

Wayne Fitzgerald is noted for its extensive sporting dog field trial programs. The site annually hosts more than 25 field trial events, in which some of the best trained beagles, retrievers and bird dogs compete for regional and national honors. Many of the competitions are equestrian trials, with dog handlers and observers following the action from horseback.

When game populations warrant, the site hosts hunting programs for upland game and deer. While no waterfowl hunting takes place at Wayne Fitzgerald, the site is a popular location where waterfowlers can camp or rent a room for their hunting trip.

Hundreds of upland game hunters flock to Wayne Fitzgerald each fall to participate in a controlled pheasant hunt accommodating up to 120 hunters a day.

Wayne Fitzgerald State Park, with its excellent camping, lodging and boat launch facilities, is a great headquarters for anglers using Rend Lake. Since 75 percent of the park's boundary is Rend Lake shoreline, the site provides outstanding bank fishing opportunities.

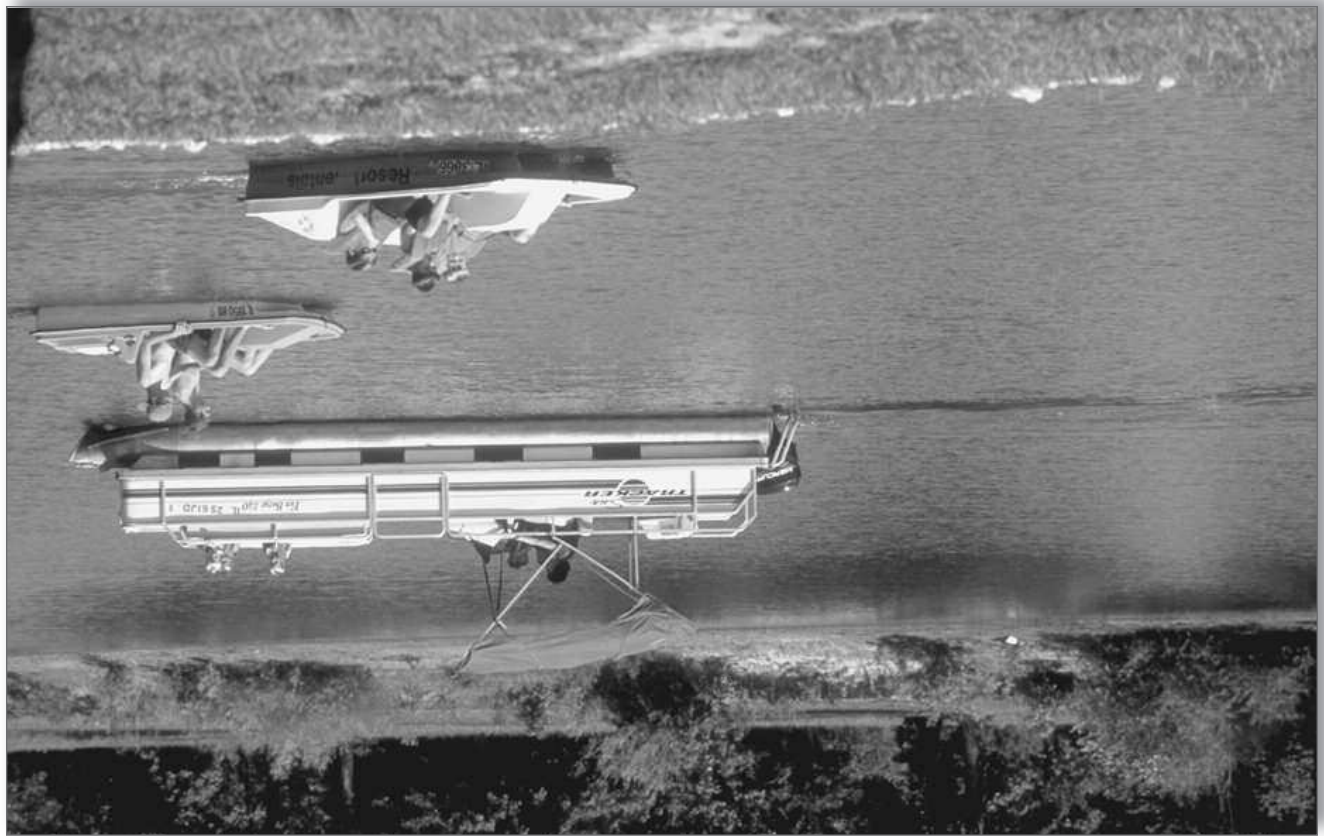
Hunting and Fishing



With more than 150 picnicking sites situated throughout the park, Wayne Fitzgerald visitors should have little problem finding the perfect spot for a summertime picnic. There are three major picnic areas and several small areas equipped with shelters, tables, fireplaces and playground equipment. Reservations are accepted at four of the five shelters. Shelter reservations at www.reserveamerica.com. Shelter 1 in the south picnic area and Shelters 2 and 3 in the north area offer a protected cove for the convenience of boaters looking for a picnicking spot. Shelter 4, located in the County Line Picnic Area, is the largest shelter in the park. This shelter has a nice shaded setting, is handicapped accessible and has water with a large fireplace for cooking. For hikers and bikers, a newly constructed 4-mile hiking/biking trail is in place which runs from the park office, to the day use areas through the campgrounds to Rend Lake Resort, and then connects to the Rend Lake College Bike Trail. Wayne Fitzgerald is a popular launch site for fishing tournaments, pleasure boaters, water skiers and anglers using Rend Lake.

