



IDNR Fisheries Lake Status Summary Horton Lake

Location: Located in Nauvoo State Park in Nauvoo, IL east of Rt. 96

Area: 13 acres

Lake history and characteristics: Horton Lake was built in 1967 to provide fishing opportunity to patrons of Nauvoo State Park. A primitive boat ramp and bank fishing are available. Only electric trolling motors are allowed. No swimming is allowed. The lake features clear water and a peaceful setting that also offers camping, picnic areas, hiking trails and even a museum. Horton Lake is one of several lakes across IL that offers the Catchable Trout Program. Catchable size Rainbow Trout are stocked every spring and fall for anglers to enjoy catch and release fishing prior to opening day and harvest of 5 trout/day after opening day. Anglers must possess an inland trout stamp, in addition to a valid sportfishing license to participate in this program.

Largemouth Bass: The Largemouth Bass population is improving. The 2020 survey yielded a catch rate of 20 fish/hour. The State Hatchery stocked 1,326 4.0" Largemouth Bass on 8/6/2020. Largemouth Bass measuring 4.0-6.3" (N=5) were collected during the 9/28/2020 survey. These fish were likely stocked in August 2020. The biggest Largemouth Bass collected in 2020 measured 20.3" and weighed 6.29lbs.

Bluegill: The Bluegill population at Horton Lake is currently characterized by a high density of fish measuring 3-6" in less than desirable body condition. The Bluegill population will not improve until the predator species are better established.

Northern Pike: Two groups of Northern Pike were stocked into Horton Lake following the 2013/14 winter fish kill with an attempt to establish a Northern Pike fishery. We collected 5 pike/hr electrofishing in the 2016 survey ranging from 13 – 20" and 5 pike/hr electrofishing in the 2017 survey ranging from 21.5 – 28". The 2018 survey produced 1 Northern Pike at 27" which showed poor growth rates and body condition (Wr = 83). One Northern Pike was collected in 2019. It measured 25" and weighed 2.9lbs. No Northern Pike were collected in 2020, however Northern Pike were visually observed from the boat.

Black Crappie: A group of Black Crappies survived the winter kill in 2013/14 and measured 9"-12" in the 2018 survey. The 2018 survey showed a catch rate of 20 crappie/hr of electrofishing, where 36% of the catchable population measured over 8". Only one Black Crappie was collected in 2019. In 2020, Black Crappie were captured at a rate of 18 fish/hour. No Black Crappie exceeded 8" in 2020. Sampling crappie species can be challenging with electrofishing equipment since they tend to inhabit deeper waters when water temperatures are warm. There is currently no restriction on crappie harvest at Horton Lake.

Channel Catfish: No Channel Catfish were collected in the 2020 survey. However, Channel Catfish are stocked from the State Hatchery system on an annual basis. The current Channel Catfish regulation is 6 fish/day with no minimum length limit.

Rainbow Trout: Rainbow Trout are stocked in the spring and fall in Horton Lake as part of the Catchable Trout Program. This put-and-take fishery offers anglers an opportunity to participate in trout fishing. No Rainbow Trout were collected during the 2020 electrofishing survey.

Other fish species: Other species present in this lake include Redear Sunfish and Hybrid Sunfish.

Fishing Regulations: see the Illinois Fishing Information Booklet or www.IFISHILLINOIS.org for updates.

- Two pole and line fishing only and each pole must not have more than 2 hooks or lures attached while fishing.
- Largemouth Bass – 1 Fish Daily Harvest Limit, 18” Minimum Length Limit
- Channel Catfish – 6 Fish Daily Harvest Limit
- Trout – Spring closed season (no harvest with hook and line, but catch and release fishing permitted from March 15 – first Sat. in April); Fall closed season (no harvest with hook and line, but catch and release fishing permitted from Oct. 1 – third Saturday in Oct.)

Aquatic vegetation and/or chemical treatment:

- Conducted a herbicide treatment to control nuisance aquatic plants on 9/28/2020.
- Conducted a herbicide treatment to control nuisance aquatic plants on 5/29/2020.

Fisheries Management Activities Completed:

- Crystal Lake Fisheries stocked 700lbs of Rainbow Trout on 10/1/2020.
- Conducted a fall fish population survey utilizing standard sampling protocol (1-30 minute pulsed-DC electrofishing survey) 9/28/2020.
- Hatchery stocked 260 7.2” Channel Catfish on 7/29/2020.
- Crystal Lake Fisheries stocked 700lbs of Rainbow Trout on 3/17/2020.