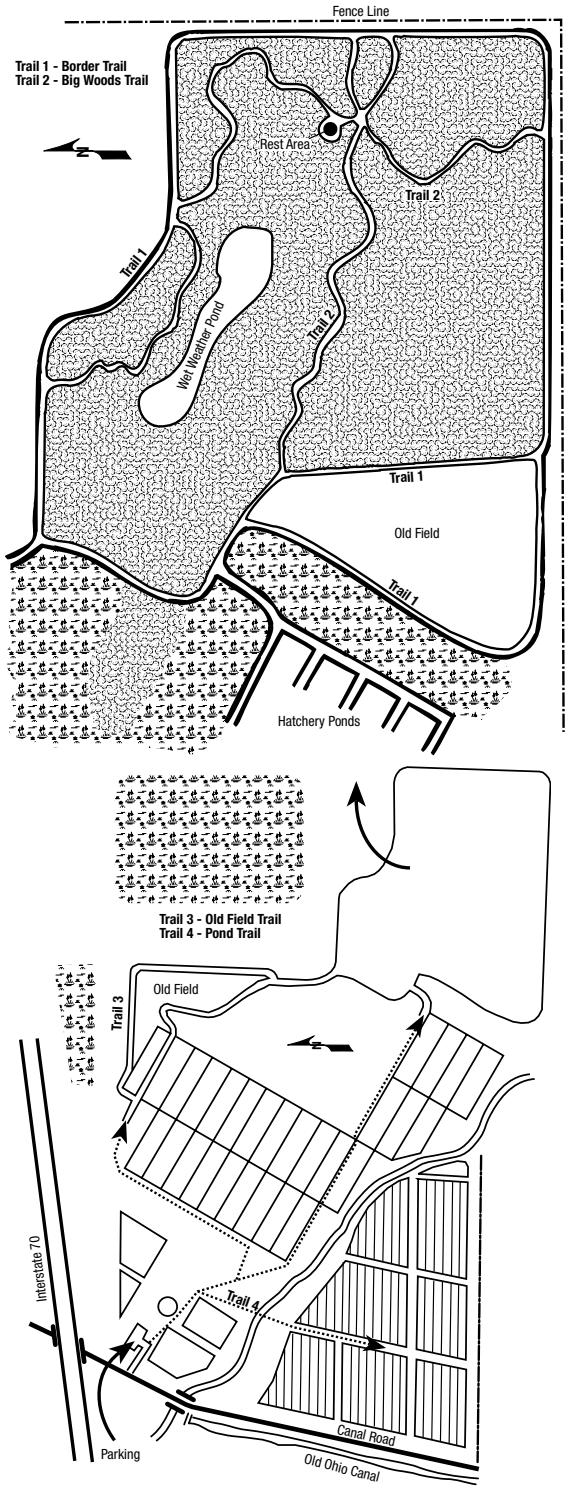


Other Interesting Facts About the Hebron Fish Hatchery . . .

The millions of gallons of water needed annually by the Hebron Fish Hatchery are supplied by nearby Buckeye Lake, a 2,800-acre impoundment. This water is transported a mile and a half to the hatchery via a section of the historic Ohio-Erie Canal. The canal once spanned the entire state, transporting both people and trade goods in boats towed by mules, but only a few water-filled sections of the canal remain today. Buckeye Lake was built as a water supply for the canal system and was the first man-made reservoir in America. Currently Buckeye Lake offers good opportunities to catch a variety of fish.

