



# 2024 SPRING FISHERIES SURVEY SUMMARY

## BARBER LAKE, SAWYER COUNTY

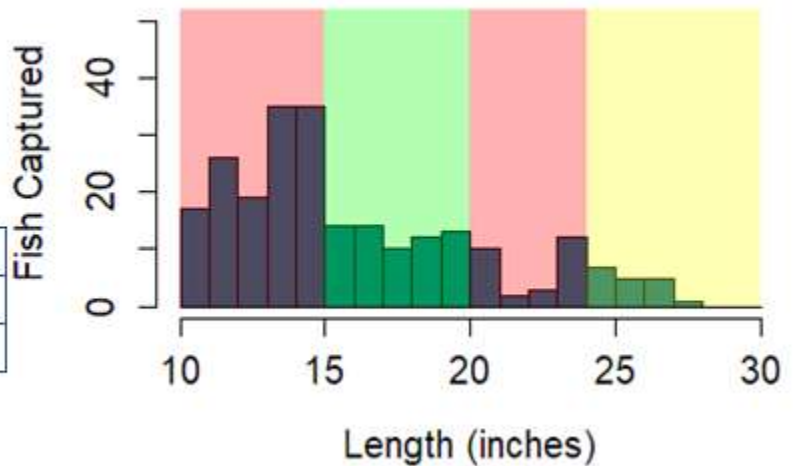
Report by Max Wolter

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Hayward Fisheries Management Team conducted a fyke netting survey on Barber Lake from March 28 to April 1, 2024. The primary target was walleye, but useful data was also gathered on muskellunge, northern pike, black crappie and yellow perch. Up to eight nets were set overnight for five total nights which resulted in 38 total net-nights of effort. Nets were only set in the “Big Barber” portion of the lake. An electrofishing survey was conducted on May 22, 2024 to target largemouth bass and bluegill and included 2.5 miles of shoreline. Quality, preferred and memorable sizes referenced in this summary are based on standard proportions of world record lengths developed for each species by the American Fisheries Society.

WALLEYE



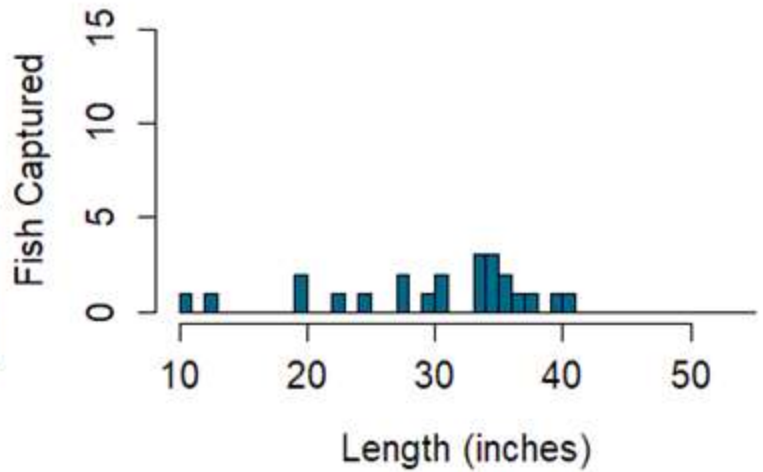
Captured 2.8 per net-night $\geq 10$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 15$ "	45%
Preferred Size $\geq 20$ "	19%



### MUSKELLUNGE



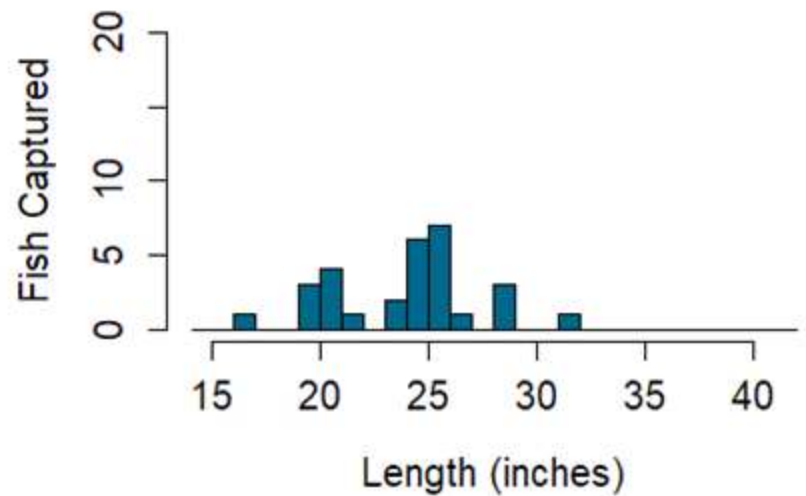
Captured 0.4 per net-night $\geq 20$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 30$ "	64%
Memorable Size $\geq 42$ "	0%



