

Sukhna Lake

Location: Base of Shivalik range

Created In: 1958

Created By: Le Corbusier

Highlights: Manmade lake

Sukhna Lake : Sukhna Lake, an artificial lake created at the foothills of the Shivalik hills, is a popular tourist attraction of Chandigarh. It was created by Le Corbusier, in the year 1958. This 3 square km-long artificial lake was constructed by blocking the flow of the Sukhna Choe stream, a seasonal stream. Initially, the seasonal flow entered the lake directly, which caused heavy siltation. In order to check the inflow of silt, 25.42 square km of land was acquired in the catchment area and put under vegetation.

In 1974, the Choe was diverged and made to bypass the lake completely. The lake was then fed by three siltation pots. The soil and water conservation measures yielded very good results and the rate of siltation of the lake has reduced drastically. The lake is fringed by a golf course to the south, and Nek Chand's Rock garden to its west. To maintain its beauty forever, Le Corbusier insisted motor boats to be forbidden in the lake and vehicular traffic to be prohibited on the top of the dam.

During summers, people of all age gather at Sukhna Lake to offer voluntary service to desilt the lake bed, for about three months. This annual ritual has been a regular feature since a long time. The lake has been declared as a protected national wetland by the Government of India. Also, the Chandigarh administration has taken a decision not to allow fishes of more than 30 cm in size in the lake. Extreme care is taken to retain its beauty and continued attempts are made to increase the splendor of the lake.

Features

Sukhna Lake attracts not only the tourists, but also the localities. It provides an excellent spot for performing healthy exercises like jogging and trekking. Besides, it gives a family the perfect way to get together and have a stroll in the midst of Nature. It is one of the most preferred picnic spots in the city, which rejuvenates the mood and wipes away the gloominess. The atmosphere here is serene and facilitates deep meditation during the early hours of the morning. As night descends on the lake, the lights from the hill resort of Kasauli reflect in its water, presenting an enchanting vision. It also serves as a shelter for a variety of migratory birds, which fly here during the winter.

Sukhna Lake serves as the venue for several water sports activities, like water surfing, skiing and sculling. It is one of the longest channels for rowing and yachting events in Asia. It has a membership-based Lake Club as well, endowed with lawns, gym, indoor games, swimming pool and tennis courts, with both synthetic and grass courts. The lake is also the venue for the celebrations of many festivals. Mango festival is the most popular one wherein different varieties of mangoes are displayed. At regular intervals several food festivals are held where the special

cuisines of different states are presented. Cultural programs are an integral part of these celebrations.