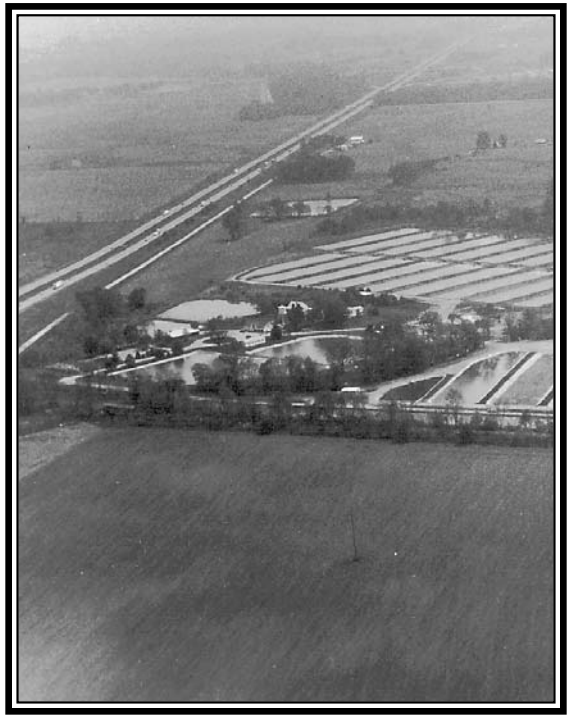
Fish Ohio Catch a Memory

The Ohio Division of Wildlife offers equal opportunity regardless of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex (in educational programs). If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, you should contact: The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office for Diversity and Civil Rights Programs-External Programs, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 130, Arlington, VA 22203; or, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, EEO Office, 2045 Morse Road, Bldg. C, Columbus, OH 43229.

Ted Strickland, Governor • Sean D. Logan, Director
David M. Graham, Chief

Publication 90 (300)

Hebron Fish Hatchery



Self-Guided Tour

Hebron Fish Hatchery, owned and operated by the Ohio Division of Wildlife, is Ohio's largest hatchery, producing some three to four million fish annually for stocking into the state's lakes and streams. Walleyes, saugeyes, hybrid-striped bass, bluegills, and channel catfish are raised here, as well as minnows that are transported to the Division's Kincaid and London hatcheries to feed growing muskellunge. The hatchery's 230 acres have also been a central Ohio bird watching hot spot for decades – more than 252 species have been recorded – and it is designated as one of Ohio's official Watchable Wildlife sites. Because of state fishing license fees, you will be enjoying your tour of the Hebron Fish Hatchery courtesy of Ohio's anglers.

Administration/Education Building

This building houses offices of the Hebron Fish Hatchery staff as well as those of Ohio's Inland Fisheries Research Unit. Interactive fish displays and free handout material about the hatchery and the Division of Wildlife are available. An outdoor observation deck off the back of the building overlooks a pond where ducks, geese, and other water birds – such as great blue herons – are likely to be seen.

Equipment Center

Electrofishing boats are built and repaired here for use by Division of Wildlife fisheries biologists across the state. These boats pulse an electric current through the water to temporarily immobilize fish. Biologists then net the fish to measure and weigh them before releasing them back into the water unharmed.

Fish Holding and Distribution Building

This is where fish are temporarily held after being netted from the hatchery's many outdoor rearing ponds. Here they are counted, weighed, and tagged if necessary, before being loaded onto specialized fish-hauling trucks and transported to Ohio's many lakes and streams. Fish eggs are also incubated in this building, hatching into young fish known as fry. In the spring the fry are then taken to the outdoor rearing ponds where they grow into slightly larger sized fish, known as fingerlings.

Outdoor Rearing Ponds

Sixty-three, one-acre earthen rearing ponds cover much of the hatchery grounds. The water level in these ponds averages about two feet deep. The pond bottoms gradually slope to catch basins about five feet in depth where fish gather as the pond is drained. The fish are then netted and lifted out of the ponds by hand. Mud flats, left after the ponds are drained in the late spring and early fall, attract many species of shorebirds.

The "Big Woods"

This 50-acre wet woods provides wildlife habitat for many species of birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and insects. It is also home to the state endangered massasauga (swamp) rattlesnake. This snake is seldom seen, but remaining on the more than two and one-half miles of designated nature trails that meander through and around the perimeter of the "Big Woods" will reduce your chances of encountering one.

Wetlands

A 25-acre wetlands complex, made up of both ponds and swamp, is located in the extreme northeast corner of the hatchery grounds. Wetlands are the most productive type of wildlife habitat in Ohio. During a walk along the trail that leads through the wetlands you may see a variety of ducks, geese, songbirds, frogs, turtles, and possibly even a muskrat, mink, or deer.