

Joe's Pond Population Survey



Located in Willow Springs on the west side of Willow Springs Rd. (104th Ave.), 1 mile south of 95th St. Joe's Pond is a 6-acre pond with a maximum depth of 9.6 feet. Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, sunfish, and bullhead make up the bulk of the population with a few crappie and carp thrown in. This pond was once part of the IDNR's Urban Fisheries Program and was stocked with Channel Catfish, a few of which may still be found.

Fish Population Survey

Fish population surveys are periodically conducted on Forest Preserves lakes in order to assess the health of the lake and the fish population in it. Surveys last anywhere from a few hours to a few days depending on the size of the lake.

Water samples are collected and analyzed for each survey. The information collected over the years will show trends to the lake's health. If any unusual readings are found, further tests may be done, or the Illinois DNR and EPA may be asked to investigate.

Fish are collected during surveys to assess the health of the population. Several methods are used to collect fish, these include experimental gill nets, Fyke or trap nets and the use of an electro-fishing boat. All fish collected are measured, weighed and a scale sample is collected when applicable. These scale samples are used to age the fish. All fish are then returned to the lake when possible.

The information listed below was collected during the most recent survey. It is only a snapshot in time. Many factors such as temperature, wind, rain and even moon light can affect the species and number of fish that are collected. The Forest Preserves' Fisheries Section looks at data from many years when assessing a lake's fish population and assumptions from just one year of data therefore should not be made.

The dates of the survey along with the type of equipment used and the length of time it was fished is listed below. The "Total Population" tables & charts show all species collected and includes not only game fish but also forage fish. A healthy balanced population of forage fish and predatory (game) fish is needed in order to support a healthy overall fish population. Ideally, 30 to 40% of a lakes total fish population should be made up of forage fish in order to support a healthy predatory fish population. The species of forage fish varies from lake to lake, Gizzard Shad may be the main forage fish in one lake, while Bluegill/sunfish may be the main forage fish in another

Individual species tables are included only for the game fish that were collected. Game fish are those fish most sought after by anglers.

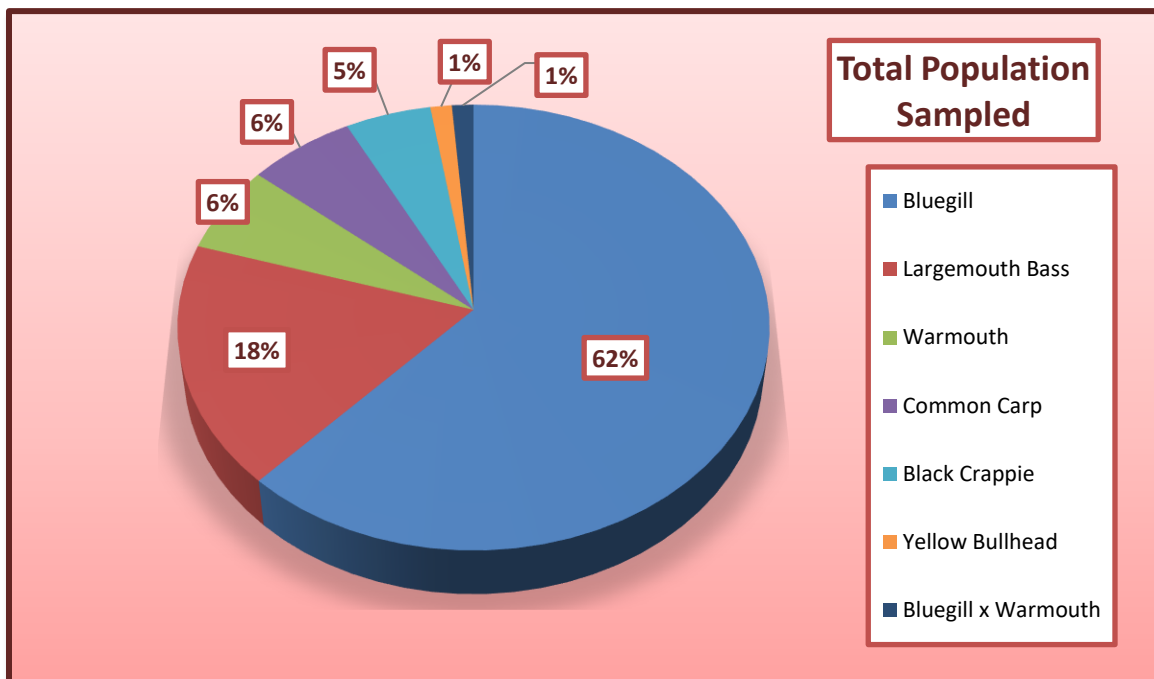
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Date of survey: August 11, 2022
Electro-fishing time: 230 minutes
0 Fyke nets fished: 0 hours
0 feet of gill nets fished: 0 hours

Total Population Sampled

Species	Number	Percent
Bluegill	49	62.03%
Largemouth Bass	14	17.72%
Warmouth	5	6.33%
Common Carp	5	6.33%
Black Crappie	4	5.06%
Yellow Bullhead	1	1.27%
Bluegill x Warmouth Hybrid	1	1.27%
Total	74	100.01%



