



# Wisconsin Department Of Natural Resources

## Fisheries Information Sheet

Deer Lake, Price County, WI

Survey Year 2025

### Introduction

Deer Lake is located 1.5 miles east of Phillips off Old 13. The lake is 143 acres, with a maximum and average depth of 18 feet and 6 feet respectively. It is classified as a simple-cool-dark-lake, meaning the lake is generally small, stained in color or bog-like that provides for specific fish species. Access is available from a public boat launch located off Old 13 on the south end of the lake. The shoreline is primarily undeveloped.

The Park Falls Fisheries Management Team of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conducted a late spring electrofishing survey (SE2) on the night of May 14, 2025. The purpose of this was to evaluate size structure and abundance of bass and bluegills. The electrofishing sample surveyed one complete circuit, 2.0 miles, around the entire shoreline, excluding the one island. The water temperature ranged between 65 and 67 degrees Fahrenheit. The first mile of the survey collected all species, then for the second mile gamefish were the only species collected. While bass and bluegills were the primary target species for this survey many other species were captured, such as golden shiner, walleye, white sucker, yellow bullhead and yellow perch. A good portion of the shoreline is comprised of bog edge which allowed for many bass to avoid our gear by escaping under the bog edge. Comparisons were made with a previous survey in 2016 on Deer Lake and similar Wisconsin lakes in the same lake class.

### Bluegill

There were 187 bluegills captured, and lengths ranged from 2.4 to 6.9 inches. The catch rate of the 2025 survey falls just short of the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of a simple-cool-dark lake. The number of bluegills per mile has decreased slightly more than 50% from the 2016 survey. While the number per mile decreased, the size structure has improved.

Table 1. Abundance and size structure of bluegills during late spring electrofishing survey in 2025 and 2016.

Survey Year	Number per mile	Number per mile $\geq 3''$ (stock size)	Quality Size $\geq 6''$	Preferred Size $\geq 8''$
2025	187	181	13%	0%
2016	380	344	2%	0%

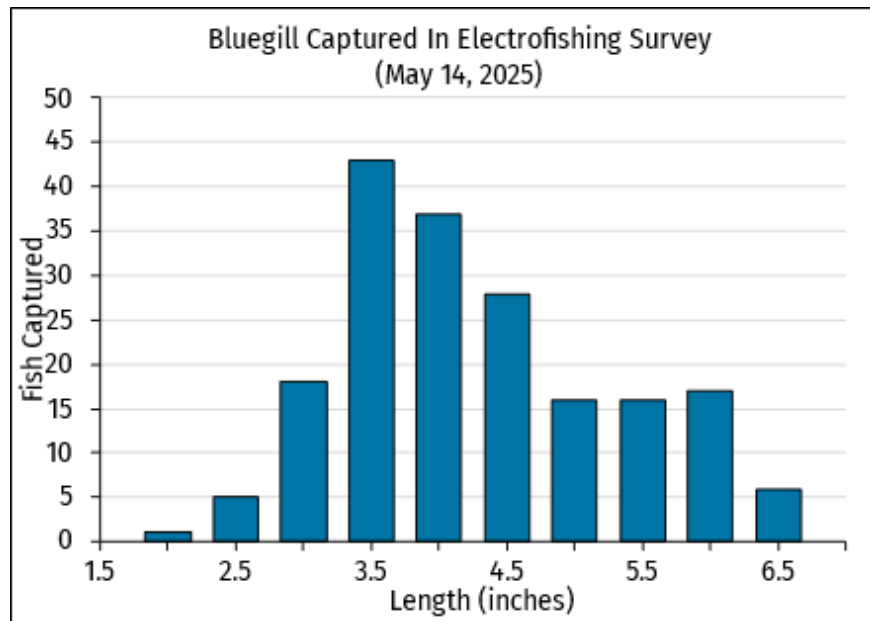


Figure 1. Size histogram of bluegill captured during a spring 2025 electrofishing survey of Deer Lake in Price County, Wisconsin.

### Largemouth Bass

There were 39 largemouth bass captured, and lengths ranged from 8.3 to 19.4 inches with an average of 13.4 inches. In this sample 46% of the bass were legal size. The catch rate of the 2025 survey falls just above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile classification for a simple-cool-dark lake. The number per mile has more than tripled since the 2016 survey and the size structure has also increased.

Table 2. Abundance and size structure of largemouth bass during late spring electrofishing survey in 2025 and 2016.

Survey Year	Number per mile	Number per mile $\geq 8''$ (stock size)	Quality Size $\geq 12''$	Preferred Size $\geq 15''$
2025	39	19	77%	23%
2016	10	10	70%	15%