### NORTHERN PIKE



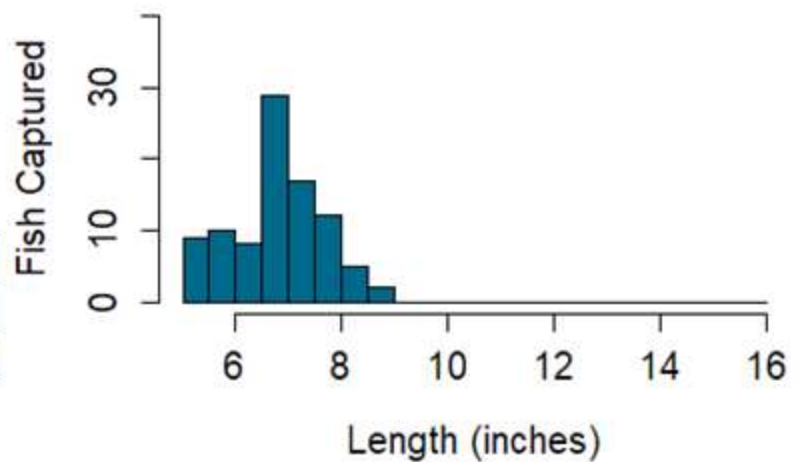
Captured 0.9 per net-night $\geq 14$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 21$ "	72%
Preferred Size $\geq 28$ "	14%



### BLACK CRAPPIE



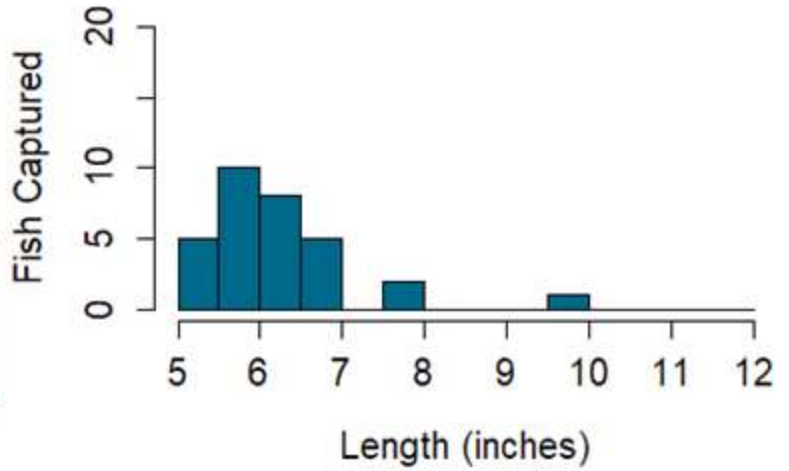
Captured 3 per net-night $\geq 5$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 8$ "	8%
Preferred Size $\geq 10$ "	0%



YELLOW PERCH



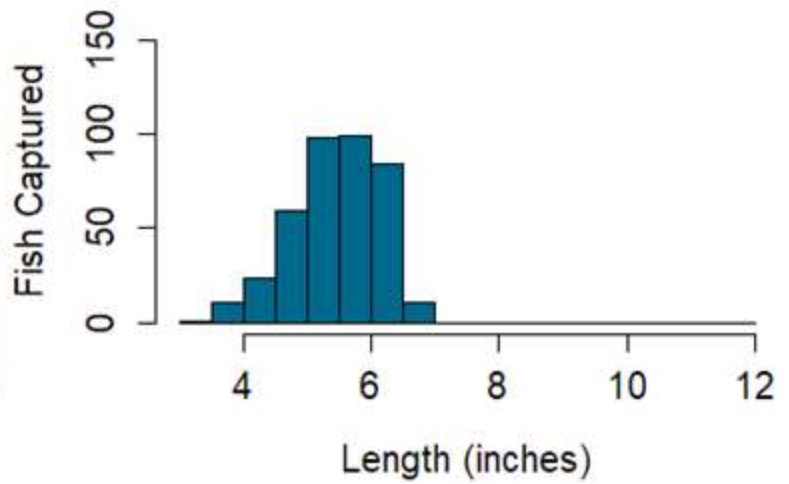
Captured 0.8 per net-night $\geq 5$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 8''$	3%
Preferred Size $\geq 10''$	0%