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Bluegill

1/2-Inch Group	Number Collected	% of Population	Average Weight lbs.	Age
2.0	3	6.12%	0.005	0+
2.5	2	4.08%	0.01	0+
3.0	14	28.57%	0.02	1+
3.5	9	18.37%	0.04	1+
4.0	6	12.24%	0.04	2-3+
4.5	9	18.37%	0.06	3+
5.0	5	10.02%	0.09	3-4+
5.5	1	2.04%	0.12	4+
Totals	49	99.99%		

Largemouth Bass

1/2-Inch Group	Number Collected	% of Population	Average Weight lbs.	Age
3.0	2	14.29%	0.01	0+
-	-	-	-	-
5.0	1	7.14%	0.07	1+
-	-	-	-	-
6.0	2	14.29%	0.10	1+
6.5	1	7.14%	0.14	1+
7.0	1	7.14%	0.16	2+
-	-	-	-	-
8.0	1	7.14%	0.20	2+
-	-	-	-	-
9.0	1	7.14%	0.28	2+
-	-	-	-	-
11.5	1	7.14%	0.73	2+
-	-	-	-	-
13.5	2	14.29%	1.21	3-4+
-	-	-	-	-
16.0	1	7.14%	2.22	4+
-	-	-	-	-
19.5	1	7.14%	3.41	6+
Totals	14	99.99%		

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Warmouth

1/2-Inch Group	Number Collected	% of Population	Average Weight lbs.	Age
3.0	5	100.00%	0.02	2-3+
Totals	5	100.00%		

Common Carp

1/2-Inch Group	Number Collected	% of Population	Average Weight lbs.	Age
21.0	1	20.00%	5.20	5+
-	-	-	-	-
24.0	1	20.00%	7.07	5+
-	-	-	-	-
25.0	1	20.00%	7.84	5+
-	-	-	-	-
29.0	1	20.00%	13.02	7+
-	-	-	-	-
30.0	1	20.00%	16.14	7+
Totals	5	100.00%		

Black Crappie

1/2-Inch Group	Number Collected	% of Population	Average Weight lbs.	Age
5.0	2	50.00%	0.06	2+
-	-	-	-	-
6.0	1	25.00%	0.11	2+
6.5	1	25.00%	0.14	2+
Totals	4	100.00%		

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Other Species collected

Species	Number	Length	Weight	Age
Yellow Bullhead	1	9.0	0.40	NA
Bluegill x Warmouth Hybrid	1	5.0	0.09	2+

Stocking

The Forest Preserves of Cook County works closely with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to stock fishes within the Forest Preserves lakes. The decision to stock fish and the number of fish stocked is based on many factors including but not limited to type of species, size of fish stocked, size of the lake and type of stocking. The Forest Preserves of Cook County must follow State of Illinois regulation regarding the introduction and stocking of fish. All requests to stock a new species into a District lake must go through the State's Management Recommendation Committee.

Most stocking fall under one of three categories, introduction, supplemental and put-and-take. Introduction stockings are the introduction of a new species within an existing lake or the stocking of a new body of water. Supplemental stockings are the stocking of species already in a lake and are used to supplement a species that may not successively reproduce on its own or has been over fished. Fish stocked in a put-and-take stocking are catchable size fish.

Size of Fish Stocked

Most of the fish stocked in the lakes of the Forest Preserves of Cook County are young-of-the-year and are provided by the IDNR Hatcheries. Fish from the hatcheries are stocked upon availability and are funded by your fishing licenses.

Bluegill are stocked at 1/2 to 3/4-inch.

Species	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Bluegill	-	-	30,000	-	-

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Population Overview

A twenty minute electro-fishing survey was conducted at Joe's Pond on August 11, 2022. The results of this survey were very similar to the results of the survey conducted in 2018. Bluegill was still the most abundant species collected with 49 fish collected and hundreds of smaller fish being seen in the shallows and weeds. Thirty thousand young Bluegill were stocked in 2020 in an effort to boost this population.

The biggest change from 2018 was that ten fewer Largemouth Bass were collected during a similar electro-fishing run, 14 this year compared to 24 in 2018. That said, some larger bass were collected this year compared to 2018 with one pushing 20-inches.

The Common Carp population appears to remain stable with five carp being collected this year compared to four in the last survey. With almost all the carp collected being over two feet in length, an angler could have a fun time hooking into one of these large bottom feeders. This population will have to be watch since this species can be invasive and disrupt the ecosystem of a lake. The smallest carp collect at 21-inches was in fact a white and orange Koi that was released into Joe's Pond by a member of the public. The dumping of aquarium/pond fish is not only illegal but could pose a threat to the native fish population of a lake.

As with most of the Forest Preserve's smaller lakes and ponds, Joe's Pond, with its bass and Bluegill can be a great place to bring the kids for a day of fishing or a good spot to stop and wet a line on the way home from work.