WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
CREEL SURVEY REPORT

METONGA LAKE

FOREST COUNTY

2013-14

Treaty Fisheries Publication

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY TABLES

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INTRODUCTION

Fish populations can fluctuate due to natural forces (weather, predation, competition), management actions (stocking, regulations, habitat improvement), inappropriate development (habitat degradation), and harvest impacts. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources fisheries crews regularly conduct fishery surveys on area lakes and reservoirs to gather the information needed to monitor changes, identify concerns, evaluate past management actions, and to prescribe good fishery management strategies. Netting and electrofishing surveys are used to gather data on the status of fish populations and communities (species composition, population size, reproductive success, size/age distribution, and growth rates). But the other key component of the fishery that we often need to measure is the harvest.

On many lakes in the Ceded Territory of northern Wisconsin, harvest of fish is divided between sport anglers and the six Chippewa tribes who harvest fish under rights granted by federal treaties. The tribes harvest fish mostly using a highly efficient method, spearing, during a relatively short time period in the spring. Every fish in the spear harvest is counted – a complete "census" of the harvest.

We also measure the sport harvest to assess its impact on the fishery. But because it would be highly impractical and very costly to conduct a complete census of every angler who fishes on a lake, we conduct creel surveys.

A creel survey is an assessment tool used to sample the fishing activities of anglers on a body of water and make projections of harvest and other fishery parameters. Creel survey clerks work on randomly-selected days and shifts, forty hours per week during the open season for gamefish from the first Saturday in May through the first Sunday in March, except during the month of November when fishing effort is low and ice conditions are often unsafe. The survey is run during daylight hours, and shift times change from month to month as day length changes.

Creel survey clerks travel their lakes using a boat or snowmobile to count numbers of anglers on a lake at predetermined times, and to interview anglers who have completed their fishing trip to collect data on what species they fished for, catch, harvest, lengths of fish harvested, marks (finclips or tags), and hours of fishing effort. Collecting completed-trip data provides the most accurate assessment of angling activities, and it avoids the need to disturb anglers while they are fishing.

A computer program is used to make projections of total catch and harvest of each species, catch and harvest rates, and total fishing effort, by month and for the year in total. Keep in mind that these are only projections based on the best information available, and not a complete accounting of effort, catch, and harvest. Accurate projections require that we sample a sufficient and representative portion of the angling activity on a lake. The accuracy of creel survey results, therefore, depends on good cooperation and truthful responses by anglers when a creel clerk interviews them.

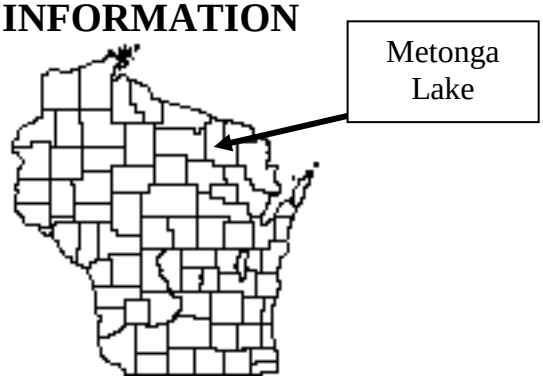
You may have encountered a DNR creel survey clerk on a recent fishing trip. We appreciate your cooperation during an interview. The survey only takes a moment of your time and it gives the Department valuable information needed for management of the fishery.

This report provides projections of:

1. Overall fishing effort (pressure)
2. Fishing effort directed at each species
3. Catch and harvest rates
4. Numbers of fish caught and harvested

Also included are a physical description of Metonga Lake; discussion of results of the survey; and detailed summaries, by species of fishing effort, catch and harvest.

GENERAL LAKE INFORMATION



Location

Metonga Lake is located in Forest County near the Town of Crandon.

Physical Characteristics

Metonga Lake is a 1991 acre drainage lake with a maximum depth of 79 feet. Littoral substrate is comprised primarily of sand, with lesser amounts of gravel, muck, and rock. Metonga Lake is a medium hard water lake having slightly alkaline, clear water of very high transparency.

Seasons Surveyed

The period referred to in this report as the 2013-14 fishing season ran from May 4, 2013 through March 2, 2014. The open water creel survey ran from May 4 through October 31, 2013 and the ice fishing creel survey ran from December 1, 2013 through March 2, 2014.

Weather

Ice-out on Metonga Lake was around May 8, 2013. Fishable-ice formed on Metonga Lake in early December.

Fishing Regulations

The following seasons, daily bag limits, and length limits were in place on Metonga Lake during the 2013-14 fishing season:

Species	Season	Bag Limit	Min. Size
Largemouth Bass&	5/4-6/14	Catch&Release	
Smallmouth Bass	6/15-3/2	5	14"
Musky	5/25-11/30	1	40"
Northern Pike	5/4-3/2	5	none
Walleye	5/4-3/2	3	18"
Panfish	year round	25	none
Rock Bass	year round	none	none

*The statewide bag limit was 5 walleye, but due to tribal declarations it was reduced on Metonga Lake.

SPECIES CATCH AND HARVEST INFORMATION

Angling effort, catch, and harvest information is summarized for each species in Table 2 and Figures 1-10. Table 2 also includes a comparison of these statistics with the previous creel survey. Information presented about species whose fishing season extends beyond March 2 should be considered minimum estimates. Each species page has up to five graphs depicting the following:

1. **PROJECTED FISHING EFFORT**
   Total calculated number of hours during each month that anglers spent fishing for a species.

2. **PROJECTED SPECIFIC CATCH AND HARVEST RATES**
   Calculated number of hours it takes an angler to catch or harvest a fish of the indicated species. Only information from anglers who were specifically targeting that species is reported.

3. PROJECTED CATCH AND HARVEST

Calculated number of fish of the indicated species caught or harvested by all anglers, regardless of targeted species.

4. LENGTH DISTRIBUTION OF HARVESTED FISH

All fish of a species that were measured by the clerk during the entire creel survey season.

5. LARGEST AND AVERAGE LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH

Monthly largest and average length of harvested fish of a species. Only those fish measured by the creel survey clerk are reported.

CREEL SURVEY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Survey Logistics

The creel survey went well. We encountered no unusual problems conducting the survey or calculating the projections contained in the report. This was the eighth time the department conducted a creel survey on Metonga Lake. The last creel survey took place in 2010-11.

General Angler Information

Anglers spent 29,913 hours or 15.0 hours per acre fishing Metonga Lake during the 2013 season (Table 1). That was less than the Forest County average of 29.0 hours per acre. December was the most heavily fished month (2.6 hours per acre). Fishing effort was lightest in February (0.5 hours per acre) for those months when the entire month was creeled.

