



# 2023 SPRING FISHERIES SURVEY SUMMARY

## TEAL LAKE, SAWYER COUNTY

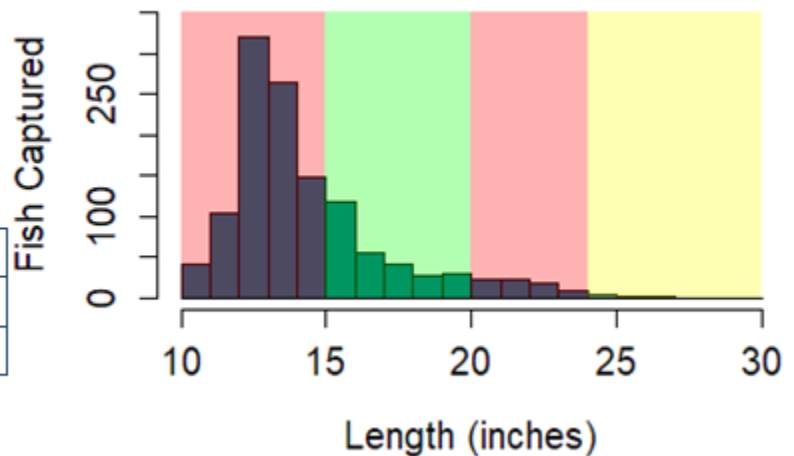
Report by Evan Sirianni

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Hayward Fisheries Management Team conducted a fyke netting survey on Teal Lake from May 2-8, 2023. The primary target was walleye, but useful data was also gathered on muskellunge, northern pike, yellow perch, and black crappie. Up to 10 nets were set overnight for 4 total nights which resulted in 31 total net-nights of effort. An electrofishing survey was conducted on May 25, 2023 to target largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, and bluegill and included 4 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



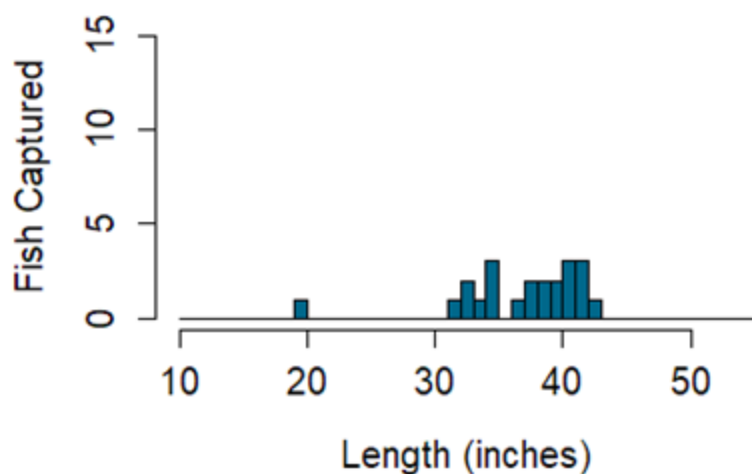
Captured 23 per net-night $\geq 10$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 15''$	28%
Preferred Size $\geq 20''$	6%



### MUSKELLUNGE



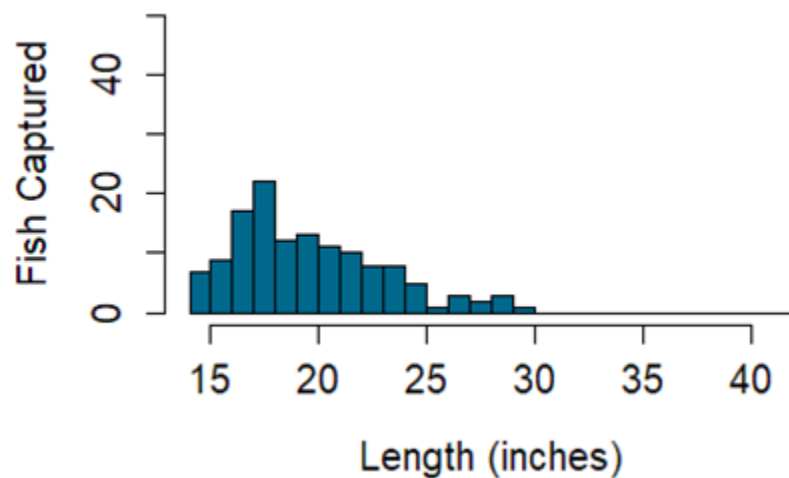
Captured 0.4 per net-night $\geq 20$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 30''$	81%
Memorable Size $\geq 42''$	5%



