

**WISCONSIN DNR
FISHERIES INFORMATION SHEET**

LAKE: Pickerel Lake

COUNTY: Vilas

YEAR: 2014

A comprehensive fishery survey was conducted of Pickerel Lake, Vilas County, from May 9 through May 29, 2014 to determine the health of this fishery. The primary goal was to evaluate the results of walleye and muskellunge stocking over the previous ten years. Pickerel Lake is a moderately fertile drainage lake with predominantly sand substrate. It has a surface area of 293 acres, 4.4 miles of shoreline and a maximum depth of 26 feet.

Walleye

A mark-recapture survey of Pickerel Lake was conducted to estimate the number of adult* walleye present. 135 adult walleye were captured and marked (fin clipped) in 5 days of netting and 36 during one night of electrofishing.

Based on these results, Pickerel Lake was estimated to contain 216 adult walleye (0.7/acre). Approximately 90% of the adult walleye were 15 inches or larger. These numbers do not reflect the entire walleye population present in Pickerel Lake. Smaller juvenile walleye are not part of this estimate. The largest walleye captured was a 29.5 inch long female.

An attempt was made to make an estimate of the overwinter survival of 2,929 large walleye fingerlings stocked in the fall of 2013. These, now yearling fish, ranged from 5.8 to 9.2 inches in length at the time of the spring survey. Our mark-recapture estimate found that there are 2,310 yearlings present. This is a 79% survival rate which is above average when compared to other waters in the region.

Muskellunge

During the survey 80 muskellunge were captured and marked (fin clipped). Netting will again take place in the spring of 2015 to recapture muskellunge marked this year in order to make a population estimate.

Approximately 80% of the muskellunge were greater than 34 inches long and 21% were 40 inches or larger. The largest muskellunge captured was a 47.6 inch long female.

Northern Pike

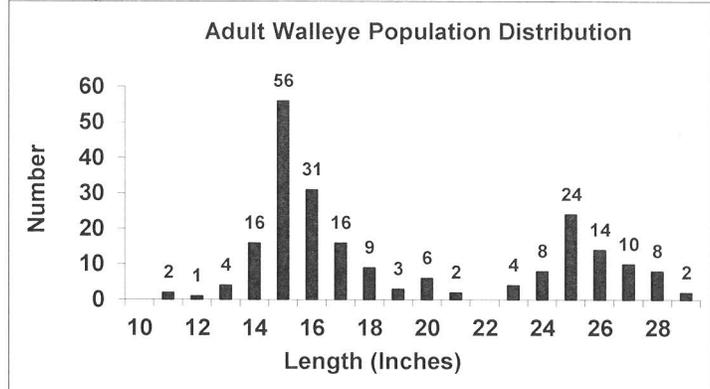
Northern pike are common in Pickerel Lake. A total of 111 were captured during this survey. There was no attempt to make a population estimate of this species.

The average length of the northern pike captured was 18.4 inches and 33% were greater than 20 inches in length. The largest pike captured was 29.2 inches long.

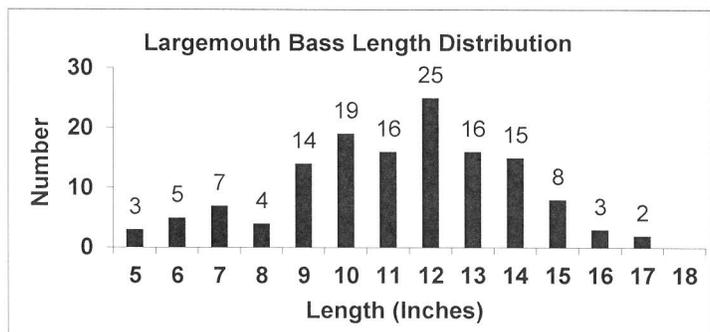
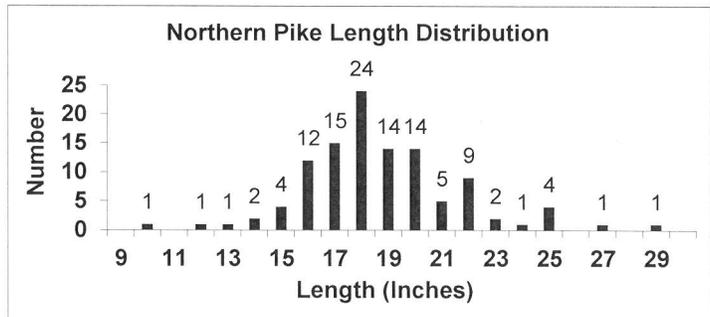
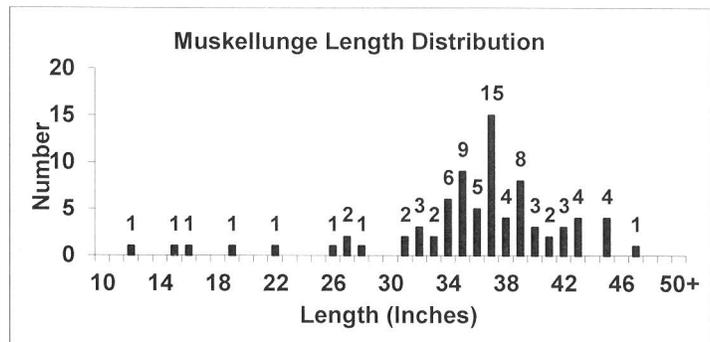
Largemouth Bass

Largemouth bass are fairly common in Pickerel Lake. There was no attempt to calculate a population estimate for this species.

