



WISCONSIN DNR
FISHERIES INFORMATION SHEET

LAKE: LOWER BUCKATABON

COUNTY: VILAS

YEAR: 2010

The Department of Natural Resources and WVIC surveyed Lower Buckatabon Lake, Vilas County, from April 3 through May 4, 2010, to determine the health of its fishery. Estimating walleye abundance was the primary objective of the survey.

Lower Buckatabon Lake is a drainage lake with predominantly sand and muck substrate and a low-density walleye population. It has a surface area of 352 acres, 3.8 miles of shoreline and a maximum depth of 16 feet.

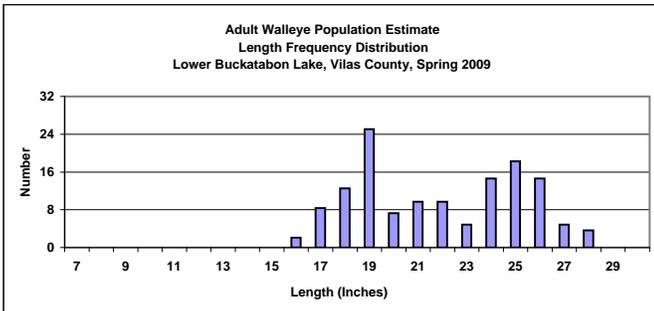


Figure 1. Length frequency distribution of 138 adult* walleye estimated to be in Lower Buckatabon Lake, Vilas County, based on a spring 2010 survey.

* Note: Adult walleye are defined as all sexable walleye and walleye of unknown sex >= 15 inches long.

Walleye

We conducted a mark-recapture survey of Lower Buckatabon Lake's adult* walleye population from April 3-11, 2010. We captured and marked (fin clipped) 95 adult walleye in six days of fyke netting. A crew sampled Lower Buckatabon with an electro-fishing boat on April 9th and 11th and captured 10 adult walleye. Sixty percent (6 of 10) of those walleye bore the fin clip given during fyke netting.

Based on those results, we estimated that Lower Buckatabon is home to 138 adult walleye (0.4/acre). All of those adult walleye were 15 inches long or larger. The largest walleye we captured was a 28.7-inch female.

Smallmouth Bass

Smallmouth bass were an incidental catch in our survey of Lower Buckatabon Lake. Our sampling was not done during the peak of the smallmouth bass spawning season.

We captured one smallmouth bass and it was 18.2 inches long.

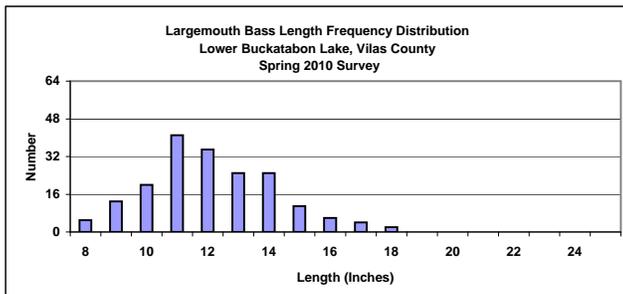


Figure 3. Length frequency distribution of 187 largemouth bass >= 8" captured during a fisheries survey of Lower Buckatabon Lake, Vilas County, in spring 2010.

Largemouth Bass

Our sampling of Lower Buckatabon Lake was also done outside the spawning period for largemouth bass.

We captured 187 largemouth bass, 8 inches or larger, during our fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Lower Buckatabon Lake. Nearly 26% (48 of 187) of those largemouth were 14 inches long or larger. The biggest largemouth bass we captured was 18.6 inches long.

Northern Pike

We captured 38 adult* northern pike in fyke nets fished in Lower Buckatabon Lake from April 3-8, 2010. We captured three adult northern pike that were larger than 26 inches long. The largest northern pike captured was a 27.2-inch female.

* Note: Adult northern pike are defined as all sexable northern pike and northern pike of unknown sex \geq 12 inches long.

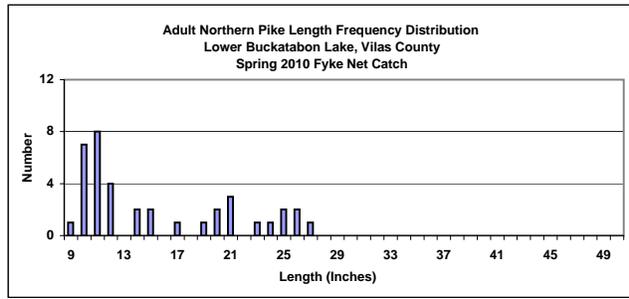


Figure 4. Length frequency distribution of 38 adult* northern pike captured in fyke nets during a fisheries survey of Lower Buckatabon Lake, Vilas County, in spring 2010.

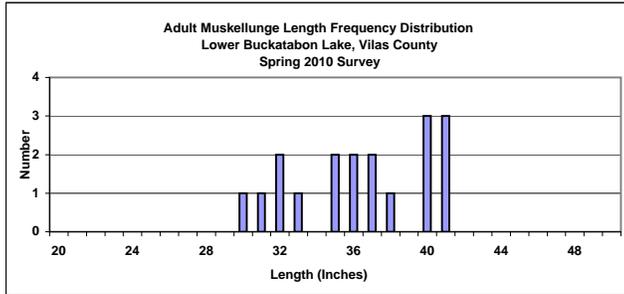


Figure 5. Length frequency distribution of 18 adult* muskellunge captured during a fisheries survey of Lower Buckatabon Lake, Vilas County, in spring 2010.

Muskellunge

We captured 18 adult* muskellunge during our fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Lower Buckatabon Lake. Thirteen of those muskellunge (72%) were 34 inches long or larger. One in three muskellunge (6 of 18) were 40 inches long or larger. The largest muskellunge we captured was 41.7 inches long.

* Note: Adult muskellunge are defined as all sexable muskellunge and muskellunge of unknown sex \geq 20 inches long.

Other Species

We captured 10 species of fish in our fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Lower Buckatabon Lake in addition to the game fish mentioned above. Black crappie, bluegill, pumpkinseed, rock bass, yellow bullhead and yellow perch were common in our fyke net catches. We also caught creek chub, golden shiner, grass pickerel and white sucker. In-water sampling will conclude with a survey of young-of-year walleye in fall 2010.

We are also conducting a creel (angler harvest) survey on Lower Buckatabon Lake this year. Creel clerk Lynn Robinson will count and interview anglers and examine their catch throughout the 2010 open-water fishing season.

Table 1. General Fishing Regulations for Lower Buckatabon Lake, Vilas County, 2010

FISH SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	DAILY LIMIT	MINIMUM LENGTH
Walleye	May 1 - March 6	3	15 inches
Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass	May 1 - June 18 (C&R) June 19 - March 6 (Harvest)	None 5 in total	14 inches
Muskellunge	May 29 - Nov. 30	1	34 inches
Northern Pike	May 1 - March 6	5	None

A brief summary of selected fishing regulations for Lower Buckatabon Lake is included 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 our web site at:

<http://www.dnr.wi.gov/fish/regulations/>

This report is interim only; data and findings should not be considered final. Results of creel surveys should be available by June 2011. Spring survey and creel survey summaries will be posted at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/nor/northern.html>

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