

# Marlette Lake



## ANGLER AND FISH SURVEY INFORMATION Sam Sedillo- Fisheries Biologist, Reno Office 1100 Valley Rd, Reno, NV (775) 688-1882

**General information:** Marlette Lake was constructed in 1873 when a small earthen dam was erected at the outlet of a broad glaciated-basin. The dam was raised several times until 1959, reaching its present height of 45 feet and water was conveyed to Virginia City via a series of open flumes and pipes (inverted siphon). The State of Nevada purchased Marlette Lake and the surrounding land in 1963. The lake is presently used by NDOW as a brood lake for Rainbow and Cutthroat Trout. Marlette Lake was first opened to fishing in 2006. Marlette Lake covers 381 surface acres and has a maximum depth of 45 feet. Brook trout were introduced in the 1880's, Lahontan cutthroat trout in 1964, and Tahoe strain rainbow trout in 1984, and continue to occupy the lake. Rainbow Trout range between 12 and 20 inches, Cutthroat Trout between 12 and 24 inches, and Brook Trout between 10 and 18 inches.

**Location and Access:** – There is no vehicle access to Marlette Lake. The easiest route into the lake is to walk the road in from Spooner Lake up North Canyon, about a 10-mile round trip. Spooner Lake sits at an elevation of 7,150 ft and the pass before entering into the Marlette basin is about 8,000 feet, making it a moderate to strenuous hike for most. If you are a mountain bike rider, then the trip can be faster, but several sections are steep. Although it adds extra weight, anglers often hike or bike in with float tubes.

**Management:** NDOW manages the lake as a catch and release fishery. Every year, NDOW conducts a spawning operation in which they take eggs from Rainbow Trout and Lahontan Cutthroat Trout to be raised in the Mason Valley Fish Hatchery to ultimately be stocked back into Marlette Lake and other Northern Nevada waters.

<u>General Info</u>	<u>Previous Stocking</u>	<u>Fishing Notes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only vessels without motors are permitted.</li> <li>• Please clean, drain, and dry any gear you bring into Marlette Lake to stop aquatic hitchhikers and invasive species, especially any float tubes or inflatable boats you bring to the lake.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>2022</u></b></p> <p>Rainbows      7,396    8-12 Inches</p> <p>Cutthroat Trout    8,192    8-12 Inches</p> <p><b><u>2021</u></b></p> <p>Rainbows      4,004    8-12 Inches</p> <p><b><u>2020</u></b></p> <p>Rainbow        4,785    8-12 Inches</p> <p>Cutthroat Trout    6,095    8-12 Inches</p> <p><b><u>2019</u></b></p> <p>Rainbow        7,777    8-12 Inches</p> <p>Cutthroat Trout    5,020    8-12 Inches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the lake opens to fishing in July, fish lures and flies along drop off points along the lake where the shallow water transitions to deep water. Fish Kastmaster, panther martins, zebra midges or balanced leeches under an indicator. Late summer pushes trout towards deeper, cooler water and fishing is best experienced from a float tube, fishing with a sinking fly line or with heavy lures is effective to get your gear to where the fish are.</li> <li>• In September, cooler temperatures will push fish closer to shore and due to the proximity of the Brook Trout spawn, there is a high chance that the fish you catch may be one of these colorful fish. Kastmaster, panther martins, midge flies, egg flies, and stripped flies are a good way to catch Brook Trout, Rainbow Trout, and Lahontan Cutthroat Trout during these times.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Fishing Regulations</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Season is open July 15 through September 30, 1 hour before sunrise to 2 hours after sunset. Limit is zero fish, catch-and-release only. Only artificial lures with single barbless hooks may be used. This includes the lake, all tributaries, and outlet stream in Carson City and Washoe Counties</li> </ul>		

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## 2023 Fishing Forecast

Sam Sedillo– Fisheries Biologist

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**Water levels-** Sierra snowpack conditions for the winter of 22/23 exceed 200% of average. This might make accessing the Lake difficult in the early season. Marlette Lake is fed by various tributaries that provide cold water into Marlette Lake year-round.

### Rainbow Trout

In 2022, 7,386 Rainbow Trout were stocked into Marlette Lake with an additional 5,000 planned to be stocked in 2023. Holdover stocked fish allow for these fish to be caught throughout the fishing season. Rainbow Trout in Marlette average 8"-12" but there is the opportunity to catch a larger fish in the 18"-22" range. Rainbow Trout are the predominant fish that are spawned by NDOW during the early summer and thousands of fish are stocked back into the reservoir every year to maintain the population. Typically, over 80% of the trout caught by anglers in Marlette Lake are Rainbow Trout. Use flies such as zebra midges and wooly buggers or lures such as panther martins or Kastmaster (single barbless) for the best success while targeting these fish.

### Brook Trout

Brook Trout continue to be abundant and are the only self-sustaining fish population in the lake. Brook Trout were introduced into Marlette Lake in the 1880s and were the predominant sportfish for close to 100 years. They continue to persist in the lake today due to their ability to successfully spawn in the lake and sustain their populations without stocking. Brook Trout can grow to large sizes in Marlette with the average Brook Trout ranging from 10"-16" with a few in the 18" range caught every year. Brook Trout are one of the most colorful and beautiful fish we have in Nevada. Brook Trout typically comprise about 5-10% of the anglers' catch every year. With Marlette Lake sitting at a high elevation, Brook Trout will feed ravenously to bulk up for the winter after ice off until the lake ices back over. For best success, use small lures or flies when targeting Brook Trout.

### Lahontan Cutthroat Trout

In 2022 a total of 8,192 LCT were stocked in Marlette Lake. LCT are the only native trout to the Tahoe Basin and grow to large sizes in Marlette Lake. Fishing for stocked LCT can be productive for the duration of the season and can award the persistent angler with a trophy sized fish. Along with Rainbow Trout, LCT are also spawned during June and are stocked back into the lake every year. Based on creel data, LCT make up around 2% of all fish caught. For most success while targeting LCT in Marlette Lake, fish lures such as Rapalas and panther martins (single barbless) and flies such as balanced leeches or chironomids. Early season is best for targeting these fish.

