



LAKE ALLATOONA



This 11,860-acre U.S. Army Corps of Engineers impoundment of the Etowah River is 30 miles north of Atlanta. Allatoona features convenient boat ramp access and parking, as well as camping opportunities. The lake receives heavy use from boaters, skiers and anglers.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Army Corp of Engineers: <http://allatoona.sam.usace.army.mil/>; ph. 678-721-6700.

Red Top Mountain State Park: <http://www.gastateparks.org/info/redtop/> ph. 770-975-4222

BOAT RAMPS

There are 26 Army Corps of Engineers (COE), state, county and city boat ramps on this lake. For information on ramp locations and current status, visit the COE Web site indicated above.

FEES

Many corps facilities have boat launch fees, user fees or both. Refer to contact information for pricing.

ABOUT

Angling prospects are compiled by fisheries biologists and are based on sampling efforts of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), knowledge of past fishing trends, angling experience and information provided by anglers and marina owners. For more information, contact the Wildlife Resources Division, Calhoun Fisheries office: ph. 770-387-4821.

FISHING QUICK LINKS

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FISHING PROSPECTS FOR LAKE ALLATOONA

BEST BETS: SPOTTED BASS, HYBRID STRIPED BASS, STRIPED BASS AND CRAPPIE

LARGEMOUTH BASS		
Prospect	Though less abundant than spotted bass, largemouth will typically weigh-in at a larger size. The average fish will be around 1.25 pounds, with a few reaching more than 5 pounds in size in 2009. The numbers of largemouth fluctuate little in Allatoona from year to year, so expect similar numbers to past years.	
Technique	Baits vary from season to season, but a good arsenal of spinnerbaits, crankbaits, swimbaits or plastic worms are all good baits to start with.	
Target	Target the coves and backwaters of the Little River, Etowah and Allatoona Creek areas of the reservoir. This is where some of the better largemouth habitat is found. Largemouth may also be found holding in the numerous shoreline habitat improvement sites scattered around the lake (see map link under 'Additional Information' below). More than 700 shoreline trees have been toppled at these sites since 2007.	

SPOTTED BASS		
Prospect	Spotted bass are the dominant black bass species, making up 80 to 90 percent of the black bass population in Allatoona. The average spot in 2009 will remain around 12-inches in length, while older, less numerous spots will measure more than 20 inches in length and 4-5 pounds in size.	
Technique	Drop-shot rigs with small baits like a 4-inch zoom tiny fluke or robo worm, or vertical jigging spoons (flex-it or hopkins shorty's) are both excellent approaches to targeting spots year-round. In the cooler months, when spots can be feeding aggressively, use more reactive baits like shallow to medium diving crankbaits, such as lucky craft's flat mini, spinnerbaits, or even larger swimbaits. Live minnows are also a great means for consistently hooking up with Allatoona's spotted bass.	
Target	Spotted bass tend to remain in deeper habitats than largemouth. Spots will however, move to shallow depths during their April-May spawning period. In summer, try fishing in and around the more than 36 deepwater fish attractor locations placed in the reservoir by the DNR and the COE. These fish attractors are best fished from fall through spring. Download a fish attractor location map from the DNR Web site listed below under 'Additional Information.'	

STRIPED BASS		
Prospect	Between 30 and 60 thousand striped bass fingerlings are annually stocked in Allatoona. Higher than normal stocking rates in 2007 led to an abundance of young stripers last year. Anglers should expect members of this large year-class to be 17-20 inches long in 2009. Due to persistent severe drought conditions in the region, anglers can expect fewer catches of larger stripers this year.	
Technique	Though striper fishing techniques abound, slow trolling live shad on free-lines or weighted down-line rigs is a favored approach to consistent catches at Allatoona. Striper fishing is best from October-June when water temperatures are relatively cool. Though stripers may feed at anytime, concentrate your efforts during the early to mid-morning hours to maximize your chance of encountering actively feeding fish.	
Target	In winter, stripers will be in the main body of the lake, but will migrate to the upper reaches during their spring spawning run. As summer heats up, smaller stripers (less than 10 lbs) will remain in the main lake, while most larger linesides will migrate up the Etowah River seeking coolwater in which to beat the summer heat. Then, with the onset of fall and cooling lake waters, these large stripers migrate back into the main lake, again feeding voraciously as they pack on pounds lost during the hot summer months.	

HYBRID BASS		
Prospect	Increased hybrid striped bass stocking rates in recent years continue to be a success on Allatoona. The average hybrid will weigh around 2 pounds, but numerous 5-8 pound fish will be available.	
Technique	White or shad patterned spinners, spoons, jigs or crankbaits will produce hybrids, but serious hybrid anglers should slow troll with 4-6 inch live shad on simple free-line or down-line rigs. During fall, winter and spring, live shad remain very effective techniques, but trolling umbrella rigs or vertical jigging with spoons can make for a good striper outing. For the bank fisherman, winter hybrids in and around the dam area can be hooked using cut shad fished on the bottom.	

