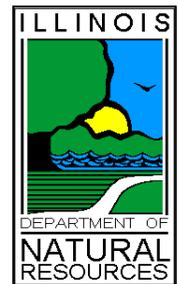
Walleye/sauger – 14” minimum length limit with a creel limit of 6/day.



Archery fishing is allowed for rough fish throughout the lake.



	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Management Objectives
<b>Largemouth Bass</b>												
% >12"	62	42	43	72	65	79.2	50.6	53.1	48.2	41	60.7	40-60
% >15"	20	15	10	21	21	31.9	26.1	19.3	14.5	14.9	21.1	10-20
% >18"	2	1	2	1	1	3.8	4.1	2.3	1.8	0.6	1.5	5-10
condition	105	105		106	99	99	103	103	104	102	105	90-110
fish/hour EF	134	143	110	78	77	116	121.3	97.5	81.8	114	147	60-75
<b>White Crappie</b>												
% >8"	99	98	100	100	100	65.5	99.7	89.5	97.5	97.6	95.4	30-50
% >10"	50	82	43	46	77	27.4	60.3	58	45.9	60.8	50.9	20-40
% >12"	5	8	10	4	8	6.3	5.3	4.1	2.5	1.2	3.7	5-10
condition	104	103		103	101	99	104	99	101	92	98	90-100
fish/hour EF	19	11	7	12	6	28.2	37.3	24.7	14.2	66	15	70-100
<b>Black Crappie</b>												
% >8"		97	100	87	98	29.4	97.3	80	78.6	50	94.3	30-50
% >10"		3	79	54	65	15.7	54.1	64	50	28.6	39	20-40
% >12"		1	1	11	13	2	8.1	2	7.1	306	3.8	5-10
condition		106		98	96	89	102	94	96	91	95	90-100
fish/hour EF				7	5	5.7	5	5.6	1.6	6.3	14	70-100
<b>White Bass</b>												
% >9"	100	97		72	86	86.4	31.6	34.4	83.5	63.5	62.8	50-60
% >12"	77	82		33	31	31.8	31.2	31.2	40.7	40	32.4	20-40
% >14"	18	26		17	7	9.1	15.6	15.6	6.6	12.9	7.7	5-15
condition	85	90		91	91	83	98	98	91	94	93	90-110
fish/hour EF	10	5		2	3	3	4	4	11	10	35	15-25



**Aquatic vegetation and/or chemical treatment:** none

**Fisheries Management Activities Completed:**

- collected fish for State Fair displays - August
- stocked 10,000 – 2-4” black crappie 9/14
- stocked 13,296 – 5.9” blue catfish 9/28
- conducted 5-1 hr and 3-45 min pulsed-DC electrofishing surveys 10/26-10/27
- stocked 800 – 5.3” black crappie from rearing pond 10/31



**Fish biologist:**

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