

BIENNIAL REPORT

OF THE

Commissioner of Fisheries
and Game of Indiana

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS OF 1913 AND 1914

GEORGE WILLIAM MILES
Commissioner

Assisted by
PRESTON H. MILES

To the Governor

INDIANAPOLIS:
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could easily conceal himself in the reeds and rushes, and return home with a good bag of game; but each year the duck becomes more educated, and while twenty or thirty specimens are killed in a day by a single hunter, the task is a big day's work for even a crack marksman.

"All sorts of ducks are common to Manitou. Mud hens or teal are the commonest specie, and are but little prized by hunters. Mallards, wood-ducks, pin-tails, canvas-backs, blue-bills, and several others are killed each season.

"Snipe are common along a stretch of sandy bank at certain seasons of the year, and many a good kill has been bagged. Sandpipers and killdeers are also occasional victims of the sportsmen, and blackbirds are found in great numbers among the reeds along the banks."

CLEAR LAKE.

Far up in the northeast corner of the State, in Steuben County, lies Clear Lake, about a mile east of Ray, a station on the Fort Wayne branch of the Lake Shore Railroad. It has an area of 857.66 acres, which makes it the third largest lake in the county. It has long been popular as a summer resort, attracting people from Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Jackson, Toledo, and other points from which the lake is easily reached, so that today it has about eighty cottages built on its banks, besides two large hotels to care for those visitors who come for a short stay. Hacks meet all trains, and passengers are carried to the lake for a small fare.

The name of Clear Lake was given by the first surveyors, almost eighty years ago, for the reason that this body of water, as it is today, was found by them to be remarkably clear and free of floating aquatic vegetation. The bottoms are principally sand, with only a few bays with a mucky bottom to color the water. And the main basins are deep, so that vegetation does not reach to the surface.

There seems to be no way of knowing what the Indians called the lake previous to the coming of the white settlers, but it is known that the redmen found this a popular fishing ground and spent much time in the neighborhood, although the various spots of interest hereabout have not been given Indian names, as is

usually done by the white man when he enters Indian regions. All the Indians were taken from the northern part of the State in 1840, and moved to a reservation that had been assigned them by the United States Government west of the Missouri River. Previous to this time there was an Indian village a little distance southeast of Clear Lake; and running along the east and north shore was an Indian trail that led from the site of Toledo to join with the one that led from Fort Wayne to Michigan. The village members were of the Pottawattomie tribe. Today the only indication of the Indian occupation to be found in a place name is Indian Point, reaching out into the lake from the eastern shore, where are two or three mounds in which it is claimed that Indians are buried; this, however, has never been proved by digging in the mounds.

In shape the lake somewhat resembles a clover-leaf, with three lobes, the main basin northward, and an east basin and west basin, each almost as large, lying below. In the center of the conjunction of these basins stands a high oak-covered island of two and one-half acres, at about the place a stem would be joined to the clover-leaf. The shores are rather regular in outline, excepting the western shore of the main basin. All the banks are high, and, save in places along the southern shore, are heavily wooded with oaks, maples, a few sycamores and elms, an occasional walnut, and at one or two places a few cedars. The island has been given the name of Cedar Island, for the reason that formerly it was covered with trees of this species, although at present only seven or eight small ones are to be found here; there are no cottages on the island, even though the place seems an attractive one. The island is still owned by the Federal Government.

The deepest point in the lake is about eighty feet, and is to be found near the center of East Bay, south of Indian Point. Other points in the lake are almost equal to this in depth, there being a sort of channel extending through the three basins. In general, however, near the shores, the water is shallow, many sandbars reaching out in places two and three hundred feet, where the depth ranges from a few inches to four and six feet. The beaches are sandy, and, in the main, are free of rushes, so

that only two or three small places around the shores are not suitable for bathing.

