

Caloosa Fish Management Area (FMA) is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) South Region Fisheries Management Section. This FMA was created in 1990 and benefits from a number of enhancements designed to improve fishing and angler access at this site. Caloosa FMA is a cooperative project between the FWC and Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department. Sport Fish Restoration funds pay for 75% of this project. These monies are federal tax dollars collected from the sale of fishing equipment and accessories to support access improvements, educational programs, aquatic habitat improvement, and fisheries research.

Caloosa lake is four acres in size and is characterized by a sandy bottom and consistently high turbidity. Shoreline vegetation consists primarily of submerged pondweed around most of the lake and, to a lesser degree, eelgrass. Shoreline access is excellent around nearly the entire lake.

Stocking



Channel catfish are 6-8" long when stocked.

This FMA is stocked annually with 2,500 channel catfish. A total of over 40,000 catfish have been stocked here since the FMA's creation in 1990. These catfish do not reproduce well in south Florida lakes, so they must be stocked regularly in order to maintain high numbers for anglers.

Fish feeders

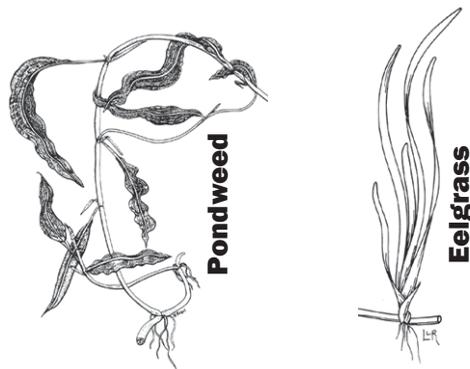


Feeders dispense food automatically.

Fish feeders have been placed in Caloosa FMA in order to provide food and increase the growth rates of fish that are already present as well as those that are stocked. The feeders dispense fish food automatically several times per day. They provide the best locations to catch catfish, sunfish, and tilapia within the FMA.

Vegetation management

Control of undesirable plant species and introduction of beneficial plant species is practiced to enhance habitat for fish as well as to improve angler access within Caloosa FMA. Illinois pondweed and eelgrass introduced by FWC provide the primary vegetative cover available to fish in the lake.



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Aeration System

A blower pump and airstone system provide Caloosa FMA with a constant supply of oxygen to reduce the possibility of low-oxygen fish kills. This "insurance" protects the investment in time, equipment, and stocking that has been made here.

Special regulations

In order to provide better angling, special regulations are in place to protect fish populations within Caloosa FMA:

- All largemouth bass must be released immediately.
- Channel catfish daily bag limit: 6.
- Panfish daily bag limit: 20.
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

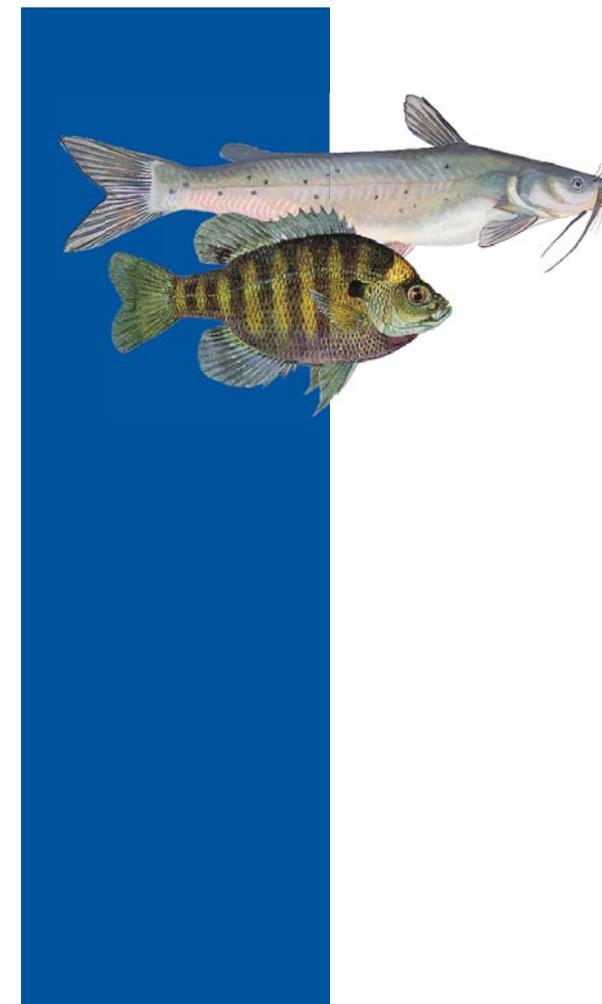
A fishing license is required for residents from 16 to 64 years of age, and for nonresidents 16 or more years of age, to fish by any method, including cane poles, on a Fish Management Area.

Directions

If you live north of Caloosa FMA take I-95 south to Woolbright Road and head west. Turn south on Congress Avenue; the park entrance will be on the left. If coming from the south, exit I-95 at Atlantic Avenue and proceed west. Head north when you reach Congress Avenue, and the park entrance will be on the right. The lake is located in the very back of the park. For information about the park itself, call (561) 966-6600.