Target	Hybrid fishing is available year-round, but is best for numbers during the heat of summer. Low summer dissolved oxygen in Allatoona's depths typically concentrates hybrids in the 20-30 foot range. While summer is good for numbers, winter hybrid fishing is typically characterized by catches of larger individuals. Though possibly found anywhere in the lake chasing shad, the mile of lake above and below Galt's Ferry boat ramp is a year-round hot spot for hybrids.	
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CRAPPIE

Prospect	Crappie fishing should be consistent with years past in terms of numbers. The average fish should measure around 10 inches, and weigh about 1/2 pound, but larger 1 to 2 pound slab crappie are available.	
Technique	Small jigs or live minnows fished beneath bobbers are both proven methods for catching crappie. Trolling jigs is a good way to cover a lot of water and locate actively feeding schools of fish.	
Target	Target spring spawn crappie from March to April in the shallows of Kellogg, Illinois, Stamp Creeks and Etowah River areas of the lake. During summer, seek deeper brush piles or other fish attractors located on humps and channel ledges, as crappie will concentrate in deeper habitat during this time. Also try night fishing with lights and light tackle around docks and bridges. During fall and winter, target crappie near old river channel edges in Allatoona's many coves.	

CATFISH

Prospect	Channel and flathead catfish are both found in Allatoona. Channel catfish are more abundant while flatheads tend to grow much larger in size. The typical channel cat is around 13 inches and 3/4 pound. Larger channels will tip scales in the 5 pound range. Flatheads are less numerous, but most caught will be 5 to 10 pounds or larger.	
Technique	Use chicken livers or cut bait for channel cats and live bait, such as bream or shad, for flatheads. Both baits should be fished on the bottom.	
Target	Pursue both species on the rocky bedrock banks in the Etowah River arm of the lake. The numerous rip-rapped shoreline banks are also good areas to target large catfish. Such habitats are common around bridges and fishing jetties. Catfish may also be found in the recesses of woody debris jams often found in the very backs of Allatoona's coves.	

BREAM

Prospect	Bluegill, redbreast sunfish and redear sunfish are all present. Bluegill are the most abundant of the three. They average 5 inches in length, with few being more than 7 inches. Though fewer in number, redear tend to be larger than either bluegill or redbreast sunfish. Larger redear will top 9-inches in length.	
Technique	Crickets or worms fished under a bobber, as well as micro-jigs or flies are all common tactics for successful bream fishing.	
Target	From early to mid-summer, bream speckle the bottom of shallow coves with their circular nests. These nests are commonly visible to anglers, and nesting often occurs in the same general area year-after-year. The best locations often are associated with some type of woody debris that offers nesting fish a place to escape danger.	

OTHER SPECIES	
Prospect	Carp and gar are numerous. Carp are widely distributed and grow to moderately large sizes. Most will be around 5 pounds, and the biggest common carp will usually weigh no more than 15 pounds. Gar, though not very tasty are strong fighters and abundant around Allatoona. Gar 3 feet in length are typical, but 4-footers also can be found.
Technique	Carp should be fished for using bottom rigs with offerings of prepared "dough" baits, corn or worms. For gar, live shad or minnows fished just below a bobber, or sight fishing with hookless handmade lures constructed from 6-8 inch pieces of frayed cotton rope will work well.
Target	Target carp in shallow flats and in the backs of coves, especially around submerged timber. Gar are often seen cruising shallow flats and tributary mouths, but can also be found ambushing prey on rocky main lake points.

Best Fishing Times Calendar Key: Fair:  Good:  Excellent: 

Additional Information

The COE, DNR and local volunteers actively work to improve fish habitat in Allatoona. Anglers can find information and current maps showing the location of these deepwater fish attractors and shoreline habitat improvements on the following Wildlife Resources Division Web site:

<http://www.georgiawildlife.org/documentdetail.aspx?docid=117&pageid=3&category=fishing>

In late 2008, DNR began stocking lake sturgeon in Allatoona in an effort to reestablish this native fish to the upper Etowah River system. Anglers accidentally catching a lake sturgeon should release the fish immediately. Fish hooked deep will often survive if anglers cut the line near the hook and release the fish with the hook. Those wondering what impact sturgeon will have on their favorite game species can rest easy. Because of its low reproductive potential, the fish does not establish itself as a prominent species making its impacts to other fish negligible. If you catch or otherwise see a sturgeon, please contact the Calhoun DNR office (706-624-1161) to report the location from which the sturgeon was caught. Such information is valuable to biologists assessing the survival and dispersal of these magnificent fish.