



2025 SPRING FISHERIES SURVEY SUMMARY

ROUND LAKE, SAWYER COUNTY

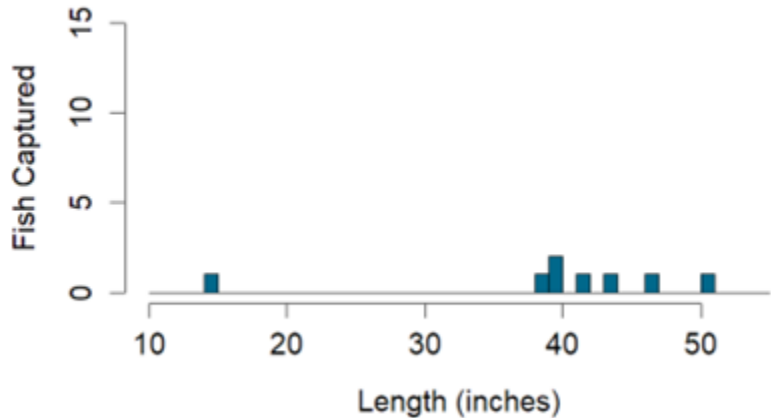
Report by Max Wolter

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Hayward Fisheries Management Team conducted a fyke netting survey on Round Lake from May 6-8, 2025. The primary targets were muskellunge and black crappie, but useful data were also gathered on northern pike. Up to 10 nets were set overnight for three nights which resulted in 29 net-nights of effort. An electrofishing survey was conducted on May 29, 2025 to target smallmouth bass, largemouth bass and bluegill and included 7.5 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.

MUSKELLUNGE



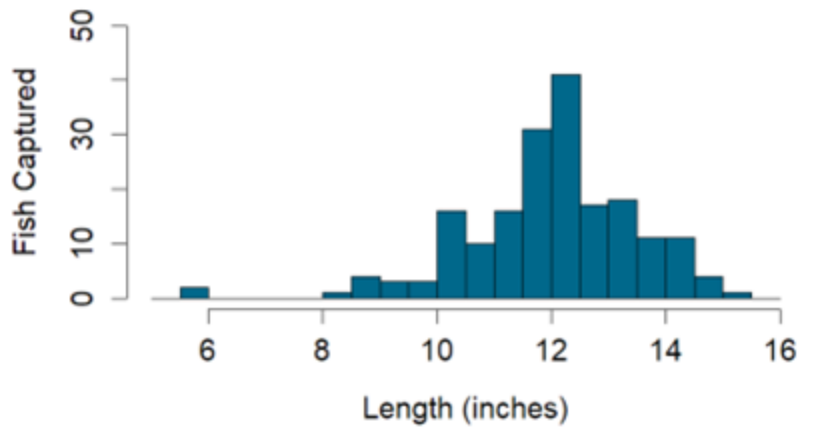
Captured 0.3 per net - night \geq 20 inches	
Quality Size \geq 30"	100%
Memorable Size \geq 42"	43%



BLACK CRAPPIE



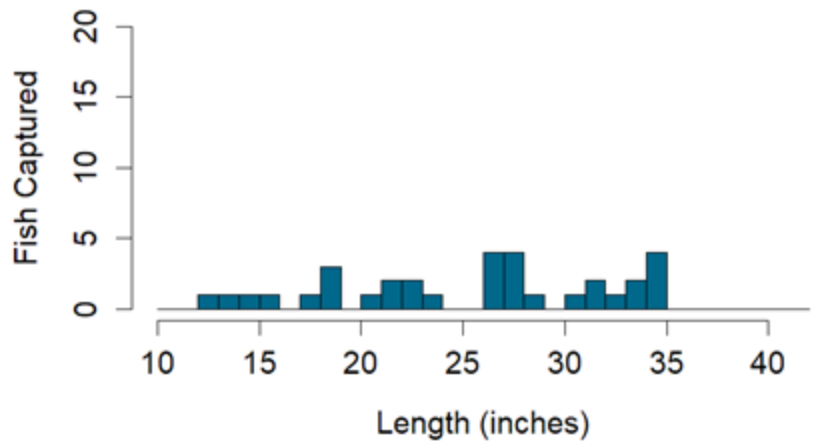
Captured 7 per net-night \geq 5 inches	
Quality Size \geq 8"	99%
Preferred Size \geq 10"	93%



