

2015 Lincoln Area Fishing Forecast

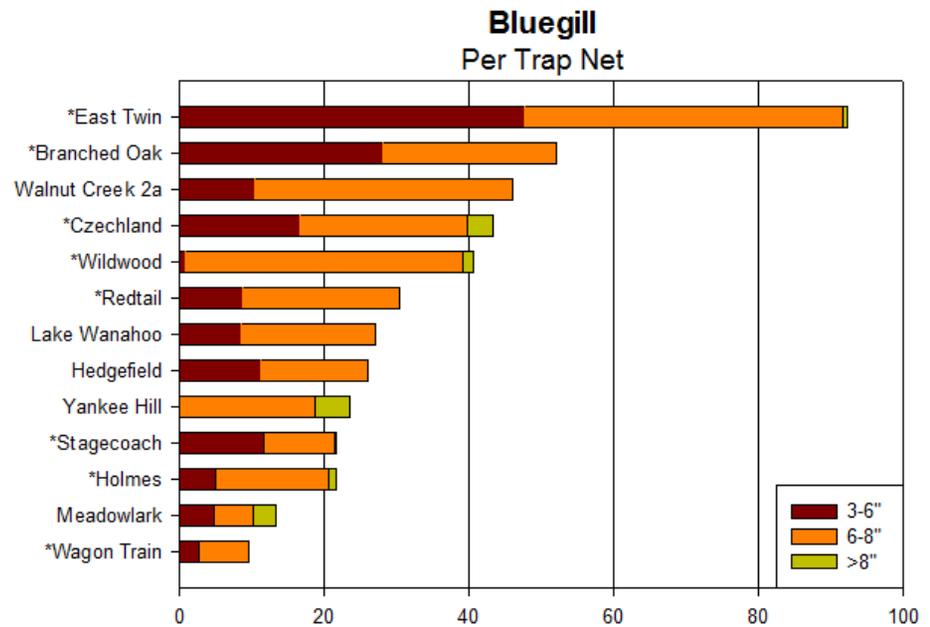


This is a fishing forecast for the Salt Valley area. The forecast includes figures for area public water bodies that were surveyed by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) during *2013 and 2014. Therefore, there may be other water bodies in the area that provide good fishing opportunities that are not included in this forecast (see map). The following information will help anglers decide on where the best fishing for a variety of species can be found based on survey results. Anglers seeking more information on area lakes such as locations, lake maps, regulations and stocking reports are encouraged to browse the Nebraska Game and Parks website at www.outdoornebraska.org.



Bluegills

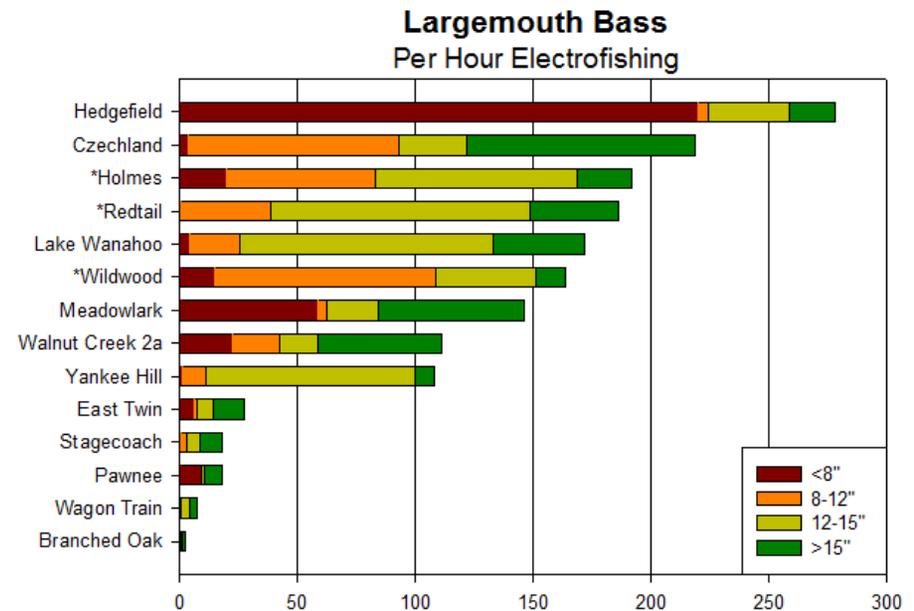
Bluegills prefer clean water and an abundance of aquatic plants. They are an excellent fish for beginning anglers to pursue. Bluegills can be caught year round, but may be most susceptible to anglers during the spawn. Spawning activity peaks when water temperatures are 70-75 degrees Fahrenheit, usually late May or early June. **East Twin** and **Walnut Creek 2a** will be good choices for recreational anglers or beginners, while anglers targeting larger bluegills should try **Yankee Hill, Meadowlark** or **Czechland**.



