

GREAT FISHING

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Upper Long.

Two other species are stocked in Noble County lakes: trout and walleyes. Each spring, Sand Lake in Chain O'Lakes State Park receives 500 rainbow trout that are produced in state hatcheries. They bite best on beemoths and redworms. A trout stamp, attached to your fishing license, is required to fish for trout. Each year about 13,000 walleyes are stocked in Sylvan Lake. Bought from a commercial hatchery with

funds generated from license sales, the walleye fingerlings measure 6-7 inches long when released. Within one year they reach the 14-inch size limit. Sylvan Lake now rivals most other walleye lakes in the state.

So you see, not all Noble County lakes are the same. We've highlighted just a few, all of which have public boat ramps that make them accessible to visitors. So too are Diamond, Eagle, Engle, the Knapp Lake Chain (Harper, Hindman, Knapp and Moss), Sparta and Wolf.

Yes, indeed, Noble County lakes are good places to fish, and we welcome you to enjoy our lakes!



ROBBIE GEE

Kids at play, Bixler Lake, Kendallville

More Fishing Info

Check with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (<http://www.in.gov/dnr/>) or any of our local bait shops to be sure that you are in compliance with licenses and fishing regulations. You can also request a copy of the DNR Recreation & Fishing Guide by contacting the Noble Visitors Bureau at 877-202-5761.

20 BEST FISHING LAKES

Bear, Big, Crane, Cree, Crooked, Diamond, Eagle, Engle, Indian Village Lakes, Knapp, Loon, Mallard Roost (Elkhart River South Branch), Sacarider, Sand (Chain O' Lakes State Park), Skinner, Smalley, Sparta, Sylvan, Upper Long, and West Lakes. See chart on pages 14 and 15 for details.

Power Boating, Skiing, and Personal Watercraft Allowed

Big Lake and Loon Lake, both near the village of Wolf Lake, allow power boating 1 - 4 p.m. Skinner Lake east of Albion and Waldron Lake west of Rome City allow power boating 1 - 4 p.m. Sylvan Lake in Rome City allows power boating from sun-up to sundown.

Swimming Beaches

Bixler Lake Park in Kendallville and Sand Lake within Chain O' Lakes State Park south of Albion are the two recommended public beaches in Noble County for swimming.

Experience the Elkhart River

BY GENE LIGHTNER

The Elkhart River flows north and west through Noble County, presenting paddlers, birders and folks who enjoy the outdoors an opportunity to spend a few hours, or a day of solitude along its waterway. The south and north branches of the river present a contrast of river habitats with the south branch mostly flowing slowly through large open wetland areas in York Township. The tree-lined north branch, downstream of Waldron Lake, flows clear over a predominately gravel bottom in Elkhart Township.

An easy family paddle to sample the south branch is the Mallard Roost Wildlife Area, where a leisurely round trip of two hours can be made by putting in at the access where County Road 600 N crosses the river and then paddling south or up river. Keep an eye and ear alert for sandhill cranes which have frequently been spotted along this stretch. Noisy and active in March and April and again in late summer, they tend to be quieter when

raising their young, confining their distinctive calling to early morning or evening. Also along this section can be seen a variety of turtles, marsh wrens, ducks, muskrats, deer and the elusive massasaugua out sunning itself, especially in the spring and fall.

A short out and back on the north branch begins at the IDNR access where the river flows under the County Road 125 W. bridge, known locally as Duke's Bridge. An upriver trip of a long mile takes you along the shoreline of the ACRES Land Trust holding, and some great springtime birding, toward Waldron

Lake. A down river trip of a mile brings you to another wetland full of birds and wildlife throughout all the warmer months. Be aware that on the downstream trip a

See ELKHART RIVER page 18