BLUEGILL



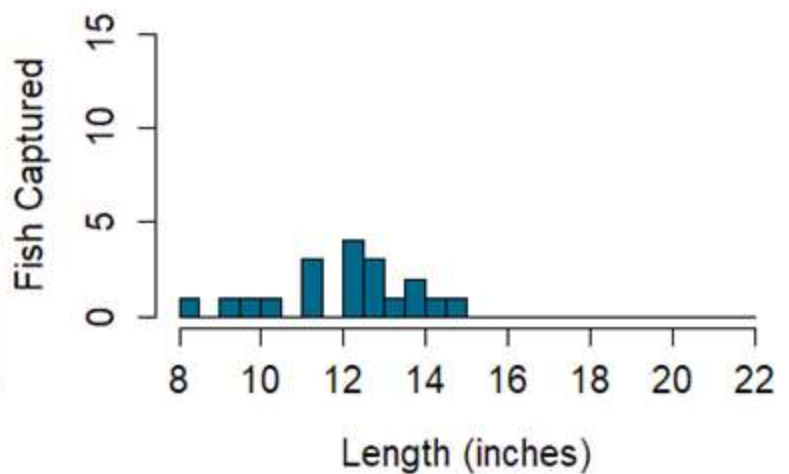
Captured 312 per mile $\geq 3$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 6''$	25%
Preferred Size $\geq 8''$	0%



LARGEMOUTH BASS



Captured 8 per mile $\geq 8$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 12''$	63%
Preferred Size $\geq 15''$	0%



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

### WALLEYE

Walleye were the main target species of this survey, which included an estimate of the total number of adult walleye in Barber Lake. Capture rates were lower than typical, likely because of the early ice out and sustained cold water temperatures throughout the netting portion of the survey. Still, enough walleye were captured to estimate a total adult abundance of 318 fish (or  $1.3 \pm 0.4$  adults per acre), which is down slightly from the last estimate in 2019 (1.9 adults per acre). A sizable portion of the population is over the minimum length limit of 15 inches with some fish also in and above the 20-24" protected slot. Anglers may harvest walleye over 15 inches, but none between 20-24" can be harvest and only 1 over 24 inches may be harvested. The daily bag limit is 3.



DNR fisheries technician Evan Sirianni with a natural born muskellunge from Barber Lake. Young fish were plentiful in the electrofishing portion of the 2024 survey. Photo courtesy of Max Wolter

### MUSKELLUNGE

Muskellunge from 10-40 inches were captured as a part of the netting survey. Capture rate was also low for muskellunge, which is also attributed to low water temperatures at the time of the survey. Still, a number of juvenile muskellunge were captured, indicating sustained natural reproduction of muskellunge in this lake. No stocking has occurred since 2014. The minimum length limit for muskellunge in Barber Lake is 40 inches and the daily bag limit is 1.

### NORTHERN PIKE

Northern pike in Barber Lake exist at a fairly low density but offer attractive size. Among all pike captured, 72% were over 21 inches and an additional 14% were over 28 inches. Northern pike offer a nice harvest opportunity in this lake.

### BLACK CRAPPIE

Black crappie were captured at a low rate in this survey that may not be indicative of their actual abundance due to survey timing. Size of crappie was poor, with just 8% of the catch over 8 inches and no crappie over 10 inches were captured. Small panfish size has been a characteristic of Barber Lake, though the specific reasons for this phenomenon are not clear. Panfish have a 25 daily bag limit in Barber Lake (all species combined).

### YELLOW PERCH

Yellow perch are present in Barber Lake but do not offer much opportunity to anglers. Size is generally small. However, small perch likely serve as an important food item for the various predator species in the lake, namely walleye.

### BLUEGILL

Like crappie, bluegill offer little size in Barber Lake. Only 25% of all bluegill captured were over 6 inches.

### LARGEMOUTH BASS

Largemouth bass were captured at a low-moderate rate and with enough size to deliver some fun for anglers. Many bass in the 12-15 inch range were captured. There are no smallmouth bass in Barber Lake.

Survey Crew: Max Wolter, Scott Braden, Evan Sirianni and volunteer Pat Eirschele  
*Reviewed and approved by Aaron Cole*