

2013-2014 Turtle-Flambeau Flowage Fishing Regulations*

FISH SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	DAILY LIMIT**	MINIMUM LENGTH
WALLEYE			
Turtle-Flambeau Flowage	May 4 - March 2	2***	None
Trude Lake	May 4 - March 2	2***	None
MUSKELLUNGE			
	May 25- Nov. 30	1	40 inches
NORTHERN PIKE			
	May 4 - March 2	5	None
LARGEMOUTH & SMALLMOUTH BASS			
Turtle-Flambeau Flowage (including Trude Lake)	May 4 - June 14	0 (Catch and Release Only)	
Turtle-Flambeau Flowage (not including Trude Lake)	June 15 - March 2	2	15 inches
Trude Lake	June 15 - March 2	5	14 inches
PANFISH (Bluegill, Pumpkinseed, Crappie, Yellow Perch)			
Turtle-Flambeau Flowage (including Trude Lake)	Open All Year	10 in total	10" for Crappie
		No size limit for bluegill, perch, pumpkinseed	
ROCK BASS			
	Open All Year	None	None
BULLHEADS AND ROUGH FISH			
	Open All Year	None	None
LAKE STURGEON			
	No Open Season	0	

* This is an abbreviated summary of seasons ,size and bag limits for the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage. For complete fishing regulations including regulations on other lakes please refer to the official Fishing Regulations Booklet. **Motor trolling is NOT allowed on the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake.**

** No person may be in possession of, or have under their control, more than the daily bag limit for the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage while fishing on the Flowage.

*** **Daily bag limits are subject to change based on Chippewa Indian spearing harvest. Current bag limits are posted at the boat landings.**

CHIPPEWA INDIAN HARVEST

A 1983 federal court decision reaffirmed the rights of Chippewa Indians to hunt, fish and gather wild foods within the ceded territory of northern Wisconsin. The Flowage has supported a walleye spear fishing harvest since 1984. Safe harvest levels are determined annually so that the combined harvest of anglers and spear fishers does not endanger the future of the walleye population.

INFORMATION

For more information about the fishery and fishing regulations on the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage please contact:

**Mercer Ranger Station
Department of Natural Resources
5291N Statehouse Circle
Mercer, WI 54547
(715)-476-7847**

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/turtleflambeau/>

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The Fishery of the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage

Featuring:

What Do Fish Eat And Why?

Walleye & Bass Diet Study Results



➤ **Turtle-Flambeau Flowage & Trude Lake Fishing Regulations 2013**

The Fishery of the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage

The Turtle-Flambeau Flowage offers anglers some of the best quality fishing opportunities found in northern Wisconsin. Walleye are king in the Flowage, and persistent anglers can be rewarded with days that mimic a trip to a remote, Canadian lake. Aggressive, quality-size smallmouth bass provide anglers with exciting, rod-bending action. Black crappie, yellow perch, and bluegill, although not numerous (due to high numbers of predatory fish), are typically significantly larger than those anglers are accustomed to catching on other waters. Trophy-size muskellunge also lurk in the Flowage's dark-stained water.

In addition to the fishing, the TFF is also known as a "scenic waters area," which identifies the wild character (e.g. undeveloped shorelines and abundance of wildlife) it has to offer. Therefore, the value of the flowage not only lies with its exceptional year-round fishery, but also with its natural beauty, which keeps anglers and outdoor enthusiasts coming back year after year. So, whether you enjoy the sport of pursuing Wisconsin's most desirable gamefish species, or you simply take pleasure in the beauty of the outdoors, the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage is a destination that you will not be disappointed in!

Feature: What Do Fish Eat And Why?

Fish, like most organisms (including ourselves), are opportunistic feeders; meaning they'll take advantage of a feeding opportunity under the right circumstances. However, each individual fish species have developed specialized characteristics that dictate how and what they eat. All fish species have unique habitat requirements, such as a specific water temperature range and physical habitat characteristics that meet their physiological and biological needs (examples: trout need cold, oxygen-rich water to survive; pike require aquatic vegetation for their eggs to adhere to for successful reproduction). These requirements have led to species adaptations (behavioral and/or bodily) that allow a particular species to develop relationships with other organisms. Species adaptations lead to development of behavioral preferences that influence how fish forage, for example. Understanding behavioral preferences (e.g. habitats fish utilize and the prey they consume) will help anglers in pursuit of their favorite, rod-bending fish species!

What Do Walleye and Smallmouth Bass Eat in the Flowage?

In 2012, the Mercer DNR Fisheries Management Team (in cooperation with volunteers) evaluated dietary habits

between walleye and smallmouth bass within the Flowage. Stomach contents from 133 walleye and 113 smallmouth bass were collected between June and October. For walleye, results of this study showed that fish (majority of which were young-of-the-year yellow perch) comprised the overwhelming majority of prey found in stomach contents (Table 1). Other dietary studies of walleye have also documented a strong association (predator-prey relationship) between walleye and yellow perch. These two species overlap considerably in both their behavioral and habitat preferences which likely explains the relationship that has evolved.

Table 1. Percent volume of prey (Fish, Crayfish, Other) found in walleye diets within the Flowage, 2012.

Month	% Fish	% Crayfish	% Other
June*	82	15	4
July	93	5	2
August*	82	11	8
September	97	2	1
October	99	0	1
Totals	92	6	2

*Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding of individual values.

For smallmouth bass, results showed that crayfish made up the vast majority of prey found in stomach contents (Table 2). These results also align with other studies examining dietary habits of smallmouth bass; when crayfish are available, smallmouth bass seem to exhibit a

preference for preying upon them. In general, crayfish are most commonly found in rocky and wooded habitats; similar habitat features that smallmouth bass typically select for.

Table 2. Percent volume of prey (Fish, Crayfish, Other) found in smallmouth bass diets within the Flowage, 2012.

Month	% Fish	% Crayfish	% Other
June*	5	86	10
July	37	63	0
August*	9	90	2
September	2	97	1
October	8	91	1
Totals	11	84	5

* Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding of individual values.

An additional objective of the study was to look for evidence of smallmouth bass predation on walleye. Undoubtedly, a smallmouth bass may occasionally eat a young walleye. However, the only young walleye that was found in this study came from the stomach of an adult walleye. Walleye are known to be cannibalistic and are actually suspected to limit their own recruitment in high-density situations. A look at the "% Fish" category in the tables above exemplifies why walleye predation, and not smallmouth bass predation, likely has a greater impact on walleye recruitment in the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage (walleye eat much greater proportions of fish than smallmouth bass do).