There are several springs around the lake, and along the southern shore the presence of springs at the bottom is indicated by changes in the temperature of the water. The principal source of water for the lake, however, is a stream inlet flowing several miles from the southeast and entering the lake at the southeast corner of the East Bay. The outlet of the lake is at the northwestern corner of the main basin, into Round Lake, a body of water of about fifty acres lying only twenty or twenty-five feet beyond the shore at the northwestern side of the main basin. From here the water flows northward through a stream outlet into a broad marsh north of the main basin, thence northward into the Saint Joe River. It gives me a feeling of relief to visit this lake and learn that it has not been affected by ditching, as has been so many others of our fine northern lakes. The lake is perhaps a foot lower than it was twenty-five years ago; but it has not been drained directly, and this slight lowering has not been noticeable in changing the size of the water area, owing to the high banks.

The lake was "discovered" seventeen years ago, when the first summer home was built on the west shore of the main basin. Since that time its growth as a summer resort has been steady. Today cottages are lined along the banks completely around the main basin, and the roadway along the north shore appears to be a busy street. At the northwest corner of the main basin has recently been built the Lakeside Hotel, capable of caring for about seventy guests. The first hotel at the lake was the Hazenhurst, which is situated about midway of the north shore, able to care for about ninety guests. On the south shore of East Bay is a row of fourteen cottages, to which the name Littlerock has been applied. On the south shore of West Bay are three new cottages, this portion of the lake having been recently opened up for settlement, and a plat made extending to Paradise Point.

Now step into a boat with me and let us take an excursion around the lake, to become acquainted with the points of interest.

Let us start here at Indian Point, this long, high head of land

that juts down into the lake from the eastern shore and helps to divide the East Bay from the main basin. The shore is fringed with rushes, and the beach is shallow for about one hundred feet out from the shore.

Extending northward from Indian Point is Crystal Beach, with a shore of fine white sand. The cottages, so hidden among the trees that they can not well be seen from out on the lake, are built close together—a good proof of the attractiveness of the place. A roadway runs along the back of the cottages, following the shore line contour, running from the grocery store at Hazenhurst, and turning eastward to meet the main road after it has reached almost to the point.

From here on up to the Hazenhurst Hotel the cottages are also built closely, and this portion of the shore has been given the name Morton Beach. The hotel is at the north end of the lake. Near the hotel is a grocery store that supplies the resorters with small necessities.

At the northwest corner of the lake is located the Lakeside Hotel, recently built. This hotel commands a view of not only the main basin, but also of the small body of water nearby called Round Lake. Cottages extend all along the shore from Hazenhurst to Lakeside, the banks being steep. The highway was built on the top of the bluff. Along part of the roadway cottages have been built on both sides.

Round Lake contains perhaps fifty acres of water, all of which is fringed with spatterdock and lily-pads. The lake lies west of the northwest corner of the main basin of Clear Lake, with only a few feet of low bank separating the two. A roadway runs south over this narrow bank, making a highway for the cottagers on the western shore. The outlet of the main basin, and Clear Lake, is at the narrowest point of the strip of land separating the two; but the stream can not be passed over in a boat except in the spring when the weeds are low and the water is high. But boats have been placed on this lake, and many fishermen like to ply their skill with casting at the margins, their efforts often being rewarded with a large-mouthed black bass. The outlet of Round Lake is opposite the inlet just mentioned, and flows to

Mud Lake, a shallow, marshy basin lying a few hundred feet north of Round Lake.

The high knoll of ground south of the bridge on the western shore is Verene Point, named after the owner. On this spot is situated two fine summer homes.

The next place south is Spring Point, named from the fact that a clear flowing spring is located at the tip of the point. Over the spring has been built a small spring-house. Between Spring Point and Verene Point is a shallow bay, fringed with rushes and lily-pads, in which the bass are to be found nesting in the spring.

Just south and under cover of Spring Point is Pleasant Bay, shallow, sandy. The banks, however, are high and covered with oak and maple trees, and have proved attractive to builders of summer homes.

Now we come to Skunk Island, this high knoll, covered with small oak trees, with an area of a few square rods. During the latter part of the summer this mound is not an island, for it connects with the mainland with a low, marshy and rush-covered sandbar. It reaches out from the shore about one hundred feet. The name that has been given it was applied to honor perhaps the island's only inhabitants.

Below Skunk Island is Long Bay, extending to the point.