NORTHERN PIKE



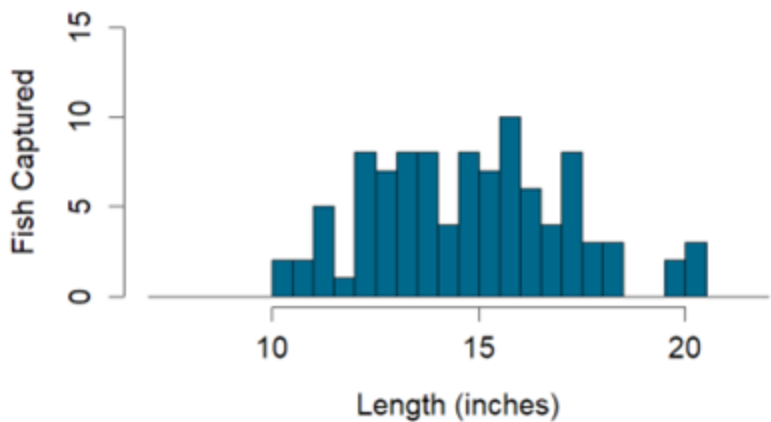
Captured 1 per net-night \geq 14 inches	
Quality Size \geq 21"	77%
Preferred Size \geq 28"	36%



SMALLMOUTH BASS



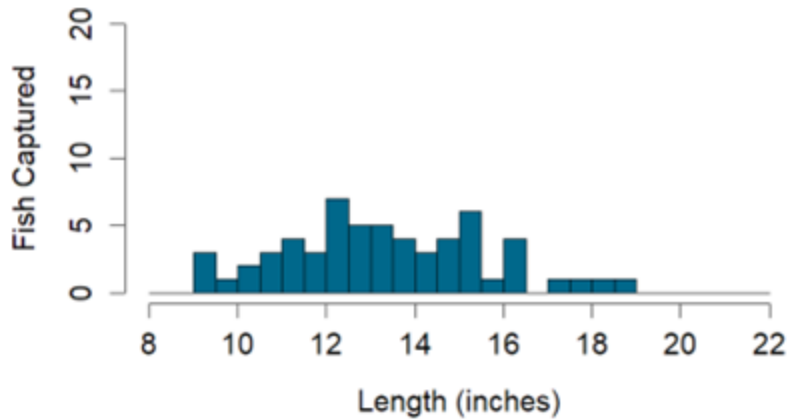
Captured 14 per mile \geq 7 inches	
Quality Size \geq 11"	96%
Preferred Size \geq 14"	59%
Memorable Size \geq 17"	19%



LARGEMOUTH BASS



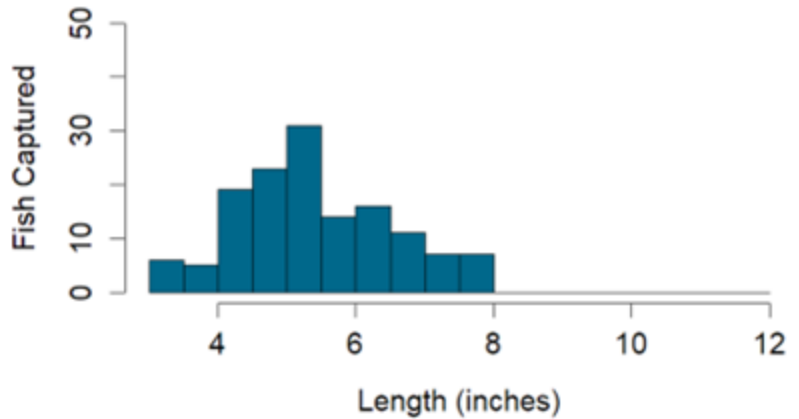
Captured 8 per mile \geq 8 inches	
Quality Size \geq 12"	73%
Preferred Size \geq 15"	25%