* 2013 Survey

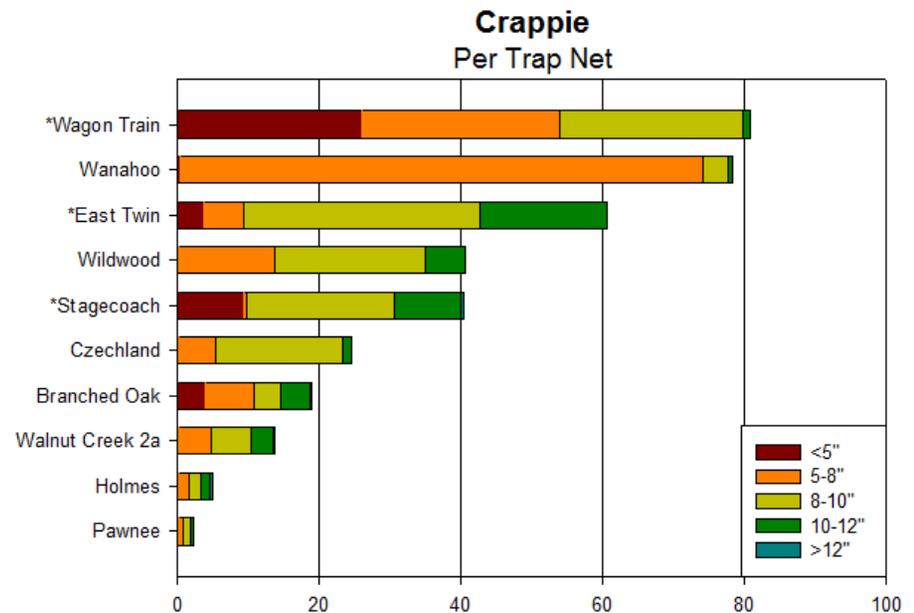
Largemouth Bass

Largemouth bass are routinely targeted by anglers and are known for their aggressiveness and fighting ability. Largemouth bass, like bluegills and other members of the sunfish family, prefer clean water and an abundance of shallow water cover. A number of Salt Valley reservoirs such as **Czechland**, **Wanahoo**, **Holmes** and **Meadowlark** will offer a good opportunity to catch good numbers of largemouth bass with some greater than 15 inches. **East Twin** and **Stagecoach** will provide an opportunity to catch some fish over 21 inches.



Crappie

Crappies are highly regarded by anglers and are often considered to be among the best tasting freshwater fish. Crappies prefer habitat with sheltered coves or bays with an abundance of cover and aquatic vegetation. Anglers looking for eating-size crappies should head to **East Twin**, **Wildwood** or **Stagecoach**. Anglers should note that a 10 inch minimum on crappie is in effect at **Branched Oak** and **Czechland**.



