



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fisheries Information Sheet

LAKE: WINNEBAGO

COUNTY: FOND DU LAC

YEAR: 2023

Introduction

On May 22, 2023, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conducted a spring electrofishing (SEII) survey in Lakeside Park, Lake Winnebago in Fond du Lac County. The survey included approximately 1.2 miles of electrofishing and targeted primarily bass and panfish species. The survey station included .5 miles of sampling targeting all species encountered and the remaining 0.7 miles was targeting gamefish species. Water temperature was 68 degrees Fahrenheit. Primary sampling objectives of this survey are to characterize species composition, relative abundance, and size structure.

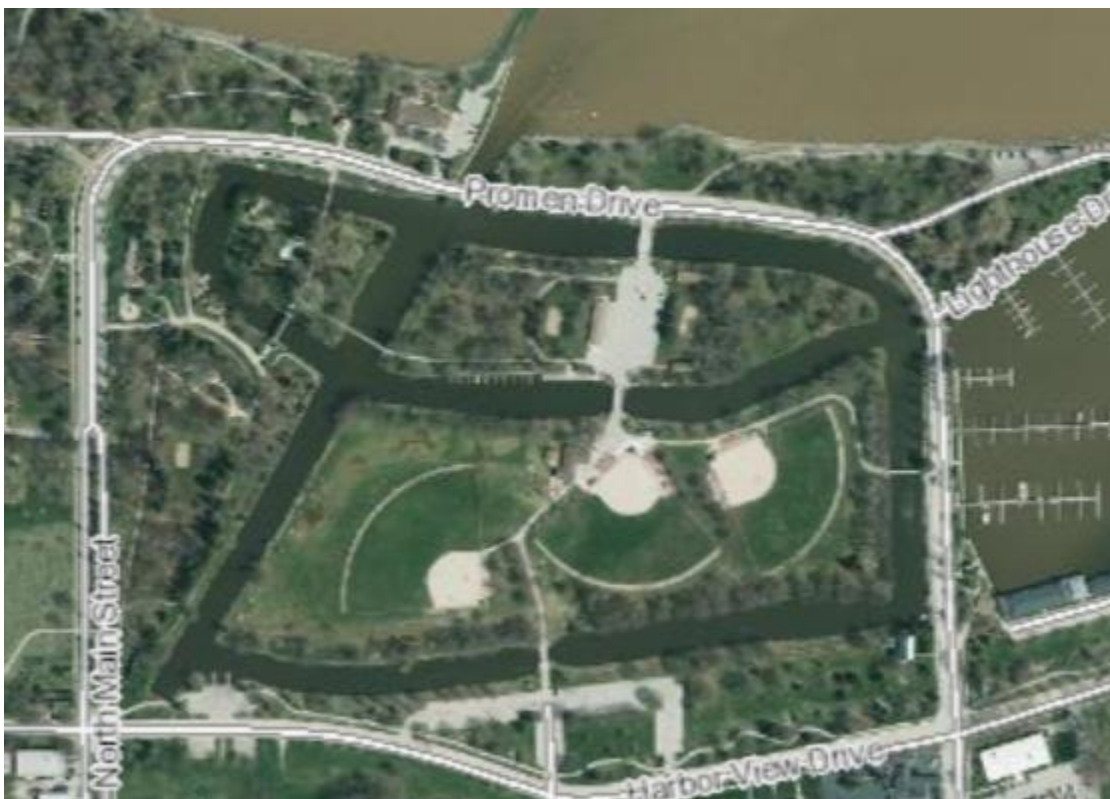


Image 1: Aerial view of Lakeside Park, Lake Winnebago.



Image 2: Fisheries biologist LTE Nate Schimanski holding a large black crappie.

BLACK CRAPPIE



A total of 3 Black Crappie were captured during our .5 mile dip all station. Lengths ranged from 8.7-9.7 inches and the average length was 9.1 inches.

# Captured Per Mile=6	
(PSD) Quality Size $\geq 8"$	100
(PSD) Preferred Size $\geq 10"$	0

Table 1: PSD-Q and PSD-P values for black crappie captured in the 2023 survey.