Survey crews captured 137 largemouth bass during sampling of Pickerel Lake. 20.7 percent of the largemouth bass were 14 inches or greater in length. The largest largemouth bass captured was 17.2 inches long.



* Note: Adult walleye are defined as all sexable walleye and walleye of unknown sex ≥ 15 inches long.



PANFISH

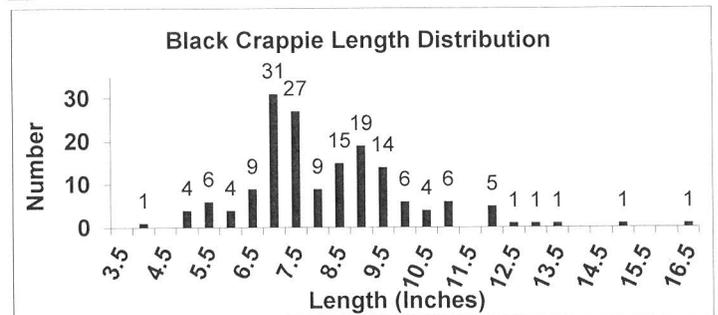
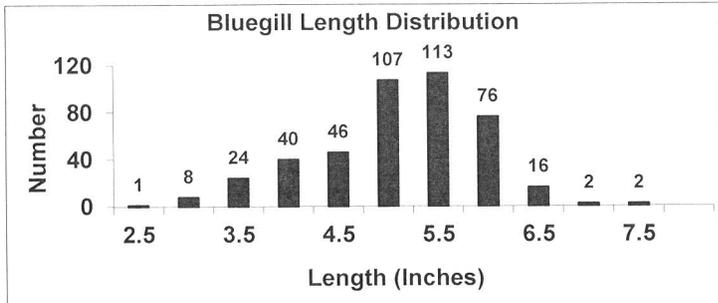
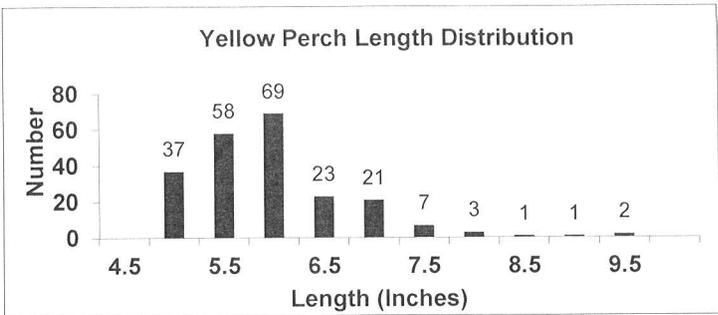
Panfish were collected during fyke netting and two half mile electrofishing stations to determine bluegill, black crappie and yellow perch length distributions. Panfish were randomly sampled from each fyke net, but all panfish were collected and measured in the two half mile stations.

Yellow Perch

Yellow perch are very abundant in Pickerel Lake. Few quality yellow perch were captured during the random sample. Only seven fish in our sample of yellow perch were greater than eight inches in length. The largest yellow perch captured during the survey measured 9.9 inches long.

Bluegill

Bluegill are very abundant in Pickerel Lake. Few quality bluegill were captured in this survey. No fish in our sample of bluegill were greater than eight inches in length. The largest bluegill captured during our sampling the was 7.7 inches long.



Black Crappie

Black Crappies are also abundant in Pickerel Lake. From a random sample of 163 crappies measured 13% were 10.0 inches long or longer. The largest black crappie captured during the survey measured 17.5 inches long, but was not captured during the random sample.

White Crappie

Pickerel Lake also contains a small population of white crappies. This species is more common in large reservoirs and rivers in southern Wisconsin. There are only two waters in Vilas county that are known to contain white crappies.

Other Fish Species

Other fish species captured or observed during this survey but in lower numbers were: pumpkinseed, rock bass, white crappie, white sucker, yellow bullhead, black bullhead, brown bullhead, common shiner, creek chub and golden shiner.

Table 1. General Fishing Regulations for Pickerel Lake, Vilas County, 2014

FISH SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	DAILY LIMIT	MINIMUM LENGTH
Walleye	May 3 - March 1	5	15 inches
Smallmouth Bass	May 3 - June 20 June 21 - March 1	0 5 in total w/ LMB	Catch and Release 14 inches
Largemouth Bass	May 3 - March 1	5 in total w/ SMB	14 inches
Muskellunge	May 24 - Nov. 30	1	40 inches
Northern Pike	May 3 - March 1	5	No minimum length

A brief summary of selected fishing regulations for Pickerel Lake is included above (Table 1). You may obtain a copy of current fishing regulations when you purchase your fishing license, or download a copy from our web site at:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/fish/regulations>

For answers to questions about fisheries management activities and plans for Pickerel Lake, Vilas County, contact:

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