Exotic Species

Plants and animals not native to Illinois are exotic species. Most of them are harmless to our state; however, some can be very invasive to native plant communities and can overwhelm or wipe out native species. Prevention and control of exotic, invasive species requires tremendous cooperation between managers and all users of parks, natural areas, and privately owned land. To learn more about exotic and invasive species and how you can help prevent their spread, visit the IDNR Exotic Species Website at: <http://www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/education/ExoticSpecies/exoticspintro.htm>.

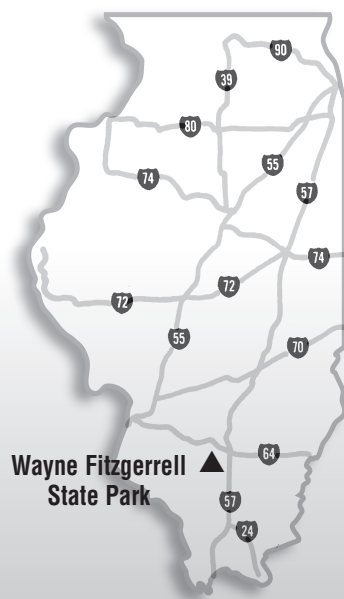


Lodging and restaurant facilities further enhance the park's reputation as a recreational area offering something for every member of the family.

Birders visiting the area have an excellent chance of seeing great blue heron, American bald eagle, red-tailed hawk and a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl. The resident population of ring-necked pheasants that Wayne Fitzgerald supports is unique in southern Illinois. White-tailed deer, raccoon, opossum and squirrel are among the mammals wildlife enthusiasts are likely to see.

The area contains many fence rows, abandoned crop fields and cleared farmsteads interspersed with small oak-hickory woodlands. Three-quarters of the site's perimeter is Rend Lake shoreline. This varied topography provides excellent habitat for a variety of upland and woodland wildlife, as well as waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors.

Approximately 2,000 acres of the site are developed for picnicking, boating access, camping and other activities, while another 1,000 acres have been set aside for hunting, field trials, wildlife observation, hiking and other land uses.