### NORTHERN PIKE



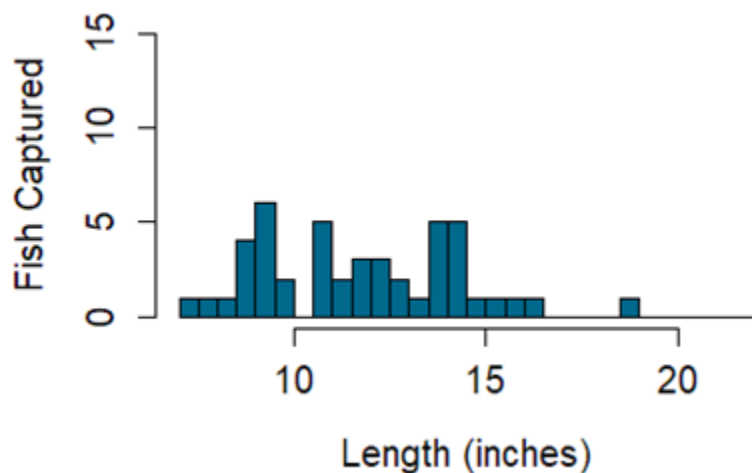
Captured 4.6 per net-night $\geq 14$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 21''$	31%
Preferred Size $\geq 28''$	3%



### SMALLMOUTH BASS



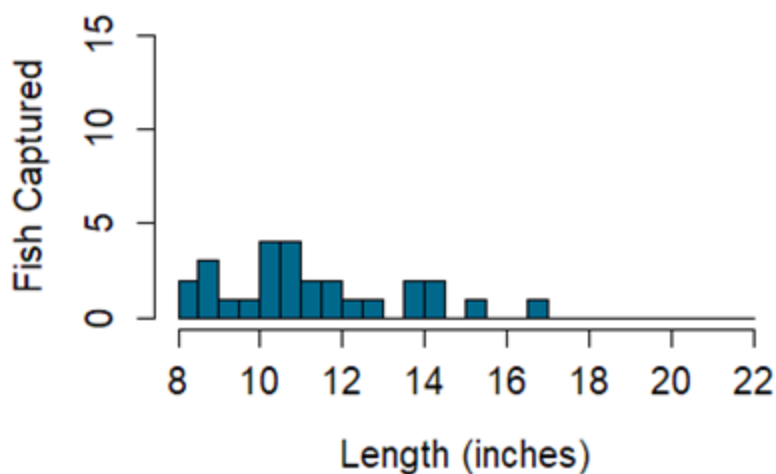
Captured 12 per mile $\geq 7$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 11''$	57%
Preferred Size $\geq 14''$	22%
Memorable Size $\geq 17''$	2%



### LARGEMOUTH BASS



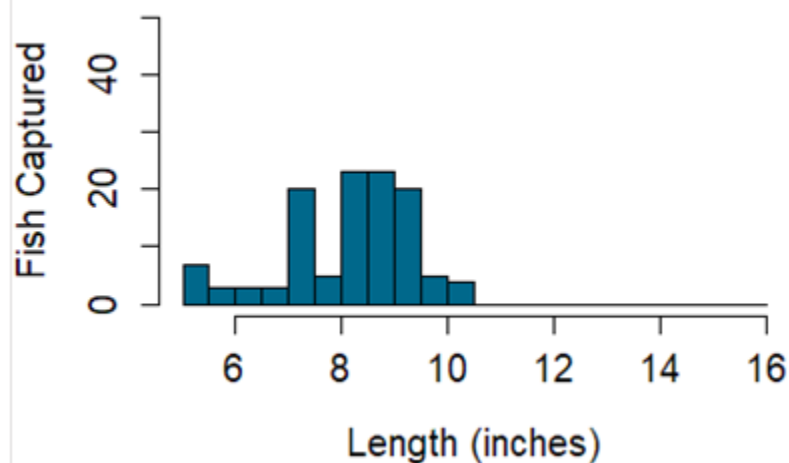
Captured 6.8 per mile $\geq$ 8 inches	
Quality Size $\geq$ 12"	30%
Preferred Size $\geq$ 15"	7%