BLUEGILL



A total of 8 Bluegill were captured. Lengths ranged from 6.2-7.8 inches and the average length was 6.9 inches.

# Captured Per Mile= 16	
(PSD) Quality Size $\geq 6"$	100
(PSD) Preferred Size $\geq 8"$	0

Table 2: PSD-Q and PSD-P values for bluegill captured in the 2023 survey.

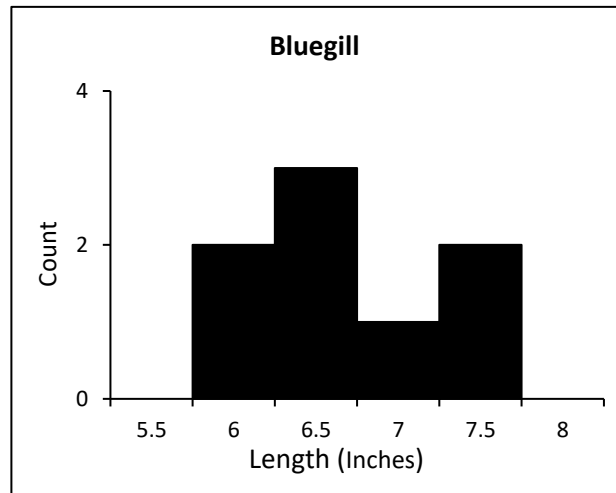


Figure 1: Bluegill catch rates observed in Sunset Bay SEII survey.

LARGEMOUTH BASS



A total of 216 Largemouth Bass were captured. Lengths ranged from 5-17.8 inches and average length was 12.9 inches.

# Captured Per Mile= 180	
(PSD) Quality Size $\geq 12"$	76
(PSD) Preferred Size $\geq 15"$	16

Table 3: PSD-Q and PSD-P values for largemouth bass captured in the 2023 survey.

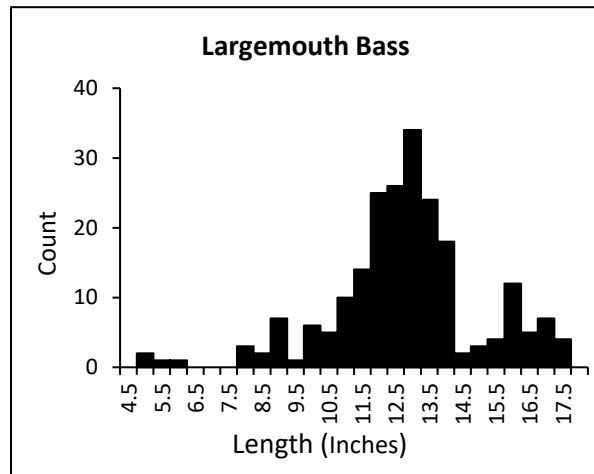


Figure 2: Largemouth bass catch rates observed in Sunset Bay SEII survey.

WALLEYE



A total of 21 Walleye were captured. Lengths ranged from 15.6-22.1 inches and average length was 18.3 inches.

# Captured Per Mile= 17.5	
(PSD) Quality Size $\geq 15"$	100
(PSD) Preferred Size $\geq 20"$	19

Table 4: PSD-Q and PSD-P values for walleye captured in the 2023 survey.

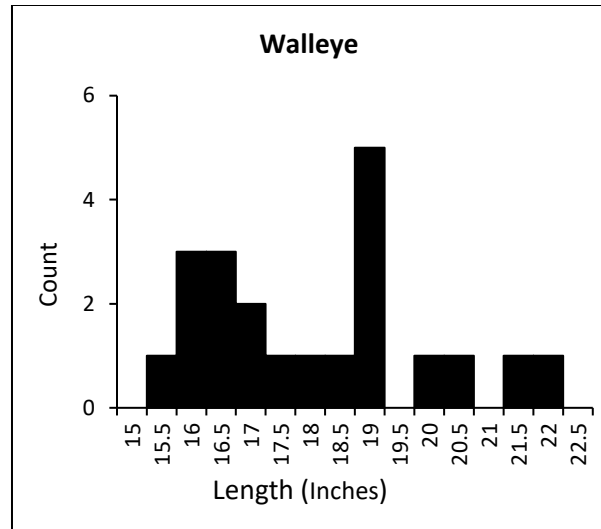


Figure 3: Walleye catch rates observed in Sunset Bay SEII survey.

