



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fisheries Information Sheet

LAKE: UPPER AND LOWER
BUCKATABON LAKES

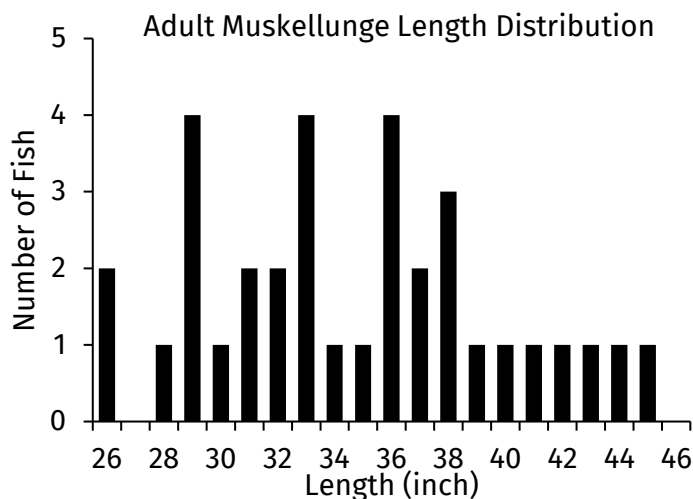
COUNTY: VILAS

YEAR: 2025

Introduction

Upper and Lower Buckatabon lakes, Vilas County, have a combined surface area of 846 acres, 11.2 miles of shoreline, a maximum depth of 47 feet and are classified as a complex-two story lake system. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) surveyed Buckatabon Lakes, from April 30 to May 7, 2025, to assess the status of muskellunge. A total of eight muskellunge fyke nets (five in Lower and three in Upper) were set on April 30 and lifted daily from May 1 to May 7. Nets were set in areas thought to be suitable for muskellunge spawning. The muskellunge population is supported by stocking.

MUSKELLUNGE

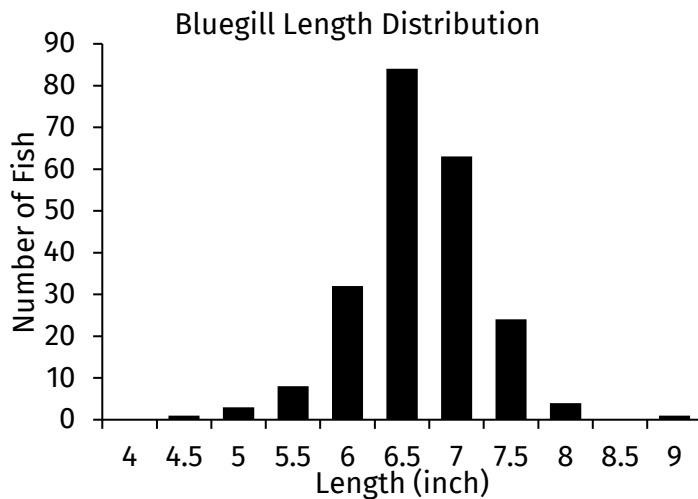
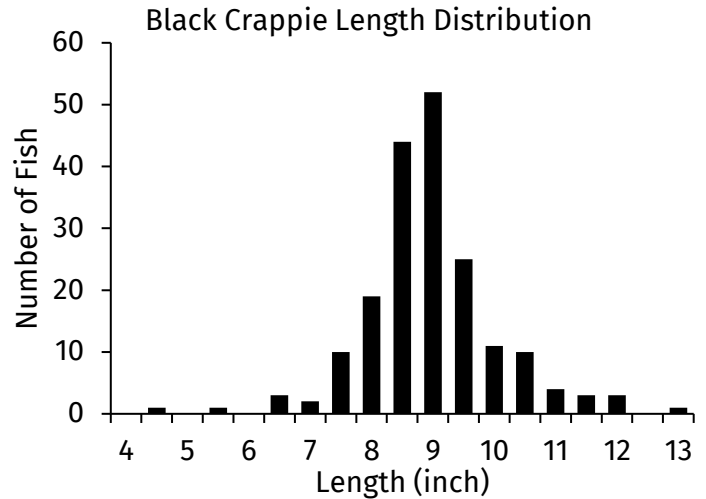


A total of 34 adult muskellunge were caught during the survey. Muskellunge were captured at a rate of 0.67 per net lift, which ranks in the 75th percentile for similarly classified lakes. Of those captured, 18% were 40 inches or larger, with the largest being a 45.1-inch female. Note: adult muskellunge are defined as all sexable muskellunge and those of unknown sex ≥ 30 inches in length.

