



# Trout Action Continues at Many Lakes

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Parking spots were expected to be at a premium Beaver State Park near Plainview during the Oct. 17 season opener of the 2020 catchable trout season.

Despite the cool and cloudy conditions, the campground was full. Nearly every available fishing location on the lake was occupied.

Like most years, success rates varied from angler to angler. Many of the fishermen filled their five-trout daily limit within a few hours. Other hopeful anglers struggled a bit longer to catch fish. And, there were always the few who failed to bring along their fishing luck.

Still, most of the anglers appeared to be enjoying the rainbow trout angling opportunity. There is no doubt that this special fishing day brings more people to this park than any other event of the year.

It seems that the majority of the opening day trout were caught by anglers fishing with commercial trout baits like Berkley Power Bait. The use of light line (four- to six-pound test) and tiny hooks also seemed to increase the angler's success rates.

Though hundreds of trout were taken home last weekend, plenty still remain in the lake. In fact, dedicated trout anglers continue to enjoy excellent success here each year long after the opening weekend crowds head home.

According to site personnel, the trout opener is always one of the park's biggest events of the year. The trout are typically delivered a few days prior to the event and have worked up a healthy appetite by the opening weekend.

This year, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' annual fall Catchable Trout Season slated opened at 5 a.m. on Oct. 20. Many of the dedicated trout anglers were already staking out their favorite fishing holes well before the official opening time.

According to park officials, Beaver Dam State Lake was stocked with some 2,800 trout weighing approximately 3,000 pounds. And, plenty of two to three pounders were among the many 12 inchers released in the lake.

The 2020 Illinois fall catchable trout fishing program features rainbow trout fishing at ponds and lakes throughout the state.

More than 70,000 trout were expected to be stocked at the locations just prior to the opening of the fall trout season. Unlike some years when warmer-than-normal temperatures delayed the stocking by almost a week, most of the sites in the state's southern reaches received their stocking well ahead of the opener.

This allows the newly stocked fish ample time to adjust to their new environment and typically means excellent angling action.

According to the regulations, no trout may be taken from any of the stocked sites from Oct. 1 until the fall trout season officially opened at 5 a.m. on Oct. 17.

Local sites participating in the program include Beaver Dam State Lake in Macoupin County, Siloam Springs State Park in Adams County, the Highland Old City Lake in Madison County and the main lake at Frank Holten State Park in St. Clair County.

In addition, trout fishing will be again offered this fall at the Greenville Old City Lake (Patriot's Park Lake) located in Bond County.

Additional nearby sites include Jones Park Lake and Willow Lake at Peabody River State Fish and Wildlife Area in St. Clair Co., as well as the Southwind and Washington Park ponds in Springfield.

Most anglers prefer a simple approach to the trout fishing. Locally, many anglers prefer to use light-weight spinning or spincast gear.

When the bite is on, virtually any type of fishing gear catches trout. In fact, more trout are likely caught by the regular bluegill and catfish anglers than by the more dedicated trout enthusiasts.

Though commercial trout baits seem to work best on opening weekend, nightcrawlers and mealworms often bring plenty of success at these popular fishing destinations. Many anglers also prefer to use marshmallows and corn.

Anglers typically find the action fast and furious. However, there are occasional days when the fishing is a bit slower.

Sometimes it takes a little longer to catch the fish. Still, veteran anglers realize that, with a little effort and dedication, they can still take home a limit of trout. In fact, many anglers experience their best success a little later in the morning, though some insist the early morning hours are best.

The trout will continue to provide excellent fishing action throughout the remainder of the fall. On years where safe ice conditions exist, the cold-minded trout provide very good ice fishing action, as well.

To take trout legally, anglers must have a valid Illinois fishing license and a 2020 inland trout stamp. Only those under the age of 16, blind or disabled, or Illinois residents on leave from active duty in the Armed Forces are exempt from the licensing regulations.

The daily catch limit for each angler is five trout. The inland trout stamps, which sell for \$6.50, are available at all IDNR Point of Sale locations. Fishing licenses and trout stamps can also be purchased by using a credit card at DNR Direct online via the IDNR web site at <http://dnr.state.il.us> or by calling DNR Direct toll-free at 1-888-6PERMIT (1-888-673-7648).

For more information, contact the IDNR Alton office, or any of the participating site offices.