Caloosa Fish Management Area

Palm Beach County



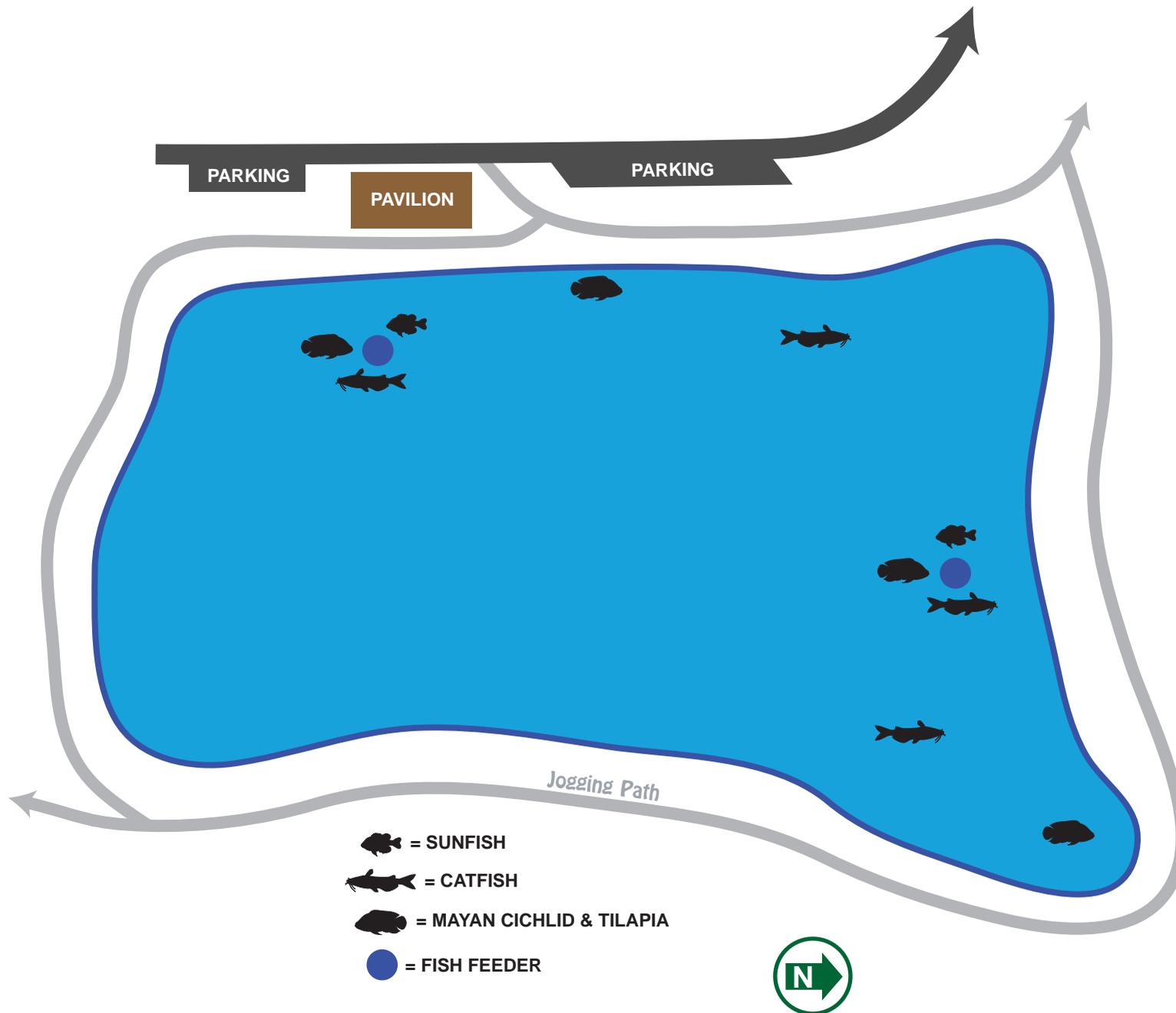
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Fish species present (and how to catch them)

Channel catfish — This fish has been reported up to 5 pounds in the lake, although the species can grow much larger. They are readily found at the fish feeders. Chicken and beef livers work well as baits, as well as commercial “stink baits” sold in tackle shops. Fish directly on the bottom, or deep under a small bobber.



Mayan cichlid — This exotic species from Central America has become established in Caloosa and is present in good numbers. It can be identified by the reddish coloration of the body, the vertical bars, and black spot with turquoise ring on the tail. This colorful fish will take the same baits and lures as sunfish, although not as readily. It is a hard and colorful fighter, and excellent table fare. **It is illegal to transport any exotic fish alive or to release it into another water body.**



Spotted tilapia — Another exotic (this one from Africa), the spotted tilapia also appears in good numbers in the lake. A more reluctant biter than the Mayan cichlid, it can still be caught on live worms and doughballs fished under a small bobber, but seldom shows interest in lures. The firm white meat provides excellent eating. **It is illegal to transport any exotic fish alive or to release it into another water body.**



Bluegill and redear sunfish — These popular and cooperative panfish are found around the fish feeders and near vegetation or structure. Live worms or crickets fished a few feet under a small bobber are a sure bet. Doughballs and small pieces of cut hot dog also work well. Good lures include small jigs, beetle spins, and tiny spinners.



Largemouth bass — This species is not abundant in Caloosa FMA. They can be tempted with plastic worms, minnow imitations, and spinnerbaits. Shiners are the best bait. **Anglers using bait should set the hook quickly to prevent deep-hooked fish, as all bass caught must be released unharmed immediately.**