BLACK CRAPPIE



A total of 1,498 black crappies were caught during the survey at a rate of 27.7 per net lift, which is above the 95th percentile for the lake class. Lengths were taken from a random subsample. Black crappies ranged in length from 4.9 to 13.2 inches, averaged 9.1 inches and 17% were 10 inches or greater.



BLUEGILL

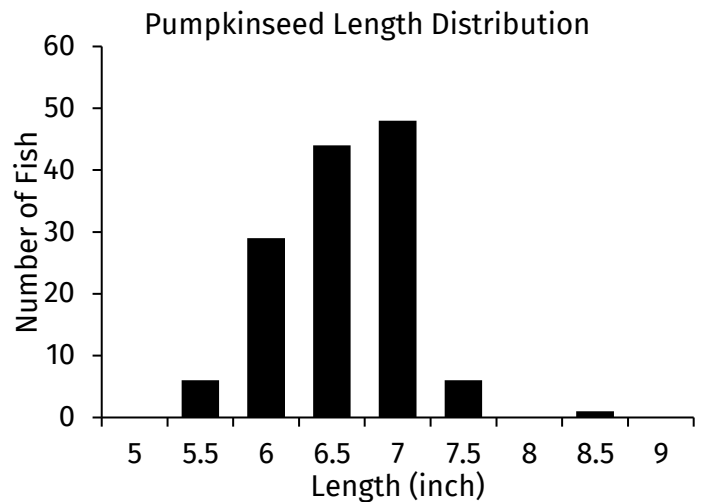


A total of 4,323 bluegills were caught during the survey. Lengths were taken from a random subsample. Bluegills ranged in length from 4.8 to 9.3 inches, averaged 6.8 inches and 42% were 7 inches or greater.

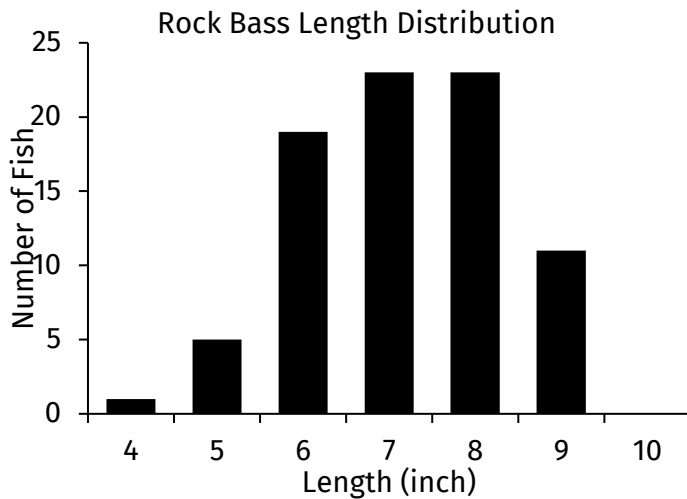
PUMPKINSEED



A total of 374 pumpkinseeds were caught during the survey. Lengths were taken from a random subsample. Pumpkinseeds ranged in length from 5.5 to 8.7 inches, averaged 6.8 inches and 41% were 7 inches or greater.