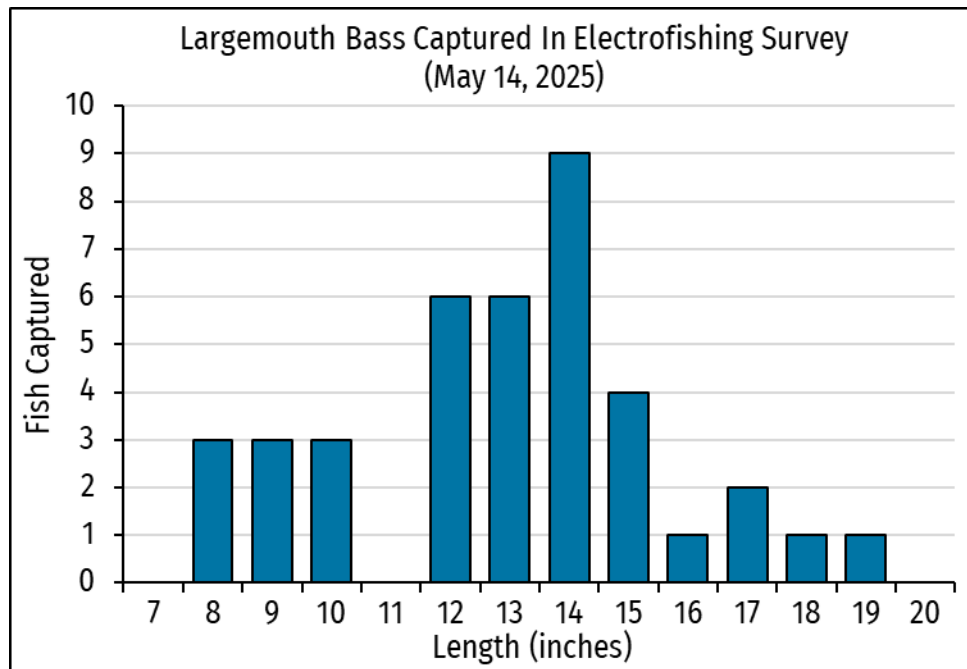


Figure 2. Size histogram of largemouth bass captured during a spring 2025 electrofishing survey of Deer Lake in Price County, Wisconsin.

### Pumpkinseed

There were 66 pumpkinseeds captured, and lengths ranged from 3.3 to 7.2 inches with an average of 5.6 inches. The catch rate is slightly above the 95<sup>th</sup> percent classification for a simple cool- dark- lake. Since the 2016 survey, the abundance of pumpkinseed has slowly decreased, but the percentage of quality sized fish has greatly increased.

Table 3. Abundance and size structure of pumpkinseed during late spring electrofishing survey in 2025 and 2016.

Survey Year	Number per mile	Number per mile $\geq 3''$ (stock size)	Quality Size $\geq 6''$	Preferred Size $\geq 8''$
2025	66	66	45%	0%
2016	74	74	27%	0%

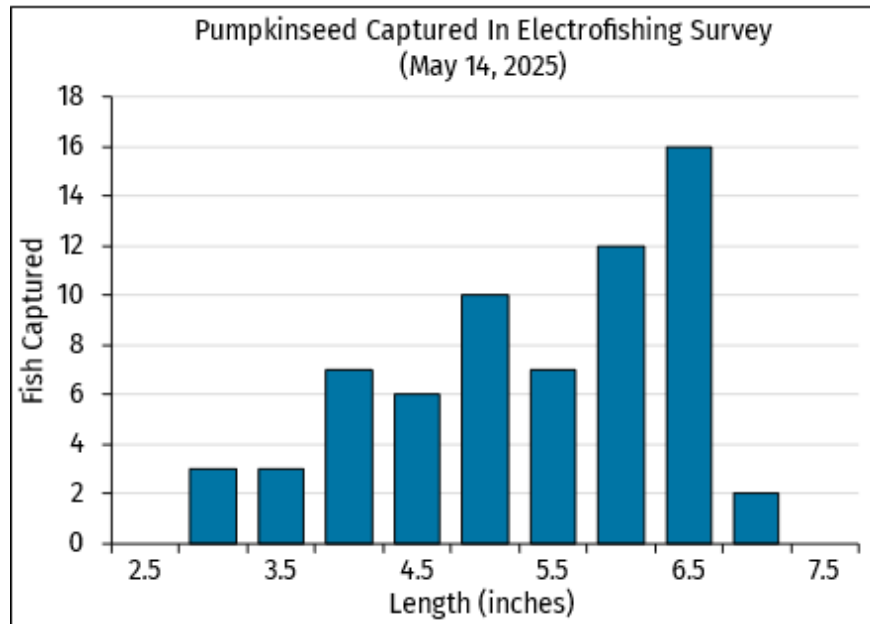


Figure 3. Size histogram of pumpkinseed captured during a spring 2025 electrofishing survey of Deer Lake in Price County, Wisconsin.

### Other Species

There were 18 black crappie captured and lengths ranged from 5.0 to 7.9 inches. There were ten northern pike captured and lengths ranged from 14.6 to 25.6 inches. Other species captured included golden shiner, walleye, white sucker, yellow bullhead and yellow perch.

## Summary

Deer Lake provides a well-managed fishery by offering a diverse selection of gamefish and panfish. Bluegill catch rates have decreased over the years, while the size structure increased. Bluegill abundance is considered moderate to high, but with a larger percentage of quality sized fish. Largemouth bass numbers have increased along with the size structure. Largemouth bass abundance is considered moderate in Deer Lake. Walleye and muskellunge aren't sustaining a good fishery with natural reproduction, therefore DNR is currently supplementing with stocking. Deer Lake is

scheduled to be sampled in spring 2026 for walleye and muskellunge to evaluate their size structure and abundance.

Table 4. General fishing regulations for Deer Lake, in Price County Wisconsin 2026-2027 fishing season.

<b>SPECIES</b>	<b>SEASON DATES</b>	<b>DAILY BAG LIMIT</b>	<b>SIZE LIMIT</b>
Largemouth Bass	First Saturday in May through first Sunday in March (Catch and release at all other times)	5 in total with smallmouth bass	14"
Muskellunge	First Saturday in May through December 31 <sup>st</sup> . (open water only)	1	40"
Northern Pike	First Saturday in May through first Sunday in March	5	None
Panfish	Open all year	25	None
Smallmouth Bass	Third Saturday in June through first Sunday in March. (Catch and release at all other times)	5 in total with largemouth bass	14"
Walleye	First Saturday in May through first Sunday in March	3	15" but less than 20" Except one over 24"

Fishing regulations for Deer Lake, Price County and all Wisconsin lakes can be found online at [Fishing Regulations | Fishing Wisconsin | Wisconsin DNR](#)

For questions about fisheries management activities on Deer Lake, contact:

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