



STERLING LAKE

LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

2013 LAKE STATUS SUMMARY



LOCATION – Located east of I-294 north of Rt 173 in Van Patton Woods Forest Preserve near Wadsworth.

DESCRIPTION – Sterling Lake, formerly known as Vulcan Gravel Pits, was constructed in 1939. The lake is located adjacent to the Des Plaines River and is connected via a 10” to 12” tube with a hinged gate so water can flow-in during high water events. The Lake County Forest Preserve District acquired the area in 1974 with emphasis on providing recreational fishing opportunities. Sterling Lake: **74 acres**, maximum depth 23.0 ft., average depth 14 ft., shoreline length is 2.3 miles, crushed limestone multi-use path surrounds the perimeter, handicap accessible fishing piers, gravel ramp for launching a canoe/kayak or electric motor only car-top boats. No concession facilities are available. No fish cleaning station is available.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES: In 2013, a D/C electrofishing survey was conducted to assess the overall fishery.

STATUS OF THE SPORT FISHERY – Sterling Lake receives periodic stockings of 5000 - 2” walleye, 150 - 11” muskie and annual stockings of 600 - 8” to 10” channel catfish. Below is a brief description of catchable game species in this water body.

LARGEMOUTH BASS – In 2013, 32 bass were collected in one hour of shocking. Fish measured between 6” to 15.5”, and weighed up to 1.9 lbs. 24% were over 12” long, 17% exceeded 14” and 10% exceeded 15” (legal length). This size structure maintains reproductive potential and helps balance panfish species for better overall sportfishing opportunities.

BLUEGILL – In 2013, 20 Bluegill were collected in one hour of electrofishing. They ranged from 4” to 6.7”, the biggest weighing 0.2 lbs. 10% were longer than 6”, but none exceeded 7” long. Sterling Lake is an old gravel pit which has matured a little but is still a fairly infertile lake relative to older systems.

MUSKIE – In 2013, 5 muskie were collected in one hour of electrofishing. Fish ranged from 31” to 34” in length, the biggest weighing 12.6 lbs. Muskie have been periodically stocking in Sterling Lake since 1990 so the possibility of trophy size fish exists.

WALLEYE – In 2013, 1 walleye was collected in one hour of electrofishing. The fish measured 10.3”. In 2011 a single 19” fish was collected and fishermen report legal catches (>18”) for those targeting walleye.

BLACK CRAPPIE – 16 black crappie were collected in 2013. Fish measured from 7” to 11.8” and weighed up to 0.9 lbs., 44% exceeded 9”, 31% exceeded 10”, and 19% of the catch exceeded 11” long.

CHANNEL CATFISH – This species is stocked every year at 8” to 10” and channel catfish are a popular species for weekend fishermen enjoying the quiet of the Park. In 2013, no channel catfish were collected with our electrofishing gear, they’re difficult to collect in deep, clear lakes since they tend to inhabit deeper water than our gear is effective.

ADDITIONAL FISH SPECIES: 14 species were detected during this survey. Additional fish species include: pumpkinseed sunfish, warmouth, yellow perch, spotted sucker, bluntnose minnow, bowfin, common carp, and yellow bullhead. Historically, yellow bass, white sucker, brook silverside, and johnny darters have been collected.

FISHING REGULATIONS:

SPECIES	DAILY LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
LARGEMOUTH BASS	1	15"
WALLEYE	6	16"
MUSKELLUNGE	1	48"
(QUICK SET RIG REQUIRED FOR BAIT OVER 8" LONG)		
CHANNEL CATFISH	6	NONE

TWO POLE AND LINE ONLY FISHING

(see current Illinois Fishing Information Booklet and IFISHILLINOIS website <http://www.ifishillinois.org/> for specific details).

ADDITIONAL SITE REGULATIONS:

Boaters - Trolling motor only

CONTACT INFORMATION – Lake County Forest Preserve District, General Number: 847/367-6640 .
IDNR District Fisheries Biologist: 815/675-2319.

Sterling Lake Map