ROCK BASS

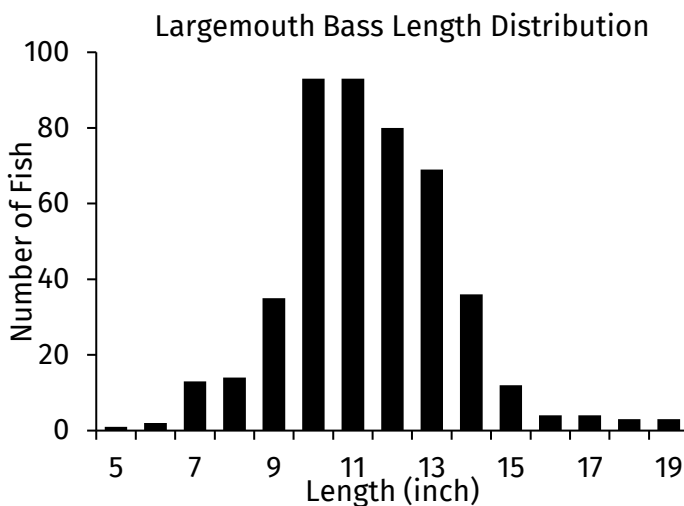
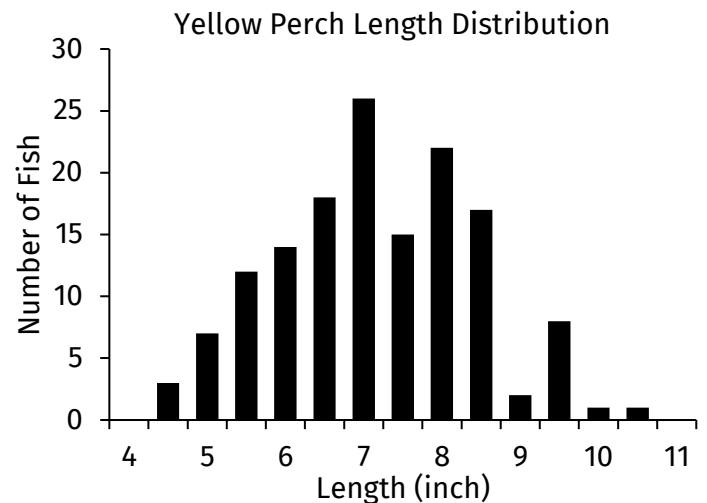


A total of 413 rock bass were caught during the survey. Lengths were taken from a random subsample. Rock bass ranged in length from 4.2 to 9.9 inches and averaged 7.7 inches.

YELLOW PERCH



A total of 193 yellow perch were caught during the survey at a rate of 3.6 per net lift, which is below the 50th percentile for the lake class. Lengths were taken from a random subsample. Yellow perch ranged in length from 4.5 to 10.6 inches, averaged 7.4 inches and 35% were 8 inches or greater.



LARGEMOUTH BASS

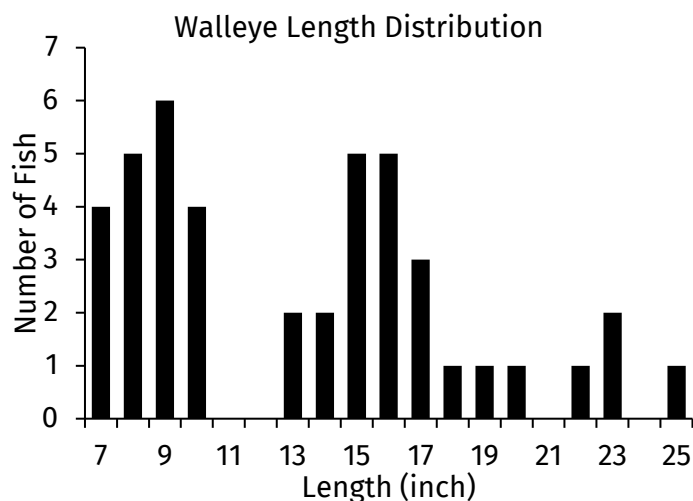
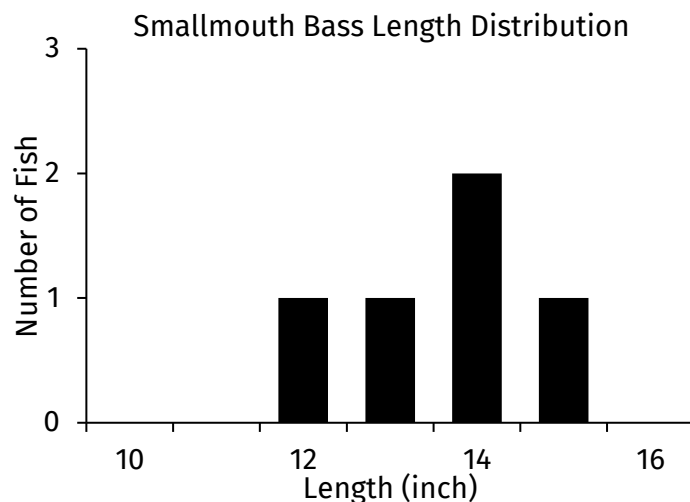


