



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fisheries Information Sheet

LAKE: ARBUTUS

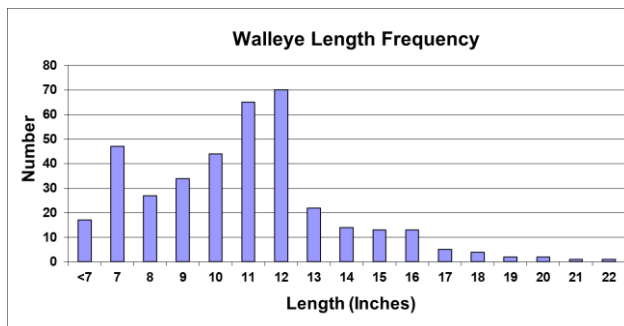
COUNTY: JACKSON/CLARK

YEAR: 2022

Introduction

Department of Natural Resources crews surveyed Lake Arbutus, Clark/Jackson Counties, during the months of March, April, and May to assess the fish community. Surveys specifically targeted walleye, muskellunge, smallmouth bass and panfish. Lake Arbutus is a flowage of the Black River. It has a maximum depth of 50 feet and is 773 acres in size. There are six public boat launches and roughly 3 miles of public shoreline comprised of county and state forest lands.

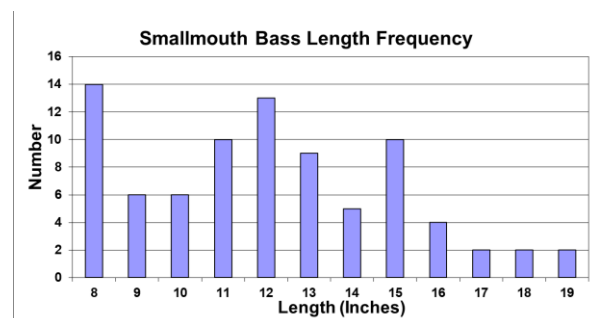
WALLEYE



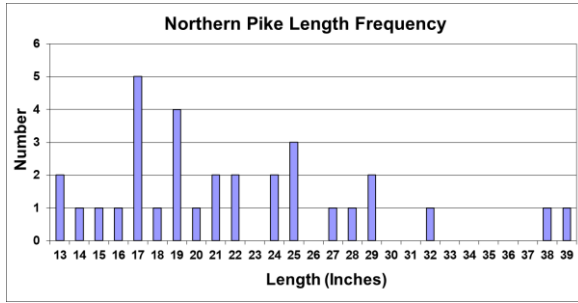
During spring surveys a total of 364 walleye were captured with 11% of the fish being greater than 15 inches. Sampling walleye proved difficult in the spring as many mature fish quickly left the main lake to spawn in the Black River. The lake consistently produces strong year classes of walleye and the future continues to look bright. Abundance is relatively high and walleye is the dominant gamefish.

SMALLMOUTH BASS

A total of 109 smallmouth bass were captured during the spring survey and 23% of the catch was greater than 14 inches. Overall the population looks healthy with multiple year classes and quality sized fish present.



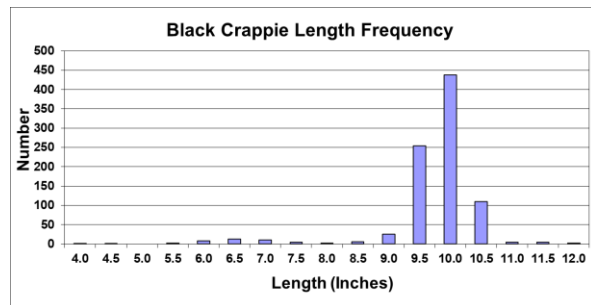
NORTHERN PIKE



A total of 32 northern pike were surveyed in Lake Arbutus ranging from 13 to 39 inches. 22% of the fish surveyed were 26 inches or greater. Trophy sized northern pike are present as two sampled were 38 and 39 inches in length. Abundance is moderate and the population is maintained by natural reproduction.

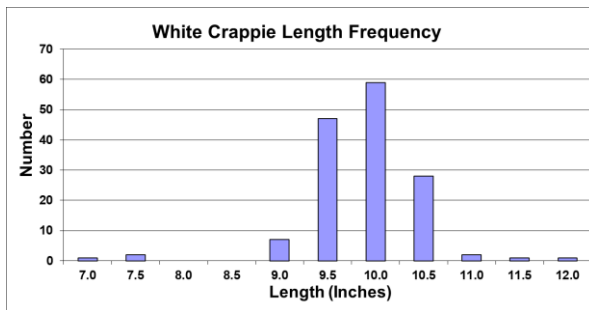
BLACK CRAPPIE

A total of 885 black crappie were captured during the Lake Arbutus survey. They ranged in size from 4-12 inches. A very strong year class is present with 63% of the fish being greater than 10 inches". They are and will continue to provide an excellent fishing opportunity. Abundance is high.



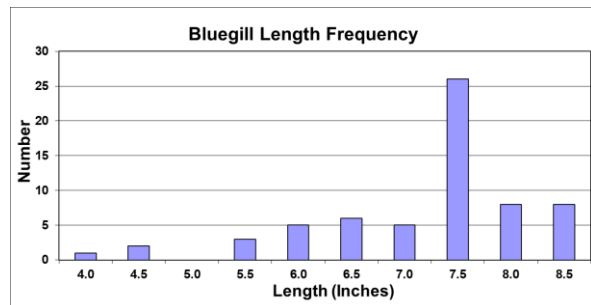
WHITE CRAPPIE

During spring surveys a total of 148 white crappie were captured. They ranged from 7 to 12 inches" in length. A strong year class is present with 61% of the fish surveyed measuring 10 inches or greater. Abundance is moderate.



BLUEGILL

Bluegill abundance is low, only 64 were captured during spring surveys. They ranged from 4 to 8.5 inches" in length. 65% of the fish surveyed measured 7.5 inches or greater.



MUSKELLUNGE

A total of five muskellunge were handled during the survey. The largest being 47 inches. Muskellunge haven't been stocked in the Black River and Lake Arbutus system above the Hatfield Dam since 2009. The presence of 17-20 inch fish shows evidence of natural recruitment occurring. Overall the muskellunge population is low-density. One 25 inch tiger muskellunge was also captured during surveys.

OTHER SPECIES

Yellow perch were also sampled in the survey but results show they are currently at a low abundance. Common carp, white sucker, golden redhorse, shorthead redhorse and silver redhorse were found in medium to high abundances.

Summary

Lake Arbutus is home to a quality sportfishery dominated by walleye and smallmouth bass. Walleye tend to be hard to find during open water as many of them move upriver following forage and return late fall to overwinter in the main lake. Muskellunge and northern pike also provide opportunity for anglers but exist in relatively low and moderate densities respectively. However, trophy potential is there for both. Anglers targeting panfish can expect a few very good years of white and black crappie fishing as there are strong year classes moving through the system along with a few up-and-coming year classes.

The next comprehensive spring fisheries survey is scheduled to occur in 2026. Fall walleye recruitment surveys occur annually.

Table 1. Special fishing regulation for Lake Arbutus, in Jackson/Clark Counties Wisconsin.

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	DAILY BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
Panfish	Year-round	10 in total	N/A

Acknowledgements

For answers to questions about fisheries management activities on Lake Arbutus, Jackson/Clark Counties contact:

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