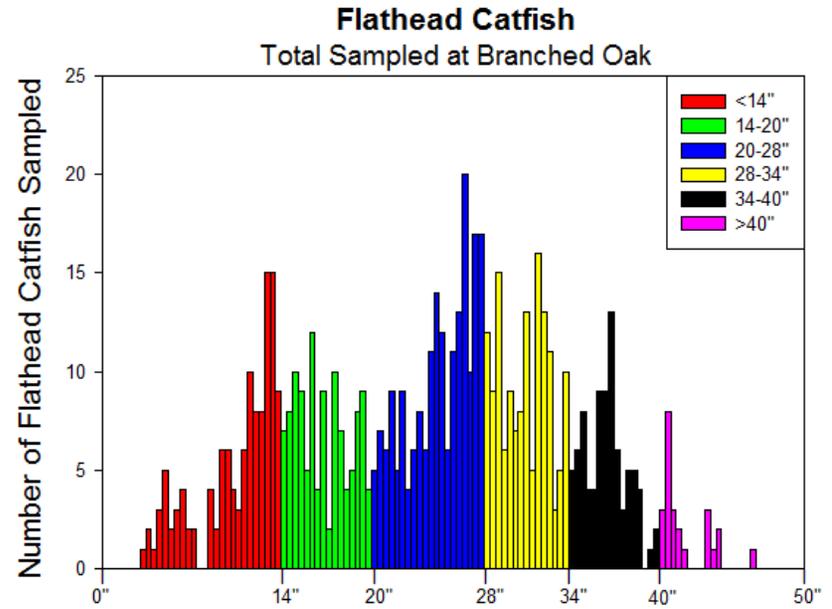
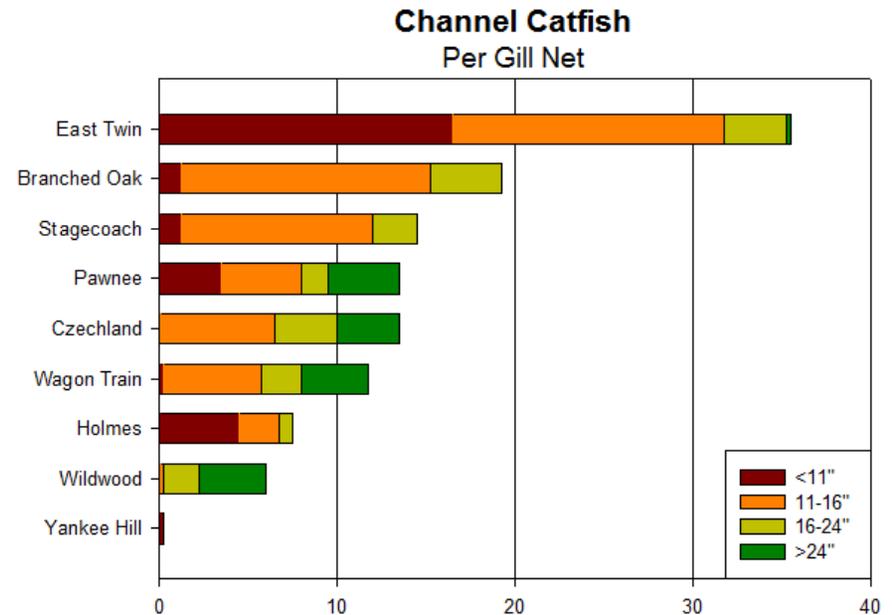
Channel Catfish

Channel catfish are popular throughout Nebraska and can be found in almost every reservoir and river in the Salt Valley area. Some waters to note for anglers seeking eater-sized catfish would be **Branched Oak**, **East Twin** and **Stagecoach**. Anglers seeking larger catfish may want to try **Wagon Train**, **Pawnee** or **Czechland**. The catch and release regulation at **Wildwood** provides a great opportunity to catch a trophy channel catfish.

