



EAST FORK WILDLIFE AREA

Clermont County

DISTANCE FROM MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS

16 miles from Cincinnati
106 miles from Columbus
62 miles from Dayton
16 miles from Georgetown
40 miles from Middletown

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

East Fork Wildlife Area is located in southwestern Ohio, on the southeast edge of Williamsburg. Access to the north side of the lake is from State Route 32 between Batavia and Williamsburg. Access to the south side is from State Route 125 near Bantam. The wildlife area may be reached from roads off State Route 133, east of the area, and Old State Route 32 west of Williamsburg.

The 2,705-acre wildlife area lies at the northeast edge of East Fork Lake, where the east fork of the Little Miami River flows into the lake. The lake was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for flood control, water supply storage, water quality control, and recreation. In summer the lake is normally 2,160 acres. During periods of heavy rainfall, the lake covers portions of the normally dry wildlife area. East Fork State Park lies south and west of the wildlife area on both sides of East Fork Lake.

Meadow and grain crops make up about 25 percent of the wildlife area; about 45 percent is woodland and 30 percent is reverting fields of shrubs, small trees, grasses, and forbs.

The wildlife area varies from level upland and bottomland fields to gently rolling and steep wooded and reverting hillsides.

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

East Fork Lake was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; a partial pool was impounded in 1978. Of the 9,906 acres licensed to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, 2,705 acres are managed by the Division of Wildlife for public hunting and fishing. The remainder of the area is managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation.

Wildlife area habitat management work has included development of crop rotations and field sizes to provide food and cover for upland wildlife. Wildlife habitat has been enhanced by establishing field dividers, improving existing fencerows, and protecting and improving woodlands.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

Bobwhite quail, cottontail rabbit, white-tailed deer, fox and gray squirrels, and woodchuck are the major game species. Common furbearers are raccoon, opossum, muskrat, mink, weasel, skunk, red fox, and gray fox. Waterfowl are most common during migration and good numbers of wood ducks nest and rear their broods here each spring and summer. A variety of songbirds can be found on the area.

Largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass, crappies, bluegill, catfish, sunfish, suckers, and carp are found in the lake. The fishery has developed from the resident fish population in the main streams. Hybrid striped bass were stocked in 1983.

HUNTING, TRAPPING, AND FISHING

East Fork is popular for hunting rabbits, squirrel, and deer. Hunting is best for gray squirrels in the larger stands of mature woodland and for fox squirrels in the smaller woodlots, along the streams, and in woody fencerows. Rabbits and woodchucks are most numerous along fencerows and woodland borders. Deer are found throughout the area. Waterfowl hunting is available on the lake and the streams flowing into the lake.

Trapping is productive around pond areas and along the streams running into the lake.

Crappies and bluegills are taken around brush and in tops of fallen trees throughout the lake. Largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass are taken along the shoreline, around stumps and logs, and around old road beds.

PUBLIC USE FACILITIES

A dog training ground is situated south of Williamsburg-Bantam Road and parking areas are distributed throughout the wildlife area. Six boat ramps, a camping area, picnic facilities, restroom facilities, and drinking water are located around the lake.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Further information may be obtained from Wildlife District Five Office, 1076 Old Springfield Pike, Xenia, Ohio 45385; telephone (937) 372-9261.

State parks have special hunting and trapping regulations. Consult the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation, 2045 Morse Road, Bldg. C-2, Columbus, Ohio 43229-6693, or the park manager, (513) 734-4323.

TURN IN A POACHER

Ohio's TIP, "Turn In a Poacher," program is helping to curtail poaching throughout the state. TIP is designed to involve the public in reporting wildlife violations. Citizens who observe wildlife violations should call the TIP toll-free hotline, 1-800-POACHER.