

OUTDOORS

FISHING | HUNTING | BOATING | TRAILS | CAMPING



Fishing

How much outdoor recreation do you consider MORE THAN ENOUGH?

Pack your bags and head to western Kentucky for the greatest outdoor experience of your life. The true outdoors is never far from any doorstep here. Whether you want to spend a relaxing few days fishing in some of the best lakes and rivers in the country, a long weekend hiking or biking along our many trails or hunting in one of our public wildlife management areas, outdoor recreational opportunities abound in our area. You can watch eagles and osprey, cruise down one of our scenic waterways, ride horses and ATV's, kayak, backpack and almost anything else you can imagine.

Many sporting goods stores in Kentucky sell fishing and hunting licenses. You can also purchase your license over the telephone by calling 877-598-2401. Most licenses and permits also can be purchased through the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife website at <http://kdfwr.state.ky.gov>

2008-2009 FISHING & HUNTING LICENSE FEES

TYPE OF LICENSE	Resident	Non resident
Annual Fishing	.....\$20	.....\$50
Annual Hunting	.....\$20	.....\$130
Annual Youth Hunting	.....\$5	.....\$5
Combination Fishing/Hunting	.....\$30	.....N/A
Senior/Disabled Fishing/Hunting	.....\$ 5	.....N/A
Joint Husband/Wife Annual Fishing	.....\$36	.....N/A
1-Day Fishing	.....\$7	.....\$10
7-Day Fishing	.....\$30	.....\$30
15-Day Fishing	.....N/A	.....\$40
5-Day Hunting (not valid for deer or turkey)	.....N/A	.....\$40
Sportsman's	.....\$95	.....N/A
Trout Permit	.....\$10	.....\$10
Deer Permit (2 tags)	.....\$30	.....\$60
Youth Deer Permit (1 tag)	.....\$10	.....\$10
Bonus Antlerless Deer Permit (2 tags)	.....\$15	.....\$15
Bonus Quota Hunt Deer Permit	.....\$30	.....\$30
Kentucky Waterfowl Permit	.....\$15	.....\$15
Migratory Game Bird Permit	.....\$10	.....\$10
Fall Turkey Permit (1 tag)	.....\$30	.....\$60
Spring Turkey Permit (1 tag)	.....\$30	.....\$60
Youth Turkey Permit	.....\$10	.....\$10
Land Between The Lakes Hunting	.....\$ 20	.....\$20
3-Day Fur Bearer's License	.....\$ 50	.....\$50
Annual Trapping	.....\$ 20	.....\$130
Annual Landowner/Tenant Trapping	.....\$ 10	.....N/A

CATFISH

When conditions are tough for many types of fishing, catfishing stays hot on several rivers and lakes in western Kentucky. Catfish are among the best-eating and most sought-after fish in western Kentucky, but they don't get a lot of fanfare. Catfish anglers quietly go about the business of catching fish while more glamorous species, like largemouth bass and crappie, get the headlines. Many guide services will help find the best spots for catfish and even clean the catch.

Fish for catfish in the four big rivers of western Kentucky – Mississippi, Ohio, Cumberland and Tennessee – as well as Barkley and Kentucky Lakes. Catfish are primarily bottom feeders, which is one reason they pack in below Smithland, Kentucky and Barkley dams. There they can pick off wounded baitfish, nose through a constant flow of other possible food sources, and have the preferred rocky bottom habitat. As water temperatures warm, catfish move into creek and river channels, and can be taken at shallower depths. At night or on overcast days, fishing around rocky cover on flats near the main-lake channel is a good choice anywhere along the course of either lake. Outside bends in the main lake channel, where the old channel pushes close to the banks of the main lake to create a bluff, are predictably good locations for catfish. Virtually every cove in the lakes supports plenty of channel catfish, along with small blues. The best summer fishing in the coves occurs after dark, when the channel cats move shallow and get more active.

LARGEMOUTH BASS

Widely distributed throughout the lakes, this top sport fish is frequently caught in excess of five pounds. The biggest fish of the year are taken in the early spring as spawn begins and the fish are close to the shorelines. The largest quantities of bass are commonly taken during April and May. In summer, as the water temperature rises, fish concentrate on the drop-offs and creek channels during midday. Some action can still be found in the shallows at early morning and late evening. Fall brings a return of spring patterns. Largemouth can also be found chasing the abundant schools of baitfish that are normally found on the main lake near the points. They will move back to drop-offs during the winter, but a few mild days may entice them into the shallows for feeding.