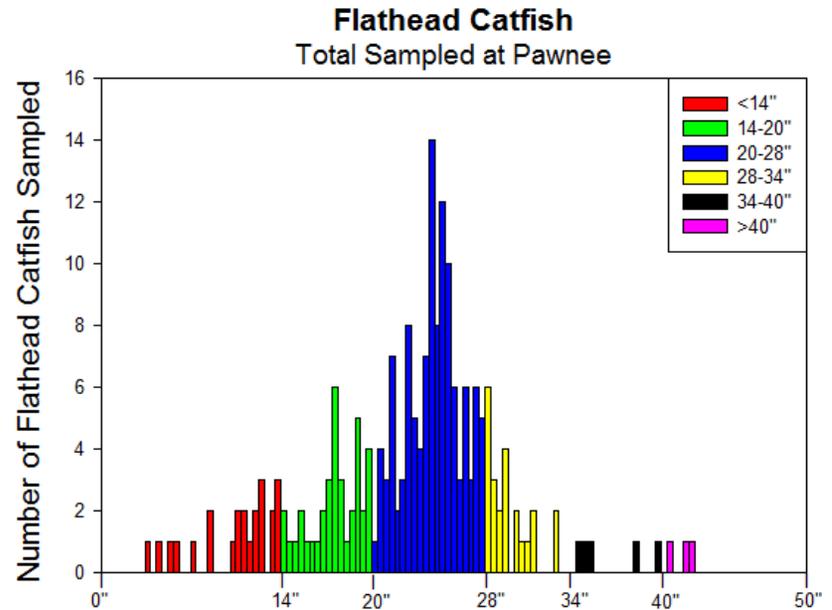
The Platte River, water willing, will also provide some good catfishing opportunities. Anglers should target log jams in deep holes or channel drop offs. Nightcrawlers, stink bait, or cut bait are all good bait options. Public access on the Platte River can be found at **Schilling WMA**, **Louisville SRA**, **Schramm Park SRA**, **Two Rivers SRA**, **Platte River Landing** near Valley, **Hormel Park** in Fremont, **Bramble WMA**, **Whitetail WMA** and **Tailrace Park** in Columbus.

Flathead Catfish

Branched Oak continues to be one of the top flathead destinations in the state and with multiple fish over 40"; anglers will have a chance to catch a true trophy. Anglers should also note that there is a catch and release regulation on flathead catfish at Branched Oak.

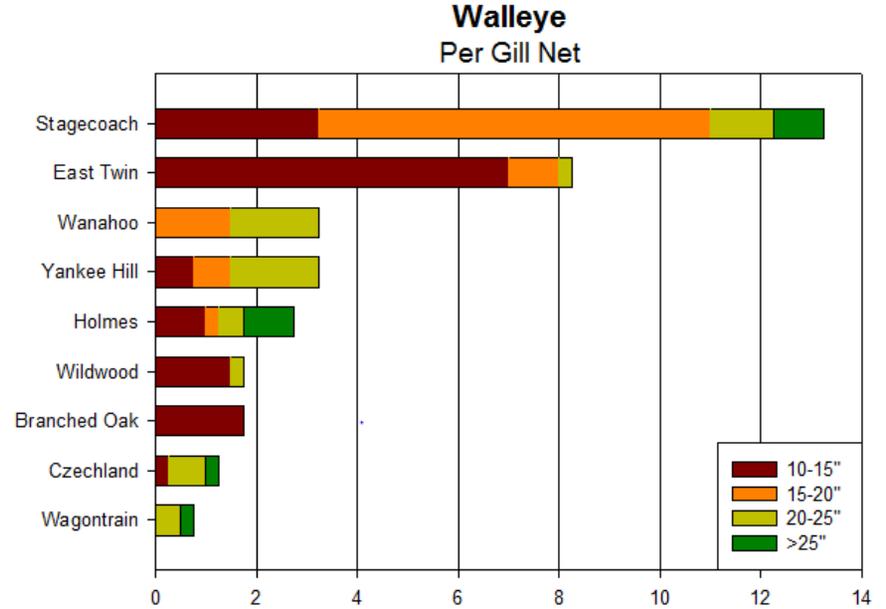


Pawnee Lake will also provide some excellent flathead fishing in 2015. Unlike Branched Oak, anglers are able to harvest up to five flatheads at Pawnee; however, only one can be over 30 inches.