Summary

A total of 260 fish were sampled in this survey, representing 10 different species. Non-gamefish species sampled included common carp, freshwater drum, golden shiner and spottail shiner. Native panfish species sampled included bluegill, black crappie and pumpkinseed. Native gamefish species sampled included largemouth bass, northern pike and walleye.

Largemouth bass were the dominant gamefish species captured in this survey and showed higher than average catch rates compared to data collected from 2015 and 2016. When comparing 2023 SEII data to past surveys largemouth bass catch rates increased from 101.7 to 180 per mile. A catch rate of 180 per mile ranks in the top 99th percentile among statewide catch rate averages for largemouth bass. Average length also slightly increased from 12.2 inches in previous years to 12.9 inches in this year's survey.

Another gamefish species that is not specifically targeted in this survey but is captured frequently is walleye. Catch rates were slightly lower, coming in at 17.5 per mile compared to the trend average of 20.9 per mile. Although catch rates were lower than average, size structure showed very positive results. Average length increased from 15.0 inches in previous years to 18.3 inches this year. Also, proportional stock density of quality sized fish greater than 15 inches increased from 45 to 100 in this year's survey compared to previous years.

Bluegill were the most represented panfish species caught in this survey, followed by pumpkinseed and then black crappie. There was a below average catch rate of

bluegill decreasing from 48.6 per mile in previous years to 16 per mile this year. While catch rates decreased, size structure increased in this year's survey with average size increasing from 4.9 inches to 6.9 inches. Black crappie catch rates and average size increased in this year's survey compared to the average of previous years. Catch rates increased from an average of 4.7 per mile to 6 per mile in this year's survey. Average size increased from an average of 7.0 inches in previous years to 9.1 inches this year.

Overall, the fish community in Lakeside Park appears to remain in a productive and healthy state showing good catch rates and size structure for largemouth bass, walleye, bluegill and black crappie. Species composition, relative abundance and size structure will continue to be monitored and evaluated to make sure it remains stable.

Table 1. General fishing regulations for Lake Winnebago, in Winnebago, Fond du Lac, Calumet and Outagamie County, Wisconsin.

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	DAILY BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
Panfish	Open all year	25	No size limit
Walleye	Open all year	3	No size limit
Northern Pike	May 6, 2023-March 3, 2024	2	26"
Largemouth/Smallmouth Bass	Open all year	5	14"

Acknowledgements

For answers to questions about fisheries management activities on Lake Winnebago, contact:

Angelo Cozzola

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

625 E. County Rd Y, Suite 700

Oshkosh, WI 54901

920-410-9170

Angelo.cozzola@wisconsin.gov

Appendix 1. Spring electrofishing II trend data from 2015-2023

<u>2015</u>	Catch/mile	Average Length	Quality PSD	Preferred PSD
Largemouth Bass	38.5	12	63	12
Bluegill	35.6	5.9	54	6
Black Crappie	.7	9	100	0
Yellow Perch	0	0	0	0
Walleye	25.2	13	18	9

<u>2016</u>	Catch/mile	Average Length	Quality PSD	Preferred PSD
Largemouth Bass	86.7	10.7	56	4
Bluegill	94.2	4.8	6	2
Black Crappie	7.5	5.7	22	22
Yellow Perch	3.3	4.1	0	0
Walleye	20	15.8	38	21

<u>2023</u>	Catch/mile	Average Length	Quality PSD	Preferred PSD
Largemouth Bass	180	12.9	76	16
Bluegill	16	6.9	100	0
Black Crappie	6	9.1	100	0
Yellow Perch	0	0	0	0
Walleye	17.5	18.3	100	19