A total of 462 largemouth bass were caught during the survey. Largemouth bass ranged in length from 5.9 to 19.7 inches, averaged 11.8 inches and 13% were 14 inches or greater.

SMALLMOUTH BASS



A total of five smallmouth bass were caught during the survey, ranging in length from 12.0 to 15.6 inches. All smallmouth bass were caught in Upper Buckatabon Lake.



WALLEYE

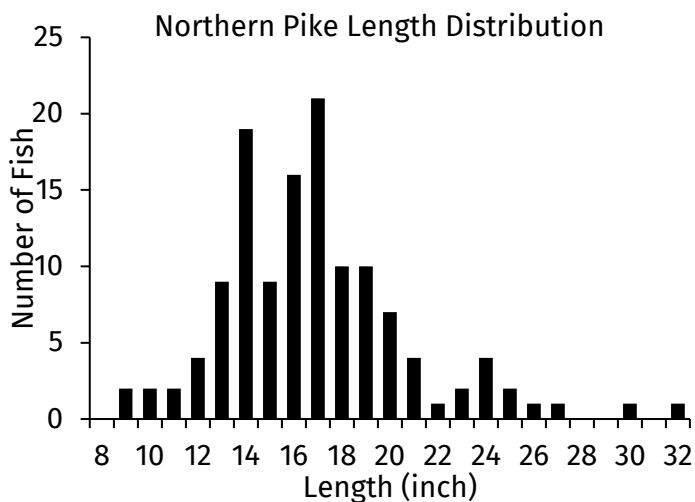


A total of 44 walleye were caught during the survey. Walleye ranged in length from 7.4 to 25.2 inches in length, averaged 13.8 inches and 47% were 15 inches or greater.

NORTHERN PIKE



A total of 128 northern pike were caught during the survey. Pike caught were 9.7 to 32.6 inches in length, averaged 17.3 inches and 13% were 21 inches or larger.



OTHER SPECIES

In addition to the fish mentioned above, fyke netting efforts in the Buckatabons resulted in the catch of four other species of fish: yellow bullhead (4,851), white sucker (29), creek chub (1) and golden shiner (1). A total of 4,851 yellow bullhead were caught in fyke nets resulting in the very high catch rate of 89.8 per net lift, which ranks in the 99th percentile among similar classed waters.

Table 1. General fishing regulations for Upper and Lower Buckatabon lakes, Vilas County, Wisconsin, 2025-26.

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	DAILY BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
Panfish	All Year	25	None
Walleye	May 3 – March 1	3	15" min length, 20-24" no harvest, 1 allowed over 24"
Largemouth bass (harvest season)	May 3 – March 1	5 in total with SMB	None
Smallmouth bass (harvest season)	June 21 – March 1	5 in total with LMB	None
Muskellunge	May 24 – December 31	1	40 inches
Northern Pike	May 3 – March 1	5	None

Selected fishing regulations for Upper and Lower Buckatabon lakes are summarized above (Table 1). While the regulatory information provided was current at the time the surveys were conducted, it is not comprehensive and should not be used as a substitute for the current fishing regulation pamphlet. You may obtain a copy of current fishing regulations when you purchase your fishing license or download a copy from the [DNR Fishing Regulations page](#).

For answers to questions about fisheries management activities on Upper and Lower Buckatabon lakes, contact:

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