

BLUE LAKE

Whitley County



Area map page / coordinates: 25 / D-6

Nearest town: Churubusco

Maximum depth: 49 feet

Surface area: 239 acres

Average depth: 26 feet

Secchi disc: 9.0 feet

Shoreline demographics: 70% developed

Shoreline fishing: Fair

Accessibility: State-owned public access with concrete ramp on south shore; parking for 8 to 10 vehicles

Motors: Inboard / outboard motors allowed

Accommodations: None

FISH STOCKING DATA: No Record of Stocking

species	number	percent	Length Range (inches)	
			min.	max.
Bluegill	422	48.0	1.1	9.7
Largemouth Bass	111	12.6	3.9	17.1
Warmouth	90	10.2	1.7	9.5
Yellow Perch	49	5.6	3.3	12.6
Yellow Bullhead	39	4.4	7.9	13.1
White Sucker	33	3.8	9.5	18.4
Pumpkinseed Sunfish	26	3.0	2.3	7.2
Black Crappie	25	2.8	3.0	11.5
Gizzard Shad	21	2.4	12.1	16.9

LENGTH OF SELECTED SPECIES SAMPLED FROM ALL GEAR

Number of fish caught for the following length categories (inches):

species	0-5	6-8	9-11	12-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	>30	Total
Bluegill	20	1360	207	-	-	-	-	-	1,587
Crappie	-	21	11	-	-	-	-	-	32
Largemouth Bass	-	3	78	22	1	-	-	-	104
Yellow Perch	4	99	17	1	-	-	-	-	121

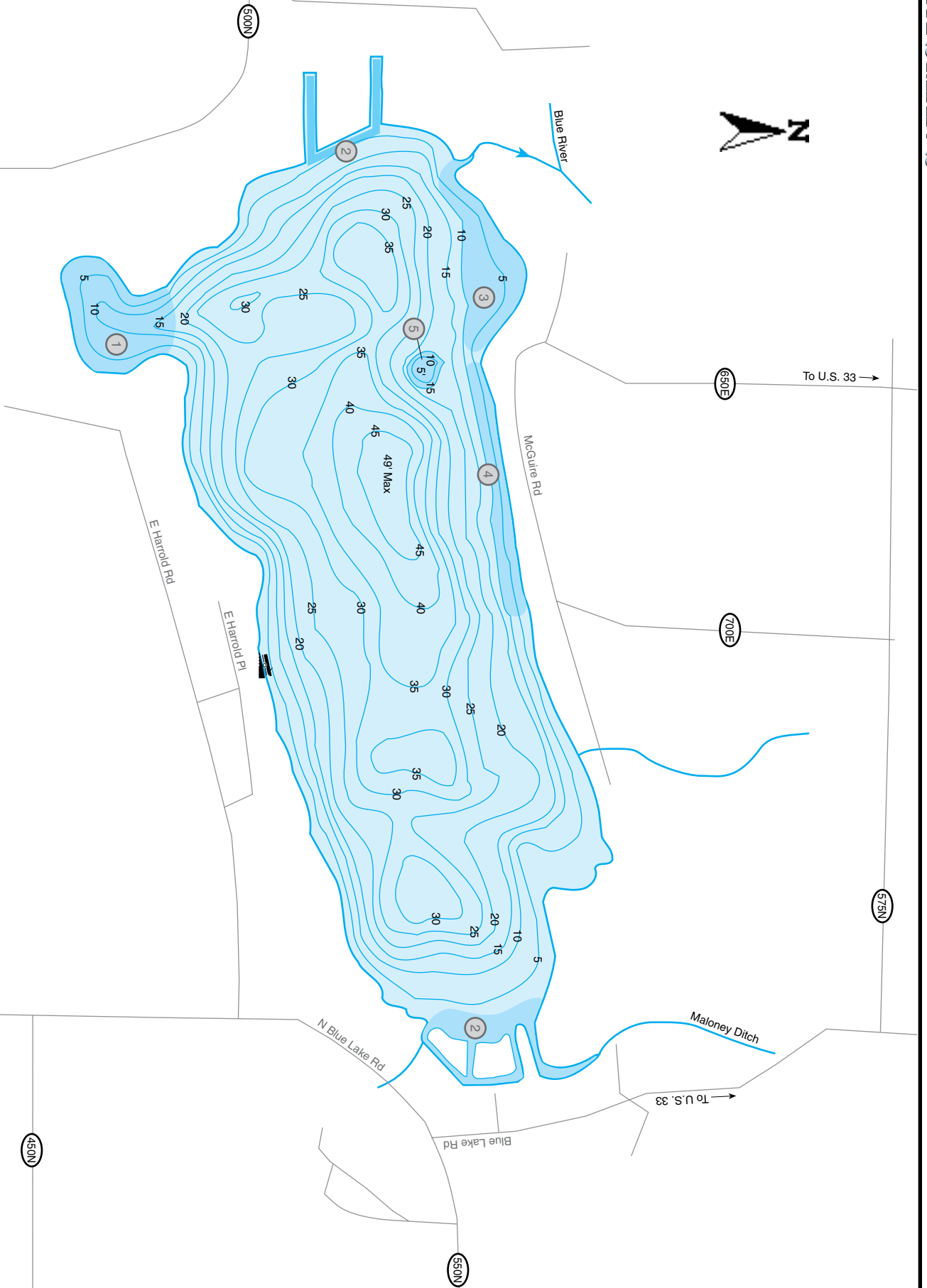
FISHING INFORMATION: This 239-acre natural lake varies in color from blue to green, depending on season, and in clarity from three feet on up to about nine feet, depending on run-off conditions and the amount of algae in the water. There's a fair amount of recreation pressure, and folks pound it pretty hard for bass and bluegill. Still, the fishery holds up well, and the lake continues to produce year after year. Bluegill are probably the lake's biggest draw. Local anglers say Blue Lake offers good numbers of bluegill in all size ranges, including fairly abundant fish in the eight- to nine-inch length range. In winter, spring and fall, bluegill are taken in the small, L-shaped bay in the lake's southwest corner (**SPOT 1**). Fish them with waxworms or redworms in open water season. In winter, tip a tiny jig with a waxworm. Another worthwhile option for catching bluegill is to drift crickets down the center of the lake and off breaklines in summertime. This lake offers the angler a good chance to catch crappie, too. Your best fishing for them is usually in the spring and winter. The channels on either end of the lake (**SPOT 2**) offer good early-season and ice action on jigs and small minnows. You can do well, too, with minnows fished under a bobber in (**SPOT 3**) off the north shore. This location also offers good fishing for bluegill in summer. The lake's bass aren't monsters, but size is improving, thanks in part to a 14-inch minimum length limit imposed in 1998 and to a strong catch-and-release ethic that's developed among Blue Lake bass anglers. There previously had been no size limit in effect for bass, which probably accounted for the 53.3% reduction in bass harvested between 1981 and 1998. Locals say bass numbers are good now, and you can occasionally catch a large one. Reports of bass in the six- to seven-pound are fairly common. Use Senkos or Texas-rigged tubes to hook less aggressive fish. Jerkbait, Rat-L-Traps and spinnerbaits are also local favorites. Troll or cast sand and weed beds at **SPOT 4** or the weedy hump at **SPOT 5**. The state-owned access site on the lake's south shore is decent and has parking for about 10 rigs. The launch ramp is concrete and can handle most boats.

