



Red Hills Lake

Fisheries Fact Sheet

Red Hills Lake was constructed in Red Hills State Fish and Wildlife Area near Sumner, Illinois in 1953. The lake was drained and rehabilitated in 2008 and restocked with fish in 2009.

Location: Red Hills Lake is located approximately midway between Lawrenceville and Olney on U.S. Route 50. The lake is located on the south side of the road. The boat launch is located on the southwest corner of the dam.

Area: Red Hills Lake has a surface area of 40 acres, a maximum depth of 22 feet, and an average depth of 8 feet. The lake has 2 miles of shoreline and a watershed of 618 acres.

Status of the Sport Fishery: The sportfish in Red Hills Lake include largemouth bass, bluegill, channel catfish, and black crappie. The lake also contains a small population of redear sunfish, some very large warmouth, yellow bullheads, and golden shiners. Red Hills Lake is open year-round. 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 overall size structure of the largemouth bass population is poor, but bass numbers are high. In the 2021 survey, approximately 3% of the adult bass collected were larger than the 15” minimum length limit. A large proportion of the bass population was less than 12” long and approximately 23% of the adult bass were between 12” – 15” in length. The large number of smaller bass in this lake is consistent with the lake management plan for this lake, which emphasizes the panfish populations. Bass fishing should be fair in 2022.

Bluegill – All of the bluegill size structure indices met or exceeded their target ranges in the 2021 survey. Average body condition was very good. Approximately 71% of the adult bluegill in the sample were 7” or longer. Bluegill fishing should be good in 2022. **Please practice selective harvest. Bluegill over 8” are important for maintaining the health of the population. We ask that you consider returning those fish to water and harvest smaller bluegill instead.**

Channel Catfish – Channel catfish numbers in Red Hills Lake are relatively low, but the population is supplemented by annual stocking efforts. The lake provides many bank fishing opportunities. Some of the more popular locations include the campgrounds, near the dam, and by the restaurant.

Crappie – Black crappie are also sampled in relatively low numbers at Red Hills Lake. However, fish collected in the surveys have good average body condition. Popular crappie bank fishing areas include Veteran’s Point, the fishing dock, and near the restaurant. Crappie fishing in Red Hills lake should be fair in 2022.

Fishing Regulations: Two pole and line fishing only

Species	Daily Creel Limit	Minimum Length Limit
Largemouth, Smallmouth, or Spotted Bass	6	15”
Channel Catfish	6	None

Additional Regulations: Operation of gas motors on the lake is prohibited, but they can be used for loading and unloading of boats. Electric trolling motors may be used on the lake.

Contacts: Newton Lake State Park 618/936-2469; IDNR Fisheries 618/393-6732.

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