SMALLMOUTH BASS

Considered to be the best fighter when hooked, this species is found in large concentrations in both lakes. These spring spawners closely follow the patterns of largemouth bass during spring and summer, with the largest numbers being caught in April and May. Fall and winter will find them much more reluctant to move into the shallows, preferring the deep, rocky banks.

KENTUCKY (SPOTTED) BASS

Abundant populations of this fighter are found along the main lakes and major tributaries. Following many of the spring and summer patterns of the largemouth, they can also be found schooling near baitfish. During mid-fall, they will return to shallow waters, especially near wood structures. Like the largemouth, they will hang near the drop-offs during the winter.

WHITE & BLACK CRAPPIE

The average size of these closely-related species is quite large due to the minimum size limitations and the immense forage base found in both lakes. In early spring they are found along shallow drop-offs and near shore where cover is available. As the water temperatures rise, crappie move into the shallows to spawn.

March, April and May yield the biggest catches and offer the heaviest activity, with the spawn generally occurring near the middle of April. As summer approaches they will seek the cooler areas around drop-offs, but will reappear in the fall around structures and shorelines with cover. The colder months will make them a little sluggish, but nice catches are still very possible on creek channels near the mouth of bays, especially after two to three days of moderate weather.

WHITE BASS

Tremendous schools of these fish make annual runs to upper reaches of the main tributaries each spring. During the summer months, large schools will chase shad and minnows on the surface of the main lake, providing some of the best action to be found. Trolling with deep divers or spoons along the edges of the main river channel will also produce large catches. During the fall months, they are more difficult to locate but are still in large schools and will occasionally show some surface activity. White bass tend to frequent deep flats in late fall, but will move to the deeper main lake points during winter months.

STRIPED BASS & ROCKFISH

These species concentrate below the dams in the swift tailwaters. Using live bait (herring or shad, caught below the dams), jigs and Rapala-type lures will produce the best results in the spring. Summer patterns are very similar, but also try trolling with a very deep diving lure. Rockfish are more active in the fall. Switch to a larger bait, 6 to 10 inches, and watch for surfacing fish. During the winter months, the activity will slow as the water temperature falls. Use smaller baits at this time of year.

Kentucky's reputation for superb fishing draws more than 150,000 out-of-state anglers each year

BLUEGILL

Located all over the lakes, bluegill spawn in late spring and concentrate in timber and brush during April and May. During summer, and even late fall, they can be found near almost every dock and tree, with the bigger of the species being caught deeper. They will often keep these patterns as late as December, growing sluggish in January.



FISHING LIMITS ON LAKES			
SPORT FISH SPECIES	Daily Limit	Possession Limit	Minimum Size Limit (Inches)
Coosa Bass*	.6	.12	none
Largemouth Bass*	.6	.12	15"
Smallmouth Bass*	.6	.12	15"
Kentucky (Spotted) Bass*	.6	.12	none
Crappie	.20	.40	10"
White/Yellow Bass**	.15	.30	none
Striped Bass & Hybrids	.5	.5	15"
Sauger	.6	.12	14"
Walleye & Hybrids	.6	.12	15"
Catfish	none	none	none
Bluegill/Sunfish	none	none	none
Brown Trout	.3	.3	12"
Brook Trout	.2	.2	10"
Rainbow Trout***	.8	.8	none

* Limits apply to any combination of these Black Bass
 ** Not more than 5 fish in a daily limit or 10 fish in a possession limit may be 15 inches or longer
 *** Reduce limits by number of Brown Trout

Note: State limits on Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass are 12"

Statewide Size & Creel Limits - measure with the fish laid flat from the tip of lower jaw to the tip of the tail. Under-sized fish must be returned immediately to the water in best possible condition. Creel and size limits may differ at certain lakes. Those listed above are for Kentucky and Barkley Lakes. Fees and limits in effect at time of publication. **For updated information, contact: Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife; #1 Game Farm Road, Frankfort, KY 40601; 502-564-4336 or 800-858-1549; Online: <http://kdfwr.state.ky.gov>**