### BLACK CRAPPIE



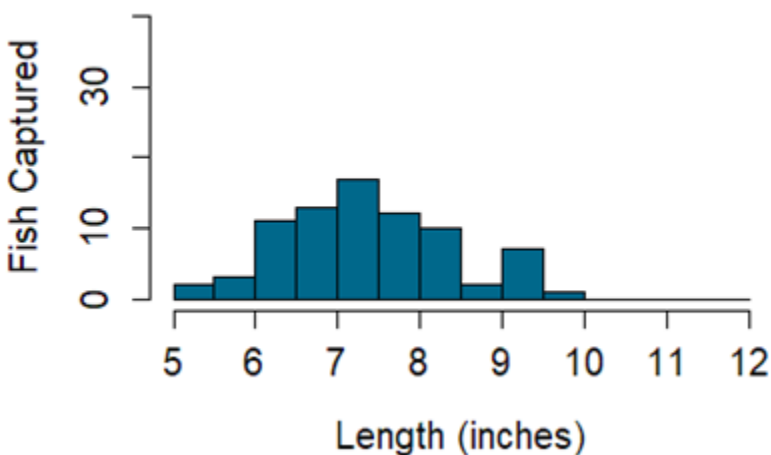
Captured 4.9 per net-night $\geq$ 5 inches	
Quality Size $\geq$ 8"	65%
Preferred Size $\geq$ 10"	3%



### YELLOW PERCH



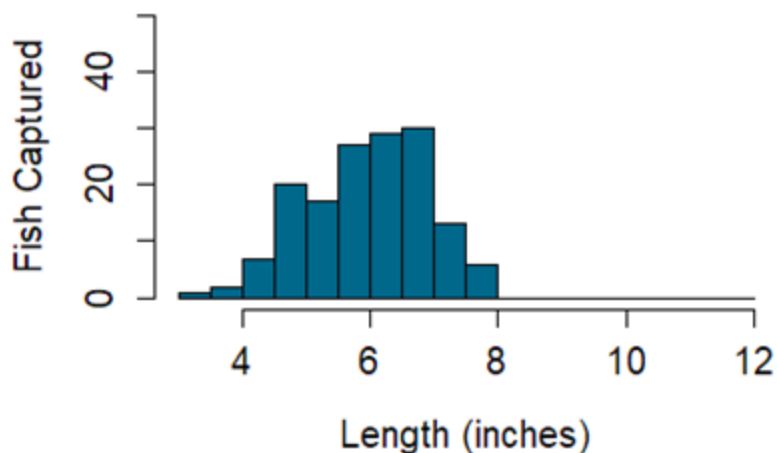
Captured 46 per net-night $\geq$ 5 inches	
Quality Size $\geq$ 8"	26%
Preferred Size $\geq$ 10"	0%



### BLUEGILL



Captured 155 per mile $\geq 3$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 6''$	51%
Preferred Size $\geq 8''$	0%



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The netting survey was well timed for capturing walleye along with other species such as muskellunge, northern pike, and black crappie. Weather played a factor during the duration of this survey, with heavy winds pushing ice around the lake that damaged two of the fyke nets that were set. The water temperature was still cold, around 38-39 degrees Fahrenheit at the start of the netting survey. The electrofishing survey conducted in late May was timed well for capturing bass and bluegill moving into shallower water as the spring progressed. During the electrofishing survey, two northern longear sunfish were captured which was a rare species in Wisconsin. Teal Lake is categorized as a Complex-Cool-Dark lake according to the DNR fisheries classification system. “Complex” refers to the number of gamefish present within the water body. “Cool” and “Dark” terms refer to the lake’s temperature and water clarity in reference to lakes of the same classification. This report compares catch rate results to lakes of the same classification of Complex-Cool-Dark.