Walleye

Anglers targeting eater-sized walleyes in the Salt Valley will want to fish **Stagecoach** or **East Twin**. Opportunities for trophy sized walleyes will be best at **Stagecoach, Holmes, Czechland** or **Wagontrain**. Also, in order to improve southeast Nebraska walleye fishing, advanced fish (8") were stocked at **Pawnee, Wanahoo, Yankee Hill, Branched Oak** and **Holmes** in the fall of 2014.



Northern Pike

Lake Wanahoo will again provide a unique fishing opportunity to catch northern pike in eastern Nebraska. Larger fish are becoming more abundant and anglers will have a chance to catch fish greater than 35 inches. Remember that all northern pike caught must be released immediately. The northern pike tagging study will continue in 2015 and anglers are asked to report all tagged fish to NGPC.FISHTAGS@NEBRASKA.GOV.

Other Species

Blue Catfish

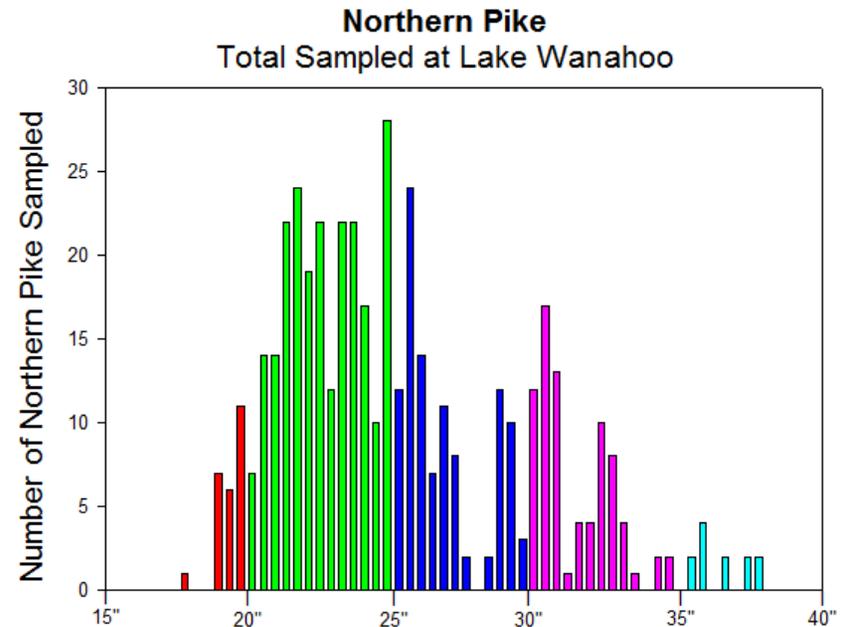
Blue catfish can be found in **Branched Oak, Lake Wanahoo** and the **Platte River**.

Bullheads

Bullheads provide a great fishing opportunity for beginners and children because they are easy to catch and a simple hook and worm is all you need. Catchable sized bullheads can be found at **Yankee Hill, Olive Creek** and **Wanahoo**.