For a fun bass fishing diversion, get and float a big shiner. Sure, you won't catch the 10-pounders folks in Florida encounter, but an awful lot of anglers pass up on bass fishing with live bait. Use a slip

float big shiners. Something in the 4-to 6-inch range will work well. Float your bait around the drop-off near the flat in (**SPOT 3**). Start in the 10-foot range and move around until you make contact with bass. This approach will work along deeper weeds edges throughout the lake. Floating a large shiner is most effective late in day as bass make their move into shallows at night to feed. A key element of tackle to make sure you're using is a circle hook. You can use traditional hooks, but the circle hooks have a tendency to provide better hook-ups for those who participate in catch-and-release fishing. As your bobber goes below the surface you don't have to set the hook very hard. Just lift up and start to reel in your line. The circle hook will catch most of the bass and other fish in the corner of the mouth. This type of hook allows you to hook fewer fish in the belly when using live bait.

Fly anglers can also have a good time on Blue Lake. During the spring cast ants, poppers or crickets over the shallow flats and in the channels. While you'll be in the minority among anglers, fly fishing can provide a very rewarding day when other methods aren't producing. The added bonus is the occasional largemouth bass that may strike your popper.

Largemouth bass accounted for 12.6% of the total catch during a 1998 INDNR survey of this lake. Of the 111 fish collected, 10 fish, or some 9.9% of the total catch, were larger than 14 inches. Growth was average for bass. Bluegill was the most abundant species in the 1998 survey, accounting for 48% of the total sample number, but only 9.3 percent by weight. Only 14.5 percent of captured bluegills were 6 inches or larger. Still, as the creel-survey length table above shows, anglers caught and kept 1,567 bluegills 6 inches or larger during April-September 1998. Growth was average for bluegill age 1 to 4 and above average for older fish.



NOT FOR NAVIGATION