



Sam Parr Lake

Fisheries Fact Sheet

Sam Parr Lake was constructed in Sam Parr State Park near Newton in 1971 through the cooperative efforts of the Illinois Department of Conservation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Federal funds for construction of the lake were provided through the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act.

Location: Sam Parr Lake is located in Jasper County, approximately 3 miles northeast of Newton Illinois on IL Rt. 33.

Area: Sam Parr Lake has a surface area of 180 acres, a maximum depth of 28 feet, and a mean depth of 10 feet. The lake has 9.5 miles of shoreline and a watershed of 3,950 acres.

Status of the Sport Fishery: The sport fish population in Sam Parr Lake is comprised of largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, black crappie, white crappie, and channel catfish. The lake also contains common carp and gizzard shad. 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 – The size structure of the bass population remained fairly stable and in good shape. The CPUE remained well above the target. Approximately 37% of the adult bass in the sample were greater than 14” in length. The average body condition fell just below the lake management plan target, but the body condition of bass over 16” was very good. Bass in the 12” – 15” size range had a less than ideal average body condition. The discrepancy in body condition is likely a result of the strong gizzard shad population in the lake. Nearly 50% of the gizzard shad collected in recent surveys have exceeded 7” in length and have not been available as a prey source for the smaller bass. In 2021, anglers can expect to catch a lot of fish 14” – 20” in length ranging from 1.25 – 5.5 pounds with a few larger fish over 6 pounds.

Bluegill – Size structure of the bluegill population remained stable and poor. Body condition also remained stable, but above the lake management plan target. The bluegill fishery was still comprised almost entirely of fish under 7” in length. The precipitous decline in the quality of the bluegill population coincided with the 2005 appearance of gizzard shad. Anglers can expect most fish to range from 5” – 7” and weigh from 0.1 – 0.22 lbs.

Crappie – Sam Parr Lake contains both white and black crappie, but the size structures of the populations are very different. The black crappie population has made some improvements in recent years and they have become the more numerous/dominant species. Black crappie average body condition was good and improved above their lake management plan target. The white crappie population was comprised mostly of a few larger and older fish. Their catch rates increased in 2020, but remain low. Average body condition for white crappie improved and remained above their lake management plan target. Approximately 22% of the adult black crappie collected were over 10” in length and 79% of the adult white crappie were over 10”. However, anglers can expect to see most fish in the 8” – 10” range, with black crappie being the most prevalent species. With only modest growth rates and below optimal size structure, crappie fishing will be fair/good in the coming year.

Harvest of smaller crappie at Sam Parr Lake is encouraged.

Channel Catfish – Catfish remain relatively abundant in Sam Parr Lake and should provide good fishing opportunities in the coming year. Most fish will range from 1 – 5 pounds with larger fish up to 10 pounds. This lake provides excellent bank fishing opportunities. The best places to fish include the rip-rap along the dam, the upper ends of the two main arms of the lake, and in the backs of coves.

Fishing Regulations: Two pole and line fishing only

Species	Daily Creel Limit	Minimum Length Limit
Largemouth Bass	6	14"
Channel Catfish	6	

Additional Regulations: Boats with outboard motors are restricted to 10 horsepower maximum.

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