Long Point is a low, mucky piece of ground reaching out into the lake southeastward toward Paradise Point on the south shore, and this in part divides West Bay from the main basin. The point is matted with marsh grass and wild rice near the tip, while farther back are elm and willow trees, with here and there a cluster of briars. Under cover of the point, in West Bay, over a large area near the shore is a profuse cluster of rushes, cattails, and lily-pads.

The whole north shore of West Bay is shallow and sandy. At the western end of the bay, however, the water is deeper, and the shore is fringed for a few feet with spatterdock. Fishing for bass is good from here on down to the cottages on the southern shore of the bay. These cottages are midway of the southern shore, and are the beginning of the row of lots that have recently

been platted, known as Powers Plat. The lots extend to the tip of Paradise Point, which reaches up into the lake northward, somewhat lance-like in shape. The point is well covered with trees. The whole southern shore of West Bay, and most of the north shore, is high and well wooded.

About three hundred feet northeast of Paradise Point stands Cedar Island, a high mound with an area of perhaps two and one-half acres, gravel banks, and covered mostly with second-growth oak trees. A few cedar trees are to be found there now, although formerly there were many, from which fact the island received its name. The bottom from Paradise Point to Cedar Island is shallow gravel, so that one can wade from one to the other.

Between the east shore of Paradise Point and the south bank of the lake is a deep pocket known as Esler Bay, which is fringed a few feet with lily-pads, and in this place the bass are usually to be found.

From Esler Bay eastward along the south shore the line is comparatively regular. At the water's edge on the high bank the briar bushes have grown thick. The bottom, however, is gravel, and for the most part is free of vegetation. About midway along this strip is a flowing spring of cool, clear water, and to the portion of the shore near the spring the name Spring Bay has been applied.

Next to Spring Bay is Whirlpool Bay. It is rumored that a fierce whirlpool located somewhere in the bay has been the cause of three or four drownings. I was unable, however, to see any evidence of a whirlpool any place in the bay or any sort of boiling of the water.

Whirlpool Bay ends at Buck Point, on the other side of which is Hingham Bay, a small pocket, with a low bank, just between the tip of the point and the first cottage.

From Buck Point up to the inlet stream near McHalaney Landing extends a row of summer homes along the south bank of East Basin, known as Littlerock Settlement. A roadway runs back of the cottages, meeting with the main road that comes down from the north on the east side of the lake, and for a short

distance follows the eastern high bank, near the water's edge. At the northeast corner of the bay is McNorton Landing. From here to Indian Point the shore is shallow and sandy and more or less covered with rushes. Just under cover of the point is a small pocket or bay, known as Indian Bay, which is fringed with lily-pads.

It was at Indian Bay that the local club of fishermen formerly operated a brooding pond for newly-hatched bass, the area being screened in and the young being placed therein for protection until they were large enough to care for themselves, when they were liberated into the lake. But the fences have fallen into disrepair and the broodery is no longer operated.

Both wall-eyed pike and black bass have been planted in the lake. But this was only recently, and as yet there is no evidence of them. Generally, however, fishing is good; although within the last few years there has been a noticeable decrease from the once excellent qualities, whence the effort to restock the lake and bring it back to its former condition, when it had an enviable reputation as a fishing resort.

There are many rowboats on the lake. A majority of the cottagers own private launches. There are two passenger launches to care for the short-time visitor. Besides these there are many canoes and sailboats. Each year a two days' program is arranged of contests of aquatic feats, and prizes are offered for the best swimmers, sailors, launchmen, casters and canoeists, etc.

BARBEE LAKES.

The Barbee Lakes are a chain of six basins lying in the central eastern part of Kosciusko County, and are to be reached from Leesburg, from which town auto liveries make regular trips. One can get to Leesburg from almost any part of the State by means of the Winona Interurban or the Benton Harbor branch of the Big Four Railroad. The drive from the Leesburg station to the lake is over five or six miles of beautiful country road. The liveryman's fare for this service is reasonable. Barbee Lakes are also conveniently reached from the town of Pierceton, which is on the main line of the Pennsylvania Railway.