



OTIS RESERVOIR

OTIS · TOLLAND

AREA = 1200 ACRES



NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES

OTIS RESERVOIR

(Otis / Tolland)

General Information:

This huge, 1,200-acre reservoir is a study in contrasts. While it is large, it is also relatively shallow, with a maximum depth of 48 feet and an average depth of about 15 feet. The southern third of the Tolland State Forest controls a third of the shoreline (primarily in the southern basin), yet the remainder is heavily developed with seasonal and permanent homes. One is likely to see canoes and cabin cruisers here on the same day. Aquatic vegetation is scarce, limited mostly to pond lilies growing in scattered clusters in the coves.

Public access for boating is provided by a large, paved boat ramp located on the western shore behind Clark Island. This is a surfaced ramp, adequate for everything from canoes to moderate draft boats, and there is parking for at least a dozen vehicles. The ramp abuts an attractive campground, which, like the state forest, is also run by the Department of Environmental Management.

Fish Populations:

This water contains a diverse population of fish. Up to 16 different species have been recorded in the past. The most recent survey, conducted in 1978, recorded 12 species: white perch, yellow perch, smallmouth bass, golden shiner, brown bullhead, largemouth bass, bluegill, chain pickerel, black crappie, white sucker, redbreasted sunfish and pumpkinseed. The lake is also stocked with tiger muskies. In addition, it is stocked with catchable trout (primarily rainbows) every spring and fall, and also receives a quota of broodstock salmon when they are available.

Fishing:

Most sportsmen come to Otis in search of the catchable trout released by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. The fishing for these trout is good, well into mid summer, and picks up again in late September and October when the reservoir receives a fall stocking of fewer but larger trout. Most are taken by trolling small spinners and spoons, or by still-fishing the bottom by boat or from shore with doughbaits or worms.

Smallmouth fishing is generally best from May through July. Although these fighters rarely reach trophy size and can be very spotty as to distribution within the lake, any angler who searches them out should find some action. Bottom-bouncing jigs, rubber slugs and live crayfish are very effective. The major problem is finding a spot away from water skiers and speedboats. Ice fishermen do well on yellow perch, large and smallmouth bass and black crappie, but chain pickerel are scarce. There is always the possibility of catching a trophy tiger muskie.

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