



WALNUT POINT LAKE

2016 Lake Status Summary



LOCATION: Walnut Point Lake is located in Walnut Point State Park, approximately 3 miles north of Oakland in Douglas County.

DESCRIPTION: The lake covers 52 surface acres with a maximum depth of 32 feet and average depth of 12.5 feet. Numerous bank fishing sites are available with many fishing piers/docks recently built. Several handicap accessible piers are present. Public boat launching facilities are available with handicap accessibility. This site has facilities for camping, hiking, hunting, and picnicking.

CONCESSIONS: food with dining area, bait and tackle, boat rental, ice, and firewood.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES: The fish population in Walnut Point Lake is surveyed intensively every two years. Special surveys are conducted on alternate years. Fish are collected by electrofishing, then measured and weighed before releasing the fish alive back in the lake. Aquatic vegetation is monitored annually. Desirable species of aquatic plants are being introduced to help compete for nutrients against undesirable plants like filamentous algae, prevent shoreline erosion, and provide valuable fish habitat. Fish attractors have been created and placed in various locations, some on the left edges of fishing piers.

FISHERY STATUS: **Largemouth bass** are abundant and fishing prospects rated as good. Anglers are allowed to keep smaller bass to help thin the population. All bass between 12-15 inches must be released immediately to ensure a high quality fishery and sufficient predation pressure on bluegill. Good numbers of bass from ½-2 lbs. are present with fish over 5 lbs. caught occasionally. Fishing prospects are rated as good for 2016.

Black crappie are generally abundant and fishing prospects rated as good for 2016. Anglers may catch crappie up to 13 inches and 1+ pound.

Bluegill fishing is excellent and there are many fish exceeding 8 inches (some even 9 inches) ranging from 1/4 – 3/4+ lbs. A maximum length limit is in effect and providing outstanding results in developing a quality fishery. The daily harvest limit is 20 fish per day, of which only 5 bluegill or redear can be 8-inches or larger. A brochure is available which explains the history of bluegill management and research leading to the utilization of this regulation at Walnut Point. Anglers are encouraged to practice catch-and- release of the largest bluegill to further increase the quality of this fishery.

Redear sunfish numbers are moderate and fishing fair-good. Anglers may catch redear over 10 inches and 3/4+ pounds.

Channel catfish are maintained through annual stockings from IDNR hatcheries. Fishing is rated as good to excellent for 2016. The average catch is from 3/4 - 2 lbs., with some catfish 10+ pounds caught.

Green sunfish, common carp, and flathead catfish are present in low to moderate numbers. It is very unfortunate that carp and flathead catfish were introduced by anglers. Common carp degrade water quality, compete for desirable and limited food items, and reduce angling quality for all species. Flathead catfish compete with anglers for quality-size panfish and are not desirable in a lake of this size. Please never release fish, including minnows, from any other source/location into this lake.

REGULATIONS: All statewide regulations are in effect. Refer to the Illinois Fishing Information Guide for special site regulations.

| Species | Daily Harvest Limits | Length Limits |
|--|----------------------|--|
| ALL | | |
| Largemouth or Smallmouth Bass | 6 | 12-15-inch slot length limit |
| Channel Catfish | 6 | None |
| Bluegill or Redear Sunfish | 20 | Maximum length limit, of which only 5 fish out of the 20 daily limit can be 8 inches or longer |

COOPERATIVE SPORTSMEN + STRUCTURED HARVEST = OPTIMAL FISHING QUALITY!

Please remove all litter, especially fishing line!

Comments and questions are encouraged!

Please contact the Illinois Department of Natural Resources fisheries biologist, Mike Mounce

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