Wayne Fitzgerald State Park
11094 Ranger Road
Whittington, IL 62897, (618) 629-2320

- While groups of 25 or more are welcome and encouraged to use the park's facilities, they are required to register in advance with the site office to avoid crowding or scheduling conflicts.
- At least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.
- Pets must be kept on leashes at all times.
- Actions by nature can result in closed roads and other facilities. We hope you enjoy your stay. Remember, take only memories, leave only footprints.
- For more information on state parks, write to the Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271 visit our website at www.dnr.state.il.us.
- For more information on tourism in Illinois, call the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Bureau of Tourism at 1-800-2CONNECT.
- Hearing-impaired individuals may call the Department of Natural Resources' TTY number, (217) 782-9175, or use the Ameritech Relay Number, 1-800-526-0844.

Equal opportunity to participate in programs of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and those funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies is available to all individuals regardless of race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion or other nonmerit factors. If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the funding source's civil rights office and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, IDNR, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271; (217) 785-0067; TTY (217) 782-9175.

Overlooking the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' 19,000-acre Rend Lake Reservoir, Wayne Fitzgerald State Park is a gateway to Southern Illinois' biggest outdoor playground – a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages and interests. The park offers outstanding opportunities for hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, horseback riding, hiking and other outdoor recreational pursuits. You'd be hard pressed to find a recreational complex with more activities than Wayne Fitzgerald State Park. Located 6 miles north of Benton on Illinois Route 154, Wayne Fitzgerald is a 1 1/2-hour drive from St. Louis via Interstate 64, or 5 hours from Chicago on Interstate 57.

Dedicated in 1975, just five years after the Rend Lake reservoir was constructed, the park encompasses 3,300 acres of former farmland leased to the Department of Natural Resources by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The site is named in honor of the late Wayne Fitzgerald, a state representative from nearby Sesser who was an advocate for the construction of Rend Lake.

Wayne Fitzgerald State Park



State of Illinois
Department of Natural Resources



Wayne Fitzgerald

STATE PARK







Lodging and Restaurant Facilities

The beautiful waterside resort on Rend Lake offers first-class accommodations in one of southern Illinois' finest recreation areas, Wayne Fitzgerald State Park. All 105 rooms and cabins have balconies or decks with lakefront views, full baths, TVs and telephones. Some rooms have fireplaces, sleeping lofts and spas, and are wheelchair accessible. Although cabins do not have cooking facilities, they are equipped with refrigerators. The entire resort has high speed internet for their guests.

Offering breakfast, lunch and dinner, Windows Restaurant at Rend Lake features a lounge and casual outdoor deck dining. House specialties include pork chops, catfish and steak, plus excellent homemade salads and desserts. The restaurant also offers a kid's menu.

Amenities include a conference center that will accommodate groups from 25 to 600, an outdoor swimming pool, a tennis court, playground, golfing packages, a convenience store and gift shop, gas for boats, courtesy boat docking and rental of pontoon boats and wave runners.

For more information on hunting, fishing and golfing packages or to make lodging reservations, call (618) 629-2211 or (800) 633-3341.

Camping

Wayne Fitzgerald has 17 tent sites to accommodate primitive campers who relish a rustic outdoor experience. Those who want a few more amenities will want to take advantage of the 243 modern campsites, which offer electrical hookups and sanitary facilities. Three shower buildings are available for campers. Campers should register with the Campground Host upon arrival. Campsite #1-33 are available by reservation at www.reserveamerica.com. The remaining 210 class A campsites are available on a first come first served basis.

Water Sports, Equestrian Trails and Picnicking

People interested in water sports, horseback riding, picnicking or hiking will find that Wayne Fitzgerald has plenty to offer. The site also provides ample opportunities for birders, wildlife observers and photographers.

For horseback riders, a 9-mile bridle trail encircles the wildlife/field trial area, and opportunities to see and photograph wildlife abound. The trail is open to all equestrians for most of the year. From Sept. 15 to April 15, the bridle trail is closed during the hunting and designated field trial seasons.