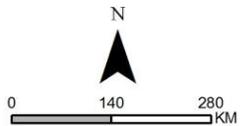
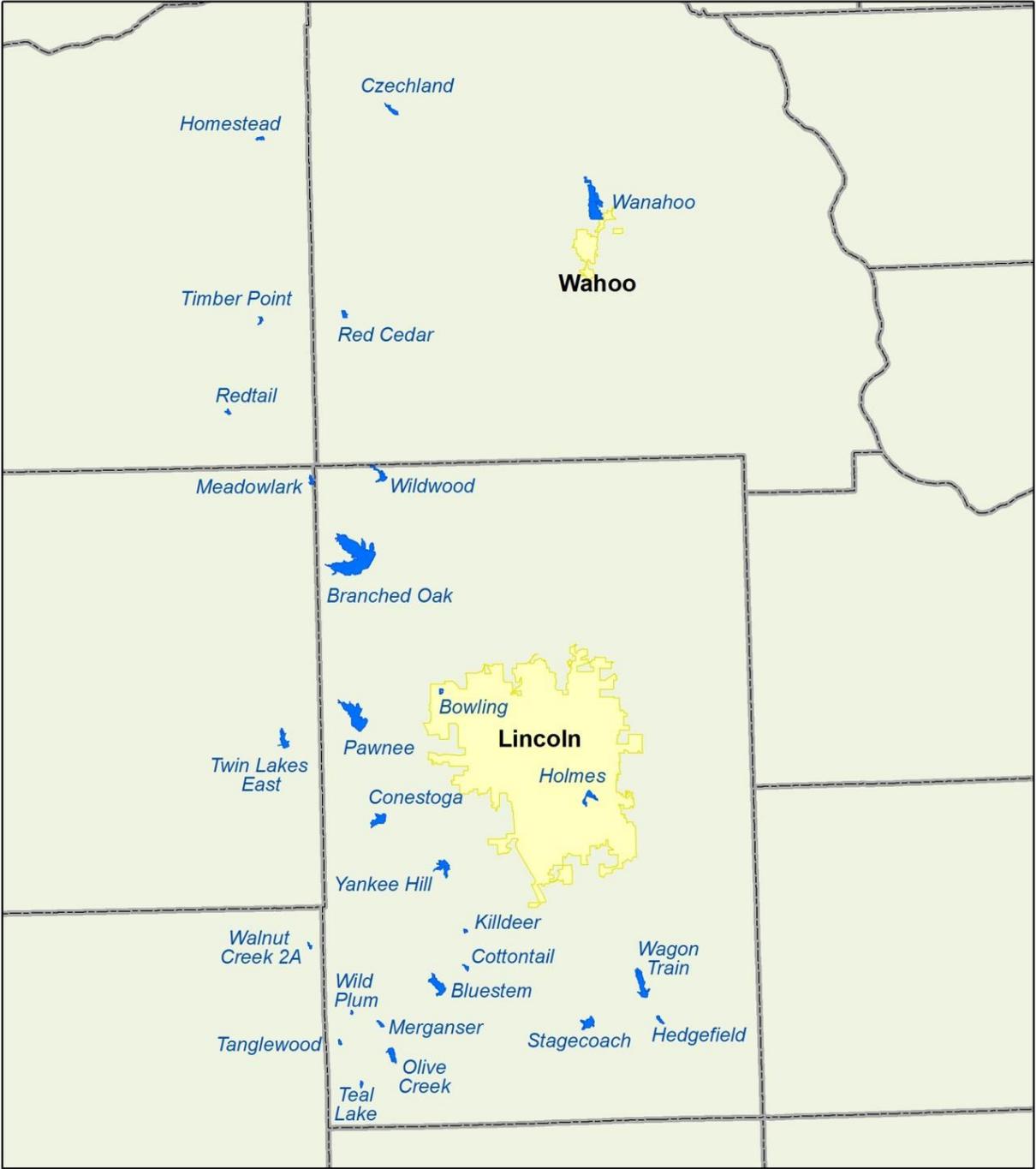
Rainbow Trout

Rainbow trout also provide a great fishing opportunity for children or beginners. Rainbow trout are stocked in the spring, fall and winter at **Holmes Lake** and in the fall and winter in the south pond at **Bowling Lake**.



Wipers and Striped Bass

Salt Valley reservoirs such as **Wagon Train, Stagecoach** and **Branched Oak** will again provide anglers an opportunity at some big wipers in eastern Nebraska. Striped bass were also stocked in **Branched Oak** in the fall of 2013 and spring of 2014. Anglers can keep only one white bass, striped bass or wiper that is 16" or longer in their daily bag limit, except at Branched Oak where a catch and release regulation is in place. Remember white perch, a similar looking species to white bass, striped bass and wipers, cannot be transported live from any waterbody as they are an aquatic invasive species.



NEBRASKA
 GAME PARKS

Trisha Schlake, IT Division, 12/18/2012