### WALLEYE

Walleye in Teal Lake were relatively abundant; however, the size structure of the fish was on the lower end of the range that is observed locally. The catch of walleye in Teal Lake during the netting survey was 23 fish per net-night. This is a very high catch rate and puts it above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of Complex-Cool-Dark lakes. The size of walleye captured were on the smaller side with only 28% of the fish measuring longer than 15 inches and 6% measuring at a length over 20 inches. Walleye have been stocked in Teal Lake on an “every-other-year” basis in odd numbered years. The regulation for walleye on Teal is a daily bag limit of three in total with walleye between 15-20 inches may be kept and one fish over 24 inches (corresponding to the colors in the figure above).

## MUSKELLUNGE

Muskellunge catch rate during the netting survey was 0.4 per net-night putting Teal between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> percentiles for lakes of the same classification. Impressively, 81% of the muskies captured were above 30 inches in length, while only 5% of the fish were above 42 inches. There is a daily bag limit of 1 muskellunge with a 40-inch minimum length limit.

## NORTHERN PIKE

Northern pike have a substantial population in Teal, but their size was lacking in the survey. Northern pike were captured at a rate of 4.6 per net-night. This is a reasonably high catch rate that puts Teal between the 75<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of lakes in the same classification. Size was not impressive with only 31% of the pike measuring longer than 21 inches, 3% longer than 28 inches, with no fish breaking 30 inches. The daily bag limit for northern pike on Teal is 5 with no minimum length limit.

## SMALLMOUTH BASS

Smallmouth bass were collected during the electrofishing survey in late May on Teal Lake. They were captured at a rate of 12 fish per mile which is considered a very high catch rate and puts Teal above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of lakes of the same classification. Size of smallmouth was sub-par with only 22% of smallmouth captured above 14 inches and only 1 fish was captured that was above 17 inches. The daily bag limit for bass on Teal Lake is 5 combined of the two bass species with a 14-inch minimum length limit for smallmouth bass.

## LARGEMOUTH BASS

Largemouth in Teal had a slightly above average catch rate of 6.8 fish per mile. Size of largemouth was similar to that of smallmouth bass, with only 30% of the fish captured measuring longer than 12 inches and only 2 fish longer than 15 inches. The daily bag limit for bass in Teal Lake is 5 combined of the two bass species with *no* minimum length limit for largemouth bass.

## BLACK CRAPPIE

The catch of black crappie during the netting survey was slightly above average (4.9 fish per net-night) compared to lakes of the same classification. Crappies that were above 8 inches made up for 65% of the catch. Only 3% of crappies were at or greater than 10 inches in length. There is a daily bag limit of 25 panfish on Teal, but no more than 10 of any one species.

## YELLOW PERCH

Yellow perch were captured at an above average rate (46 fish per net-night) that would put Teal between the 75<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile for lakes of the same classification. Size of perch was nothing glamorous with 26% of perch caught being longer than 8 inches and no perch were captured above 10 inches. There is a daily bag limit of 25 panfish on Teal, but no more than 10 of any one species.

## BLUEGILL

Catch of bluegill in Teal (155 fish per mile) was between the 50<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentile for lakes of the same classification. Bluegill continued the trend of small panfish in Teal Lake, with an underwhelming size structure of only 50% of the fish measuring over 6 inches and no bluegill over 8 inches. There is a daily bag limit of 25 panfish on Teal, but no more than 10 of any one species.

Survey Crew: Max Wolter, Scott Braden, and Evan Sirianni with Brenda Maier, John Maier, Bob Dale, and Levi Meetz.

*Reviewed and approved by Aaron Cole*