BLUEGILL



Captured 93 per mile \geq 3 inches	
Quality Size \geq 6"	30%
Preferred Size \geq 8"	0%



SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Round Lake (3,294 acres) is a premiere fishing lake in Sawyer County. The lake has a stellar reputation for a variety of popular species. This survey was timed later in the spring to capture muskellunge and black crappie during their spawning window. Nets were set in areas where those species were more likely to be (bays). Walleye had spawned earlier in the spring and typically use other habitats (main lake points and rock bars). Some walleye were captured during this survey, but it was not considered to be a representative sample of the population, so no data are presented.

Round Lake is classified as a “two-story” fishery by the DNR lake classification system. This designation is due to the presence of cisco that inhabit the deep, colder part of the lake for most of the year. This report will make comparisons between Round Lake and other two-story fisheries, especially for catch rates. Little Round Lake was also included in this survey, but most of the effort was in Round and results are most representative of the fishery in Round Lake.

MUSKELLUNGE

Muskellunge have been a species of interest in Round Lake due to the lake's potential to produce trophy-sized fish. The lake is primarily managed for maximum muskellunge size, which is most attainable when the population density is on the lower end. This survey reaffirmed the low-density/high-size status of the muskellunge fishery. The catch rate for muskellunge was between the 25th-50th percentile for two-story lakes, but most muskellunge captured were large. The largest to appear in the survey was almost 51 inches. Round Lake is stocked with muskellunge every third year (the 14-inch musky appearing in the figure above is believed to be a stocked fish from fall of 2024). There is a 50-inch minimum length limit for muskellunge in Round Lake and a 1-fish daily bag limit.

BLACK CRAPPIE

The black crappie population in Round is not particularly abundant (around the 75th percentile for two story lakes) and occurrence of crappie is spotty throughout the system. However, crappie size is excellent and sure to excite anglers who are able to find them. The majority of crappie are over 10 inches, with many being over 12 inches as well. A few crappie over 15 inches were handled as part of this survey. Crappie in Round Lake are managed with a restrictive bag limit of 5-fish per day, which is intended to maintain this quality population.

NORTHERN PIKE

Abundance of northern pike in Round lake is average for two story fisheries (50th percentile), but size is very good. Over a third of the pike handled in this survey were over 28 inches. Round Lake has excellent potential to produce high-quality and even trophy northern pike. There is no minimum length limit for northern pike and the daily bag limit is 5 fish.

SMALLMOUTH BASS

Habitat in Round Lake is well-suited to smallmouth bass and they are a popular species among anglers. This lake has maintained excellent quality fishing opportunities for smallmouth bass, with abundance in the 90th percentile for two story lakes and a majority were over 14 inches. Round Lake frequently produces 20-inch smallmouth and several of that size appeared in this survey. There is an 18-inch minimum length limit and 1-fish daily bag limit for smallmouth bass in Round Lake.

LARGEMOUTH BASS

Largemouth bass in Round Lake tend to occupy the shallow and weedy bays (including most of Little Round Lake) and spend less time in the main lake. As a result, their abundance is lower than smallmouth bass. Size of largemouth bass is fair, with 25% over 15 inches. There is no minimum length limit for largemouth bass in Round Lake and the daily bag limit is 5 fish.

BLUEGILL

Bluegill are most abundant in shallow weedy bays in Round Lake. Size of bluegill in this survey was modest, with some over 7 inches but no 8-inch bluegill captured.

Survey Crew: Max Wolter, Scott Braden, and Dan Nelson

Reviewed and approved by Aaron Cole