



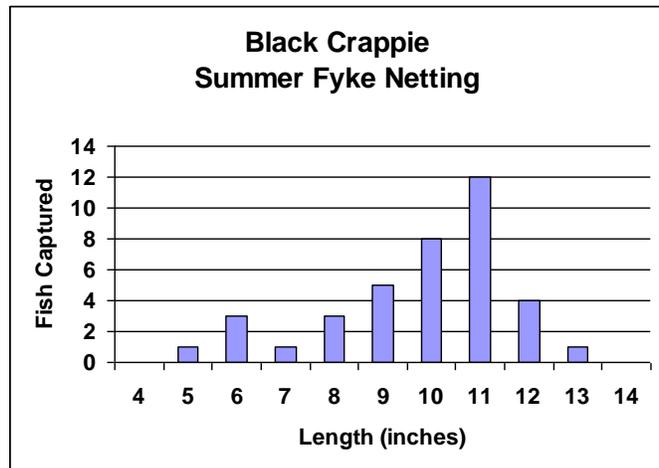
## Summer Panfish Survey Summary Turtle-Flambeau Flowage, Iron County, 2010

The Mercer DNR Fisheries Management Team conducted a fyke netting survey on the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage during June 29-30, 2010 as part of our baseline monitoring program. Nine nets were set overnight, for one night, resulting in 9 net-nights of effort. Primary target species were bluegill, black crappie, and pumpkinseed sunfish. An electrofishing survey conducted by the Mercer team in mid May documented the status of smallmouth bass (summarized in a separate survey summary) but provided a poor sample of panfish, which were not targeted specifically. We believe this netting survey provides better insight into the relative number and sizes of panfish in the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage. 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.

### Black Crappie



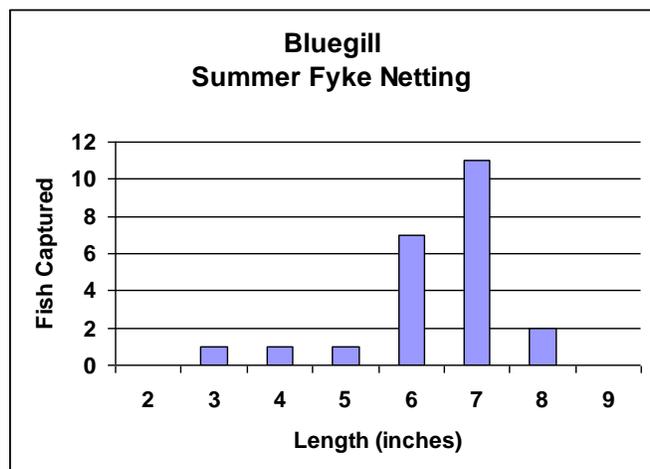
Captured 4.2 per net-night $\geq 5''$	
Quality Size $\geq 8''$	87%
Preferred Size $\geq 10''$	66%
Memorable Size $\geq 12''$	13%



### Bluegill



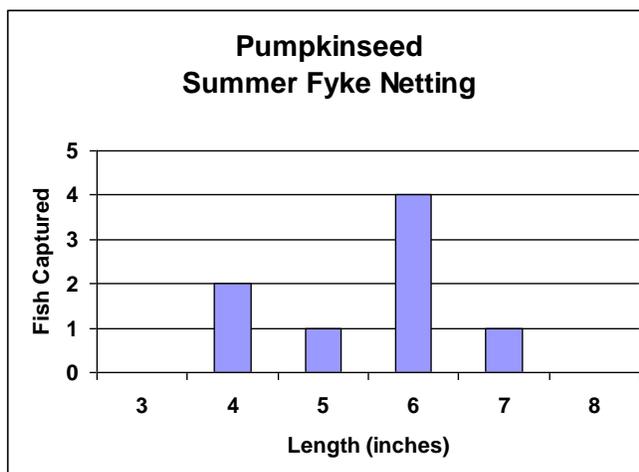
Captured 2.6 per net-night $\geq 3''$	
Quality Size $\geq 6''$	87%
Preferred Size $\geq 8''$	9%



## Pumpkinseed



Captured 1.1 per net-night $\geq 3''$	
Quality Size $\geq 6''$	60%
Preferred Size $\geq 8''$	0%



## Summary of Results

Panfish were captured at a low rate during this survey. Sampling effort (only 9 net-nights) was too low to allow conclusions about relative abundance; but the data provide what is likely to be a representative sample of the size distribution for these panfish species, which can be used for comparisons with past and future survey results.

Fyke nets were set in habitats likely to be used by panfish species (i.e. shallow water with aquatic vegetation). Surface water temperature on 6/30/2010 was measured at 71 °F, and it was noted that the bluegills sampled appeared to have completed a recent bout of spawning. Pumpkinseed sunfish were also probably still spawning at this time and water temperature, and therefore, the sample should be reflective of the spawning stock present in the population. Black crappies were finished spawning by this time, which potentially could negatively influence our catch rates.

### Black Crappie

Although catch rates for black crappie were low (4.2 fish per net-night), the size structure of the population was very good. Of the 38 crappies  $\geq 5$  inches, 66% were of legal size ( $\geq 10$  inches), exceeding the target range of 40-60% as identified in the 2007 Turtle-Flambeau Flowage Fishery Management Plan. In addition, 13% of the crappies sampled were also  $\geq 12$  inches, which falls within the target range of 10-20%.

### Bluegill

Catch rates for bluegill in the TFF were low (2.6 per net-night), but size structure was respectable. Of the 23 bluegills  $\geq 3$  inches, 57% were  $\geq 7$  inches, and 9% were  $\geq 8$  inches – just below the target range of 10-30% identified in the Fishery Management Plan. Based on these survey results, and information from previous surveys, it seems there is a relatively low-density, high-quality bluegill population in the Flowage. This would be typical of lakes with a moderate to high density population of walleye, which are efficient predators on young bluegill in lakes with limited aquatic vegetation.

## Pumpkinseed Sunfish

Only 10 pumpkinseeds were captured during the survey (1.1 per net-night). Of those fish sampled, only 1 was over 7 inches in length. These results, along with information from previous surveys, suggest that pumpkinseed make up a small proportion of the panfish community in the TFF.

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