RESULTS BY SPECIES

Walleye (Table 2, Figure 1)

Walleyes received the second most fishing effort during the 2013-14 season. Anglers spent 5,715 hours targeting walleyes. The greatest fishing effort for walleyes was in July (1,668 hours). February had the least amount of walleye fishing effort (35hours).

Total catch of walleyes was 3,228 fish with a harvest of 231 fish. Highest catch (909 fish) occurred in December and harvest (85 fish) occurred in July. Anglers fished 4.4 hours to catch and 26.7 hours to harvest a walleye during 2013-14.

The mean length of harvested walleyes was 19.5 inches and the largest walleye measured was a 27.2 inch fish.

Northern Pike (Table 2, Figure 2)

Fishing effort directed at northern pike was 249 hours during the 2013-14 season. Northern pike fishing effort was greatest in January (121 hours).

Total catch of northern pike was 126 fish with a harvest of 37 fish.

The mean length of harvested northern pike was 26.1 inches and the largest northern pike measured was a 29.8 inch fish.

Smallmouth Bass (Table 2, Figure 3)

Fishing effort targeted at smallmouth bass was 3,934 hours during the 2013-14 season. Smallmouth bass fishing effort was greatest in June (1,123 hours).

Total catch of smallmouth bass was 3,083 fish with 83 harvested. Highest catch (807 fish) occurred in September. Anglers fished 2.1 hours to catch a smallmouth bass during 2013-14.

Largemouth Bass (Table 2, Figure 4)

Fishing effort directed at largemouth bass was 134 hours during the 2013-14 season. Largemouth bass fishing effort was greatest in June (105 hours).

Total catch of largemouth bass was 31 fish with no documented fish harvested. Highest catch (8 fish) occurred in September. Anglers fished 19.0 hours to catch a largemouth bass during 2013-14

Panfish (Table 2, Figures 5-9)

Yellow perch were the most sought after fish species during the survey. Fishing effort directed at yellow perch was 22,344 hours.

Total catch of yellow perch was 45,302 fish with 14,306 harvested. Highest catch (8,215 fish) and harvest (2,786 fish) occurred in September. The mean length of yellow perch harvested was 9.5 inches.

Bluegills were the second most sought after panfish species during the survey. Fishing effort directed at bluegills was 131 hours.

Total catch of bluegills was 338 fish with 221 harvested. The mean length of bluegills harvested was 6.9 inches.

Rock bass were the third most sought after panfish species during the survey. Fishing effort directed at rock bass was 84 hours.

Total catch of rock bass was 813 fish with a harvested of 129 fish. The mean length of rock bass harvested was 7.9 inches.

Pumpkinseeds and Black Bullheads were also caught during the 2013-14 season.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Completion of this survey was possible because of the efforts of Fisheries Management and Treaty Fisheries Unit including Johnathan Pyatskowit, Jeff Blonski, Joelle Underwood, Jason Halverson, Greg Matzke, Aaron Nelson, Brad Shucha, and Mike Preul and staff at the Mole Lake Tribal Fisheries Department. David Gunderson and Bob Consolo were the creel clerks on Metonga Lake during the survey period.

We also thank all the anglers who took the time to offer information about their fishing trip to the survey clerk. Without their cooperation the survey would not have been possible.

The department thanks the cooperators, Steve and Mary Naughton, Dewey and Elaine Karcz, Cliff Flanery, and the Konen Family, who generously allowed the department to keep a boat and snowmobile on their property during this survey.

This creel report was reviewed by, Greg Matzke Wisconsin DNR Florence, WI and Dennis Scholl Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Woodruff, WI.

Additional copies of this report and those covering other local lakes can be obtained from the Woodruff DNR or online at:

http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Fishing/north/trtycrlsrvys.html

Table 1. Sportfishing effort summary, Metonga Lake, 2013-14 season.

Month	Total Angler Hours	Total Angler Hours/Acre	Forest County Average Hours/Acre	Ceded Territory Average Hours/Acre
May	1918	1.0	3.9	5.1
June	2728	1.4	4.7	6.4
July	4648	2.3	5.6	6.9
August	4782	2.4	4.7	5.4
September	3566	1.8	2.4	3.3
October	1639	0.8	0.8	1.5
December	5129	2.6	1.4	1.1
January	4415	2.2	2.2	1.6
February	1024	0.5	1.8	1.5
March	63	0.0	0.2	0.2
*Summer Total	19282	9.7	23.3	28.6
*Winter Total	10631	5.3	5.7	4.4
Grand Total	29913	15.0	29.0	33.0

*"Summer" is May-October; "Winter" is December-March

Total Angler Hours is the estimated total number of hours that anglers spent fishing on Metonga Lake during each month surveyed.

Total Angler Hours/Acre is the total angler hours divided by the area of the lake in acres. This is useful if you wish to compare effort on Metonga Lake to other lakes.

County Average Hours/Acre is the average angler effort in hours per acre for county lakes that have been surveyed since 1990. This value can be useful in comparisons as well.

Ceded Territory Average Hours/Acre is the average angler effort in hours per acre for inland lakes in the ceded territory hat have been surveyed since 1990. This value can be used to compare Metonga Lake to other lakes statewide.

Table 2. Comparison of creel survey synopses, Metonga Lake, 2013-14 & 2010-11 fishing seasons.

CREEL YEAR: 2013-14

SPECIES	DIRECTED EFFORT (Hours)	PERCENT OF TOTAL	TOTAL CATCH	SPECIFIC CATCH RATE (Hrs/Fish) *	TOTAL HARVEST	SPECIFIC HARVEST RATE (Hrs/Fish) **	MEAN LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH
Walleye	5715	17.48%	3228	4.4	231	26.7	19.5
Northern Pike	249	0.76%	126	9.4	37	9.4	26.1
Smallmouth Bass	3934	12.03%	3083	2.1	83	62.1	17.2
Largemouth Bass	134	0.41%	31	19.0	0		
Yellow Perch	22344	68.34%	45302	0.5	14306	1.6	9.5
Bluegill	131	0.40%	388	0.4	221	0.7	6.9
Pumpkinseed	53	0.16%	61	2.0	38	2.0	6.6
Rock Bass	84	0.26%	813	0.7	129		7.9
Black Bullhead	53	0.16%	221	4.0	53	4.0	9.3

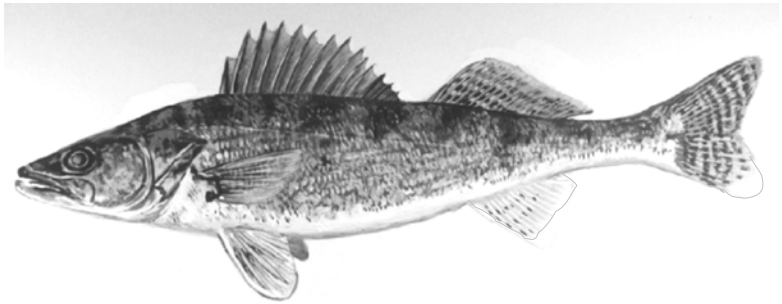
* A blank cell in this column indicates that no fish of a given species were caught by anglers who specifically targeted that species.

