

Busse Lake

Northeast Illinois - Elk Grove Village

Facts: Busse Lake is a 590-acre artificial reservoir that serves as a flood-control catchment for Salt Creek, flowing from Rolling Meadows and by the tall skyscrapers of eastern Schaumburg. ***It is a beautiful location for paddling and suitable for beginners. There is an accessible canoe and kayak launch area and boat rentals are available from April to October.***

The lake is part of the 3,558-acre Ned Brown Preserve, popularly known as Busse Woods, one of the largest and most diverse locations in the Forest Preserves. The site includes ancient upland forests, one of the largest fishing and boating waters in Cook County, nearly 13 miles of paved trail, an elk pasture and much more making it one of the best-used natural areas in Illinois.

Fish:

This is a popular fishing destination. Walleye, Northern Pike, Musky, Largemouth Bass, and Channel Catfish are the top predators. Bluegill, sunfish, bullheads, Yellow Bass, Yellow Perch, and crappie can be found in all three pools. Boat rentals and fishing supplies are available at the main boat launch concession.

Wildlife:

White-tailed deer, coyotes, foxes, muskrats, beavers, river otters, and various bats, alongside abundant birdlife like woodpeckers, warblers, hawks, and waterfowl, and many insects, reptiles (turtles and snakes), and amphibians (toads, frogs and salamanders), making it a rich spot for observing nature.

A wide variety of bird species live in or visit Busse Woods. Egrets, herons, cormorants and terns can be spotted in trees and spits around the reservoir and Salt Creek, while grassland birds such as savannah and Henslow's sparrows and bobolinks use the open meadows during the summer.

Landscape: The 1,213-acre Busse Forest Nature Preserve's unusual combination of flatwoods, upland forests, and marshes have earned it National Natural Landmark status and is one of the richest and most diverse natural areas in the Cook County Forest preserves.

Flatwoods, slightly depressed areas with poorly draining soils, are a unique feature of this region. They support red maple, swamp white oak and black ash, as well as sensitive fern, hop sedge and blue flag iris.

Busse's upland forest is an ancient remnant, full of tall red oaks and hickories, maple, ash, basswood, elm and very large ironwoods. Many of the trees here date back to before European settlement. The trees shelter wildflowers such as bloodroot, great white trillium and woodland phlox. In spring and fall, birders can spot attractive migrants such as black-throated blue warblers. The dense aquatic vegetation of Busse's marshes supports shorebirds, mink and muskrat.

Reference:

Cook County Forest Preserve information and maps
<https://fpdcc.com/places/locations/busse-woods/>

