

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Monroe
County Lake
is a Hidden
Gem in South
Alabama

// By Jack Turner, State Lakes Supervisor, Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries // Photography by Billy Pope //

The fishing pier at Monroe County Lake makes it easy for anglers to reach deep water without use of a boat.



Monroe County Lake, located 17 miles north of Monroeville, might be a little off the beaten path, but the lake's fine fishing and scenic beauty can make the trip worth anyone's while. Set among rolling hills and pine forests, a trip to this lake will be a delight, whether you want to fish, picnic under a covered pavilion or simply get back to nature with a stroll along the lake's forested shore.



In 1998, Monroe County Lake was drained and restocked with bream, bass and channel catfish. Since reopening in 2000, it has been one of Alabama's best fishing lakes for bream and catfish. Anglers have caught more than 130,000 bream and over 20 tons of catfish! In 2006, a fine bass fishery developed as well, and anglers harvested almost 20,000 fish that weighed more than 10,000 pounds!

If you only want to wet a hook and enjoy a day out of doors, most any lake will do. But, if you want to catch a mess of fish in the process, a trip to Monroe County Lake might be worth your time and effort.

Access and Amenities

Expensive equipment is not necessary to catch fish at Monroe County Lake. Designed for easy angling access, this 94-acre lake contains extensive bank fishing areas. A roomy, accessible fishing pier may be used for no extra charge.

Boats may be rented, or a permit may be obtained to launch a private boat. Boat anglers do well along the west bank where the water is a little deeper.


Good fishing is not all the lake has to offer, however. For picnickers, a covered pavilion offers a wonderful view of the lake, and there are also picnic tables scattered around the lake's shoreline. Clean and safe, the lake is a great place to bring children, and hikers may use the trail that winds along the east shoreline under the forest canopy.

Don't forget to stop at the concession building for a chat with the lake's managers, Marion and Brenda Craft. They enjoy assisting lake visitors, regardless of whether they came to fish or simply want to stop and chat for a while. The Crafts have a complete line of bait, tackle, soft drinks, and snacks available, so there is no need to stop for supplies before going to Monroe County Lake.

Monroe County Lake is operated by the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Like Alabama's other public fishing lakes, Monroe County Lake is operated entirely with user fees. These fees are derived from the lake's fishing and boating permits, from the sale of fishing licenses, and from a federal excise tax on fishing and boating supplies. No State General Fund money is used to operate Monroe County Lake.

Admission and Hours

There is no admission charge to the lake. Anglers 12 years and older must purchase a \$2 daily permit to fish. A boat may be rented for \$3, and a private boat may be launched for \$2. A valid fishing license is required for resident anglers 16-65 in age, and all non-residents age 16 and older.

The lake is in operation daylight til dark from February 1 through November. From February 1 through November, the lake is open every day except Monday. After July 1, the lake is also closed on Tuesday. 

Directions

To reach Monroe County Lake from Monroeville, head north on Highway 21 for 17 miles to Beatrice. In Beatrice, turn left on Highway 265, then take another left on Robbins St. (Co. Rd. 50) and go 2.5 miles to the lake.

For More Information

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