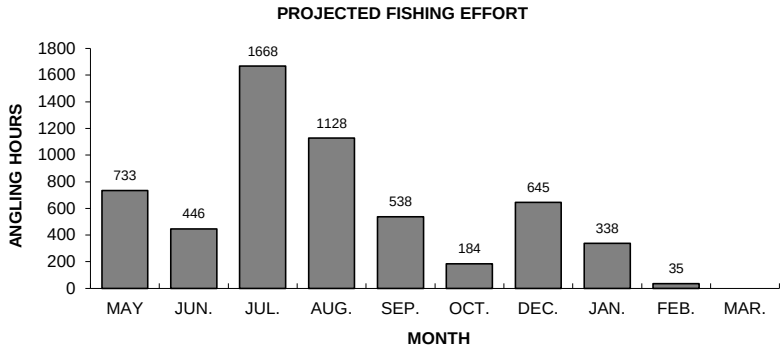
** A blank cell in this column indicates that no fish of a given species were harvested by anglers who specifically targeted that species.

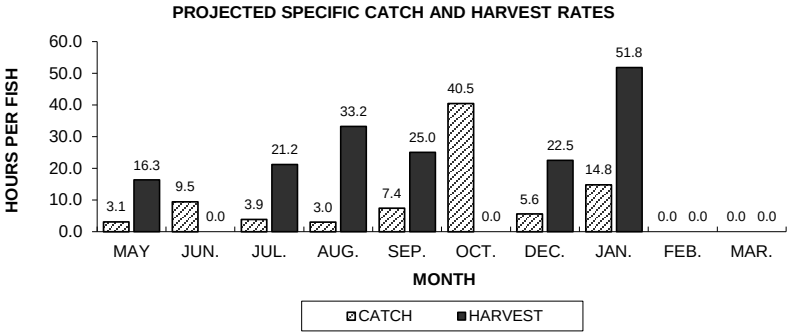
CREEL YEAR: 2010-11

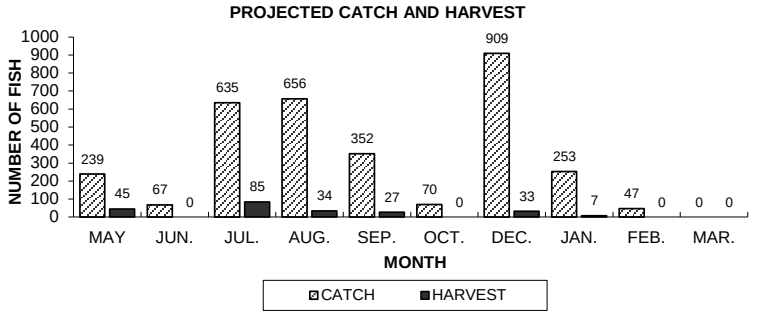
SPECIES	DIRECTED EFFORT (Hours)	PERCENT OF TOTAL	TOTAL CATCH	SPECIFIC CATCH RATE (Hrs/Fish) *	TOTAL HARVEST	SPECIFIC HARVEST RATE (Hrs/Fish) **	MEAN LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH
Walleye	10172	13.28%	3894	4.4	647	16.6	18.4
Northern Pike	1305	1.70%	444	8.5	142	15.0	25.7
Smallmouth Bass	5197	6.79%	10465	1.4	255	28.9	16.9
Largemouth Bass	706	0.92%	91	10.9	0		
Yellow Perch	58445	76.31%	128145	0.5	76522	0.8	8.6
Bluegill	335	0.44%	229	2.3	8		7.7
Pumpkinseed	60	0.08%	127		76		7.0
Rock Bass	260	0.34%	2524	0.5	219	1.5	8.0
Black Crappie	29	0.04%	0		0		
Black Bullhead	78	0.10%	805	1.1	173	1.4	12.2

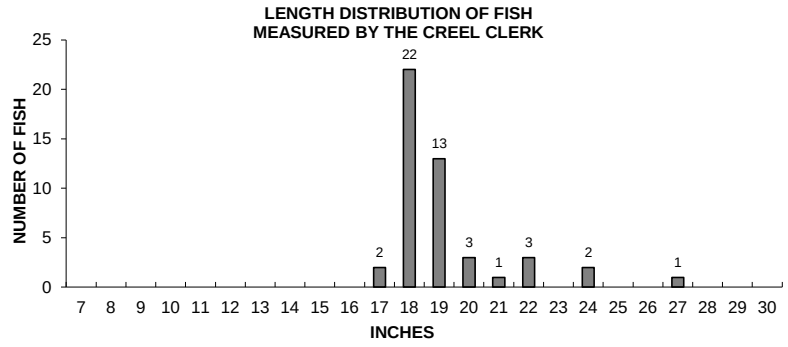
WALLEYE











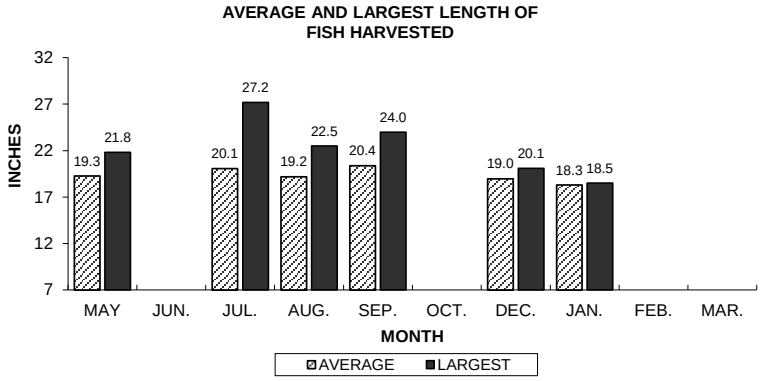
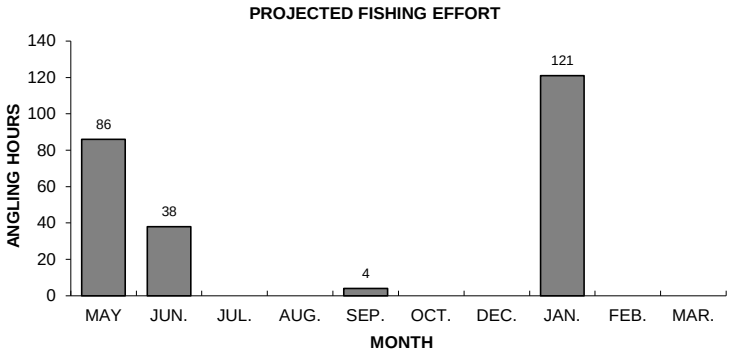
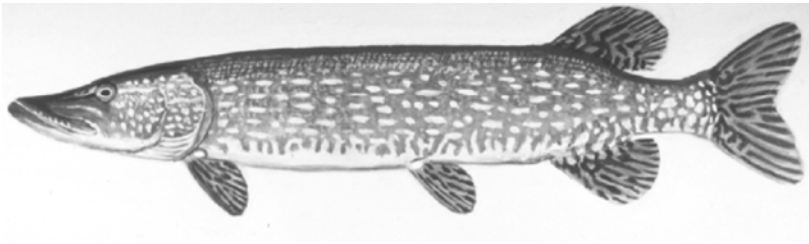
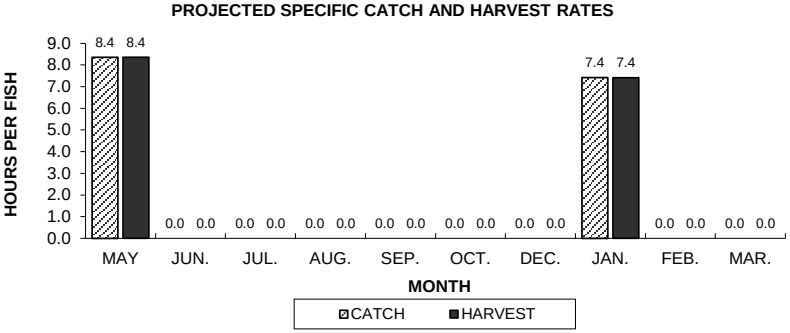


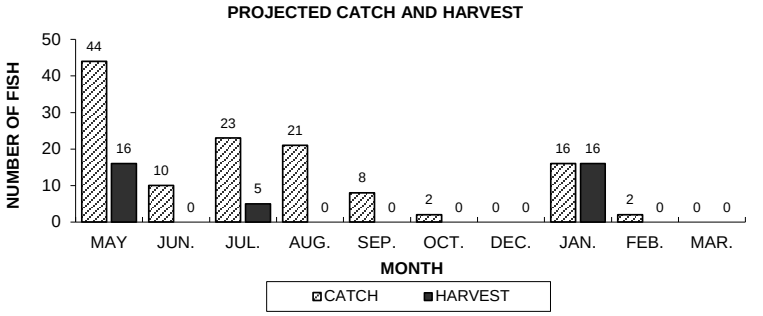
Figure 1. Walleye sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2013-14.

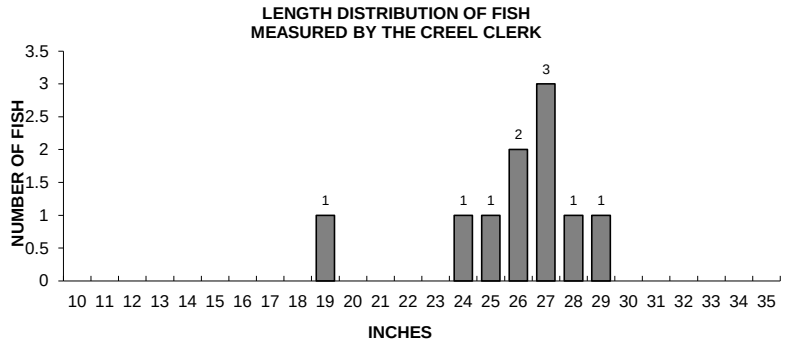


NORTHERN PIKE









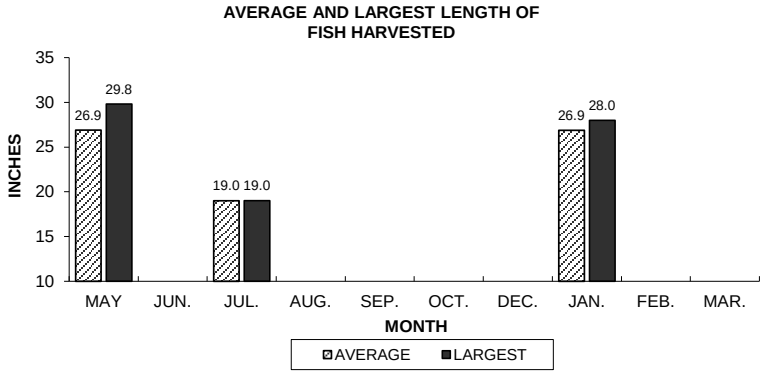
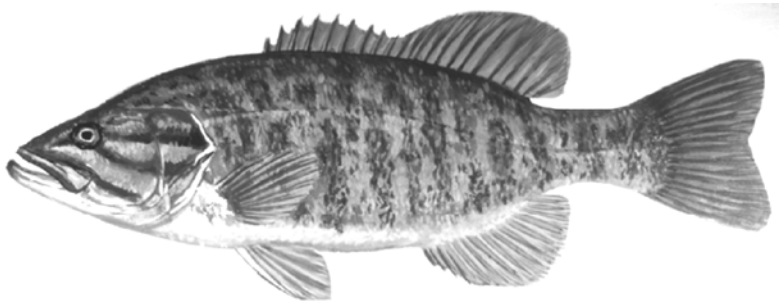
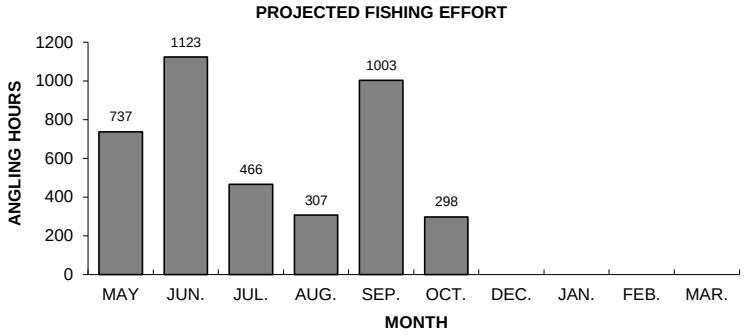
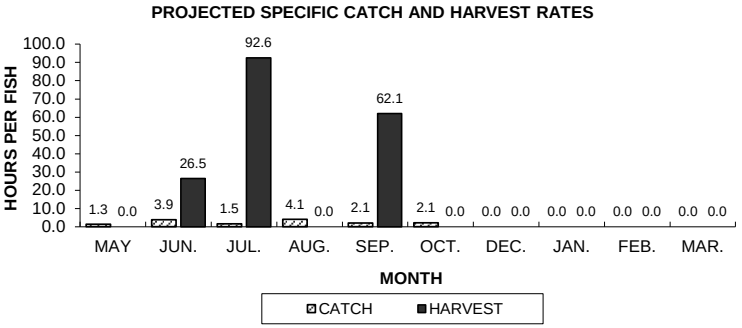


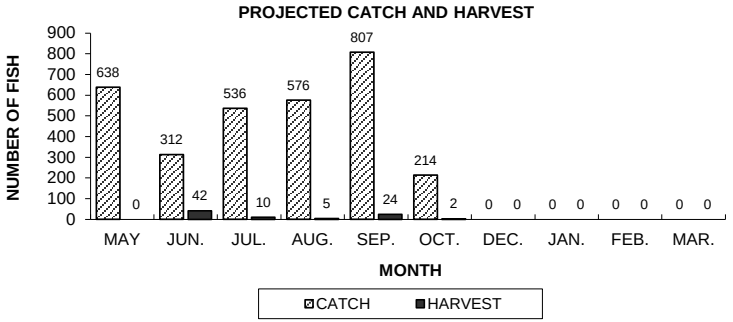
Figure 2. Northern pike sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2013-14.

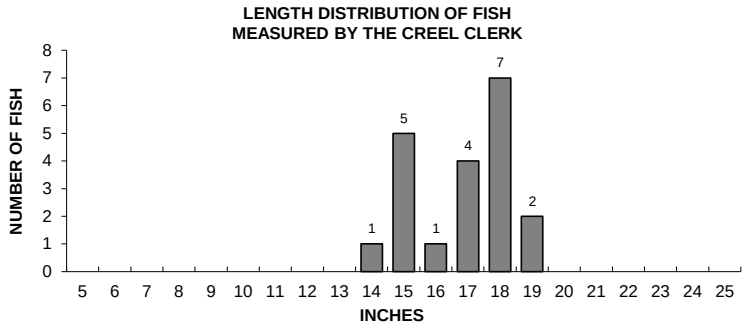
SMALLMOUTH BASS











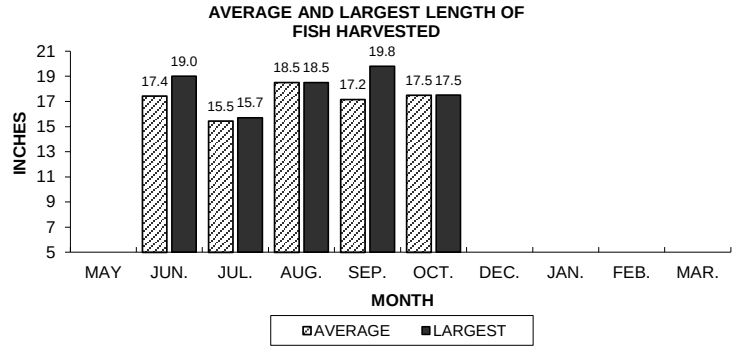
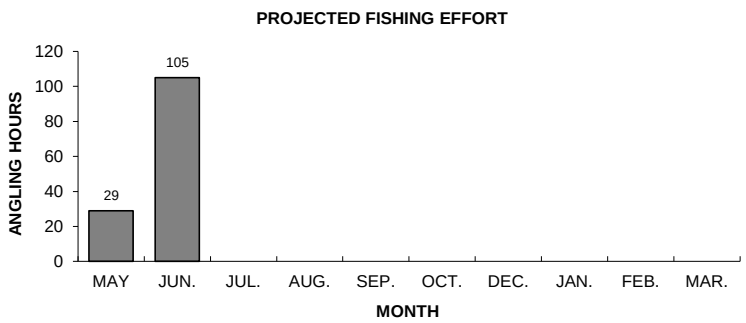
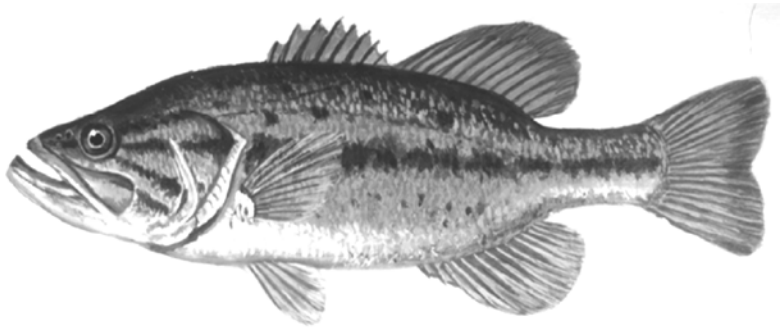
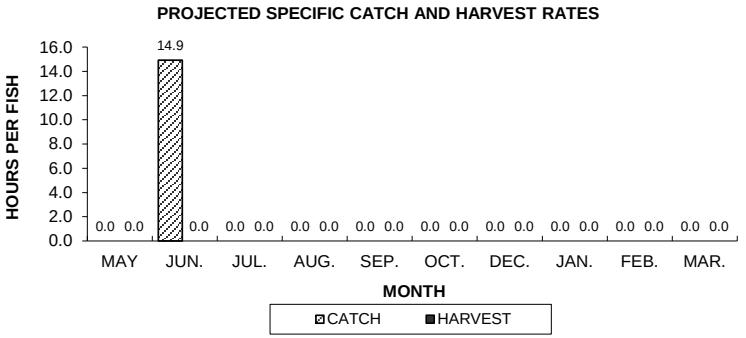


Figure 3. Smallmouth bass sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2013-14.

LARGEMOUTH BASS







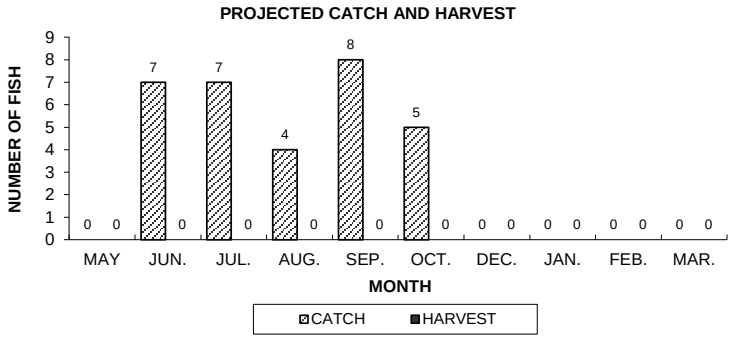
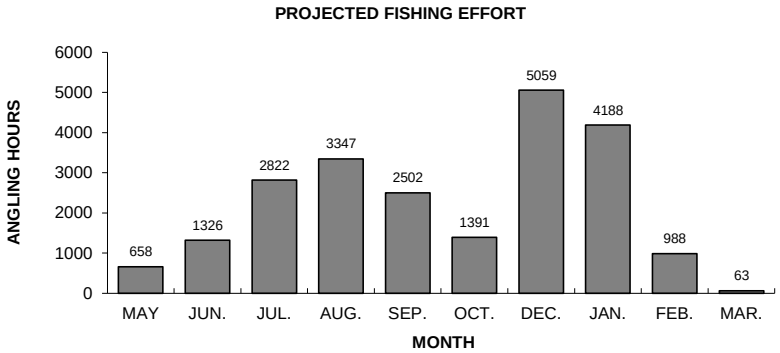
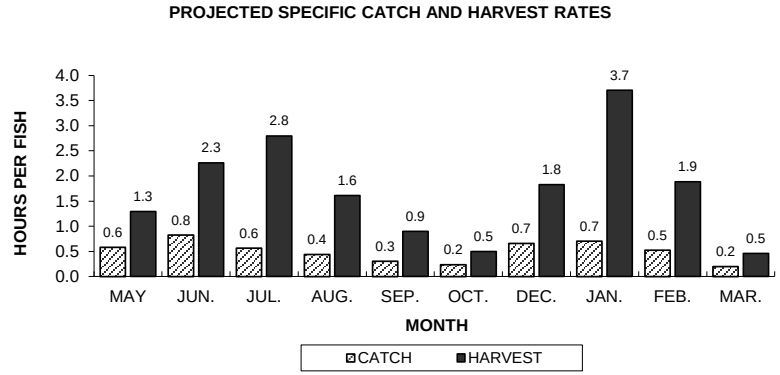
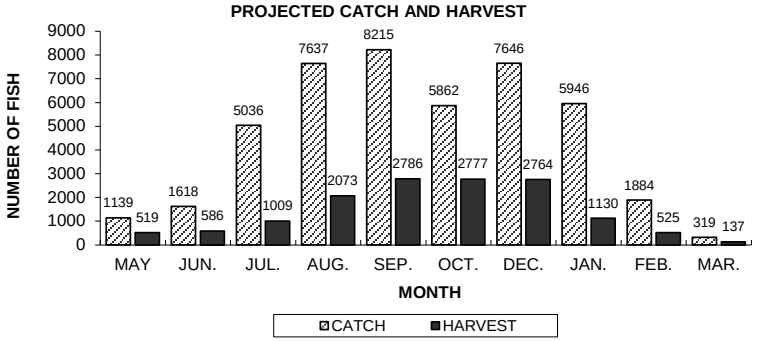


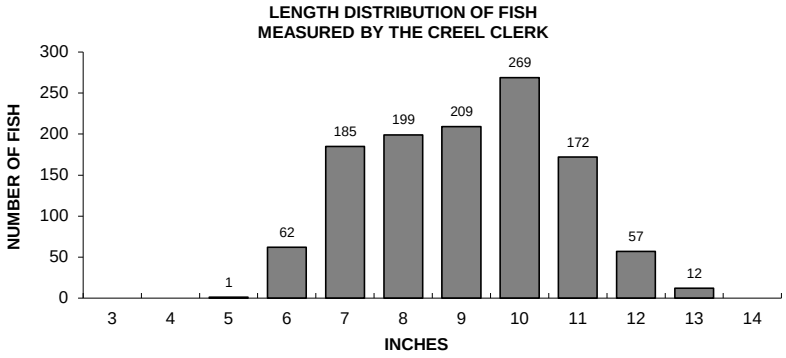
Figure 4. Largemouth bass sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2013-14.

YELLOW PERCH









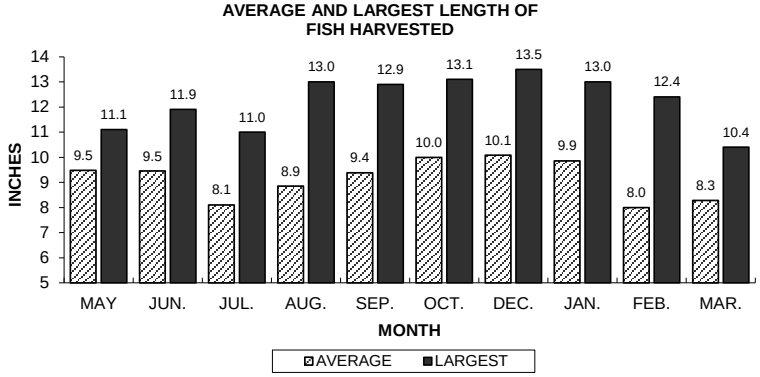
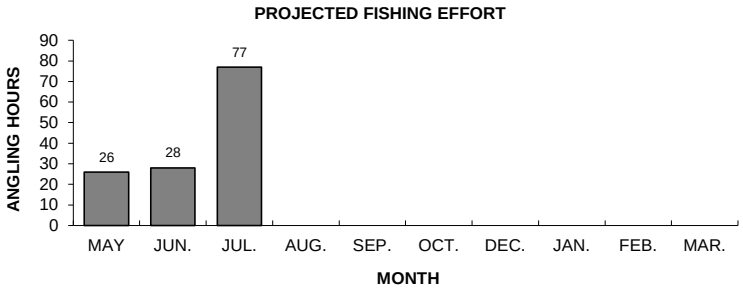
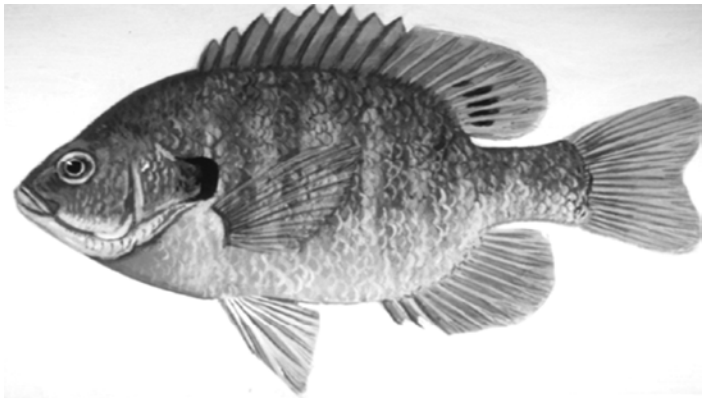
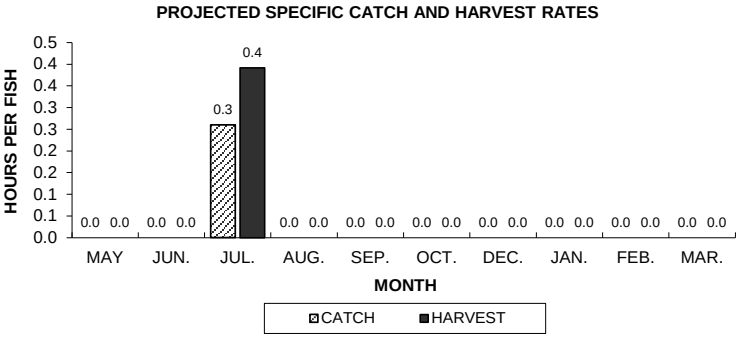


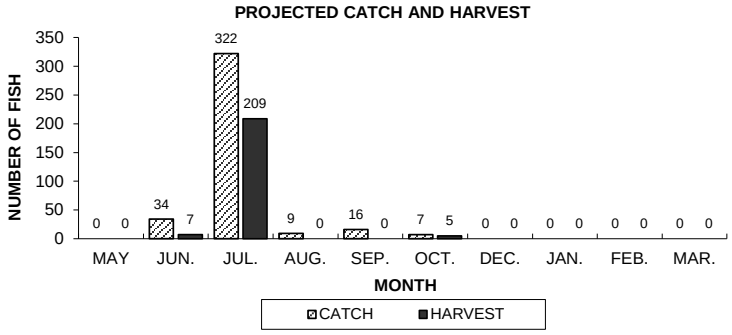
Figure 5. Yellow perch sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2013-14.

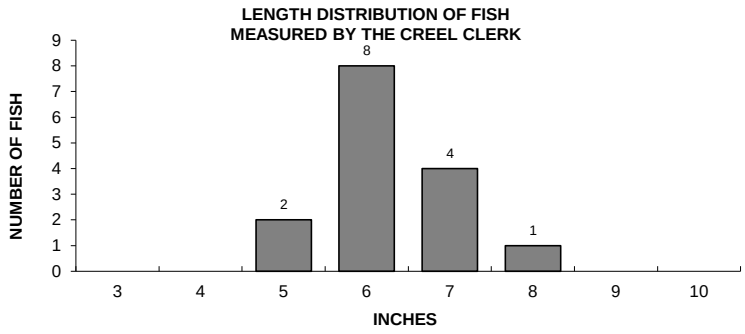
BLUEGILL











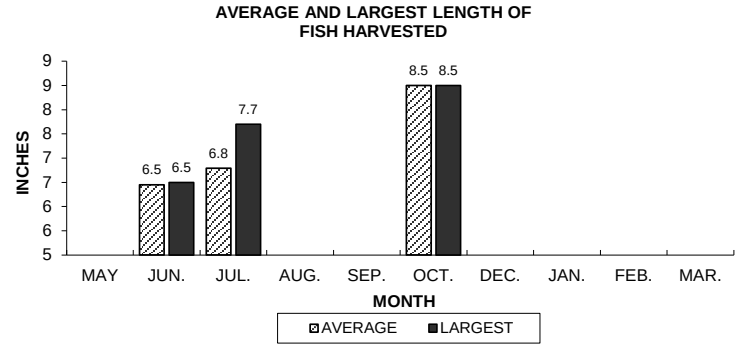
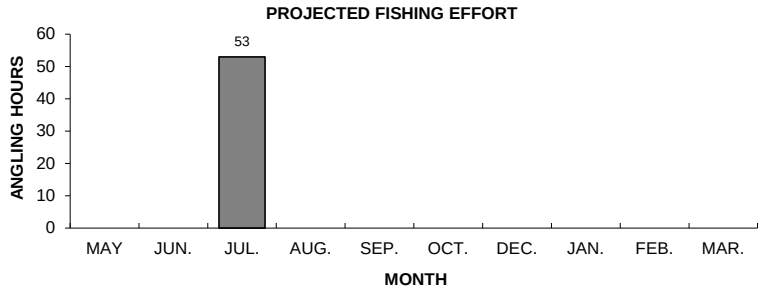
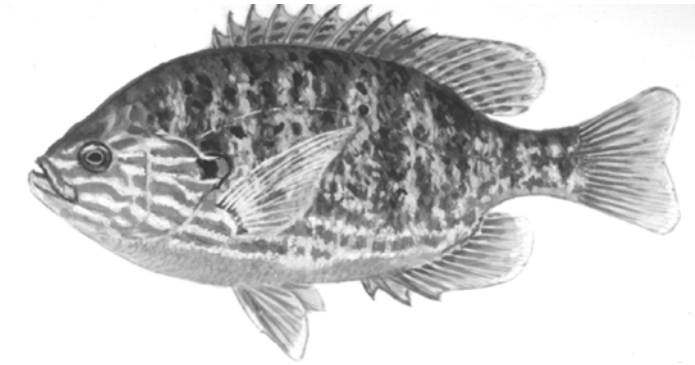
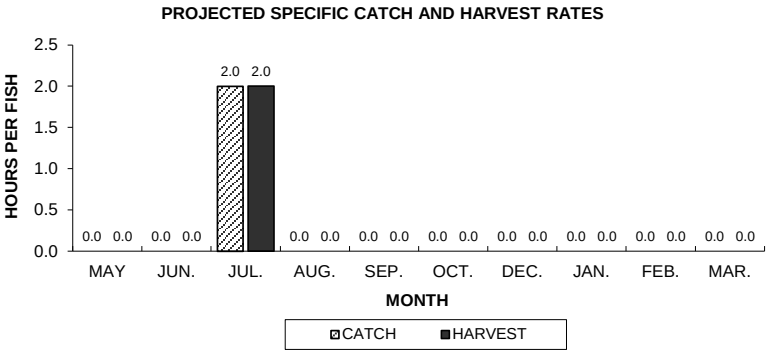


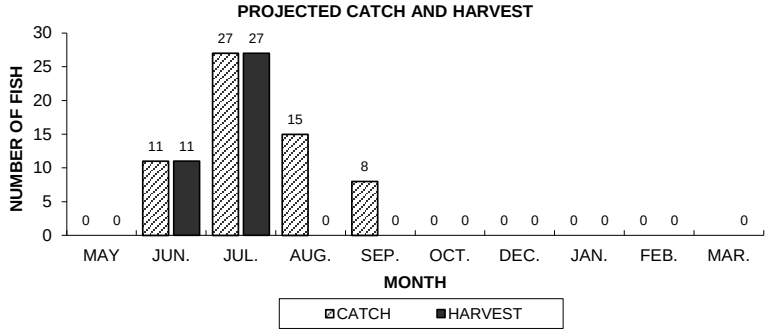
Figure 8. Bluegill sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2013-14.

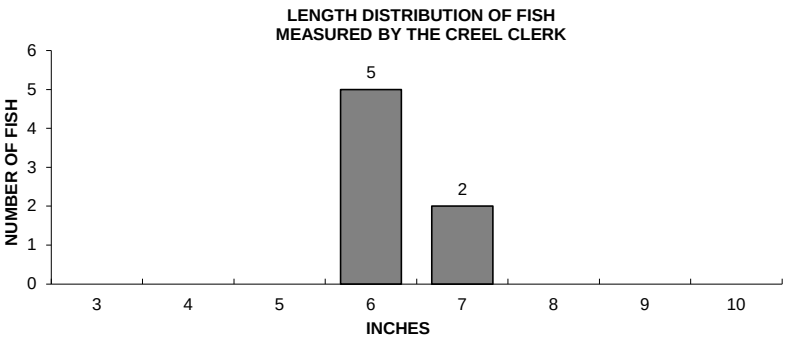
PUMPKINSEED











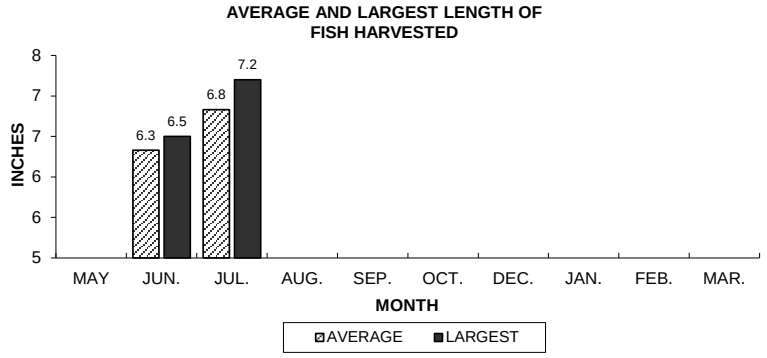
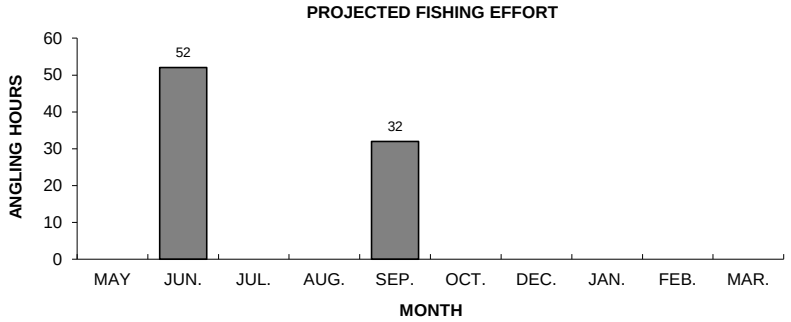
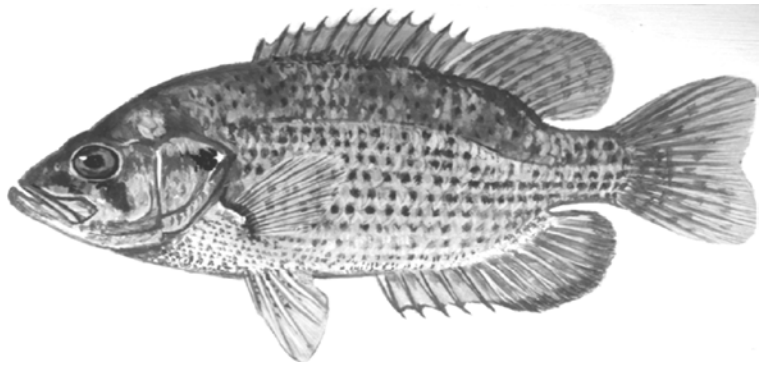
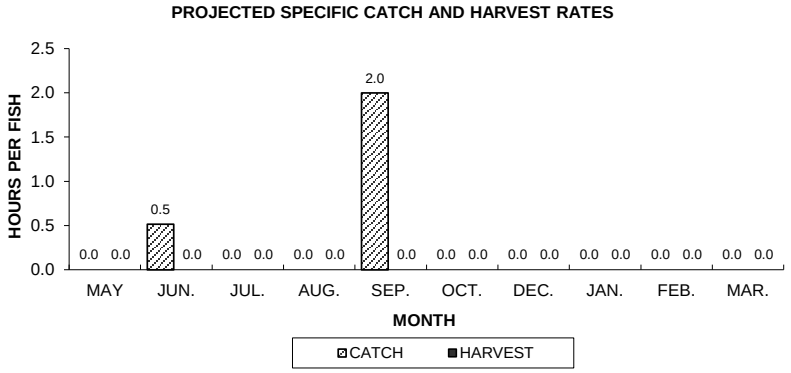


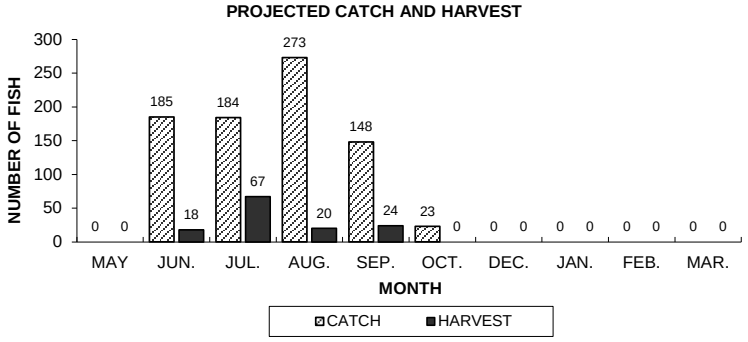
Figure 7. Pumpkinseed sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2013-14.

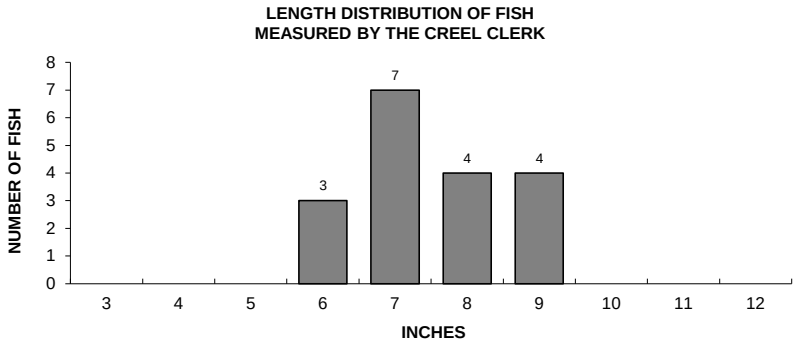
ROCK BASS











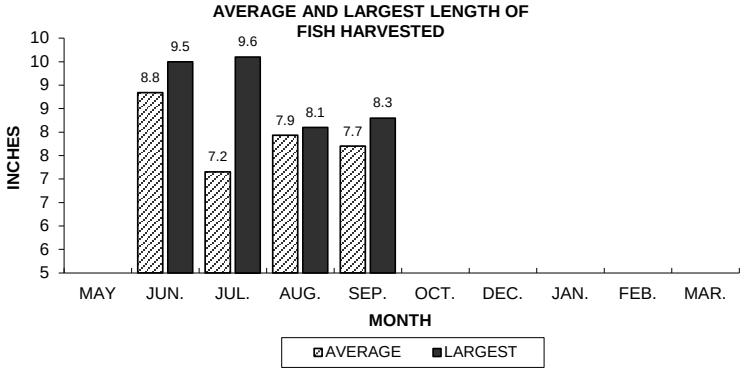
