



Forbes Lake

2013 Lake Status Summary



Location: Forbes Lake was constructed in Stephen A. Forbes State Park near Salem in 1963. Forbes Lake is located in Marion County, approximately 13 miles northeast of Salem Illinois.

Area: Forbes Lake has a surface area of 585 acres, a maximum depth of 31 feet, and a mean depth of 12 feet. The lake has 18 miles of shoreline and a watershed of 13,800 acres.

Status of the Sport Fishery: The sport fish population in Forbes Lake is comprised primarily of largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, white crappie, and channel catfish, and is stocked annually with saugeye (walleye/sauger hybrid), and hybrid striped bass. The lake also contains common carp and yellow bullheads. 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 declined slightly over the last year, but the long-term trends show a very stable population. The catch per effort (CPE) remained unchanged at 78 bass/hr., and bass body condition was good (Wr 92). Just over 26% of the population exceeds the 14" minimum length limit, and large fish up to 22" are common. Bass fishing in 2014 should be very similar to the previous 4 years.

Bluegill – Size structure of the bluegill population improved slightly, but remains poor and well below the target range. Body condition is also improved (Wr 92), but the fishery is still comprised almost entirely of slow growing fish under 7" in length.

Crappie - The white crappie population is dominated by large, slow-growing age 3 year classes in the 6"-9" size range. However, there are enough larger fish 10" - 12" in length to provide quality fishing opportunities. Anglers can expect most fish in the coming year to range from 6" – 12" in length with a few larger fish to 14".

Channel Catfish – Catfish remain abundant in Forbes Lake and should provide good fishing opportunities in the coming year. Most fish will range from 1 – 5 pounds with larger fish exceeding 6 pounds common, and body condition is good (Wr 94). This lake provides excellent bank fishing opportunities. Drift fishing the main lake is also very productive.

Saugeye – Three year classes were collected in this year's survey, but the catch rate of 6 per net-night was well below average. While the number of saugeye is down, a significant percentage of the remaining population is comprised of older larger fish, with many in the 6 – 9 lbs. range.

Hybrid Striped Bass – None collected in 2013.

Fishing Regulations: Two pole and line fishing only.

Species	Daily Creel Limit	Minimum Length Limit
Largemouth Bass	6	14"
Striped, White, or Hybrid Striped Bass	3	17"
Channel Catfish	6	

Additional Regulations: Muskellunge 48" minimum (No longer stocked, remnant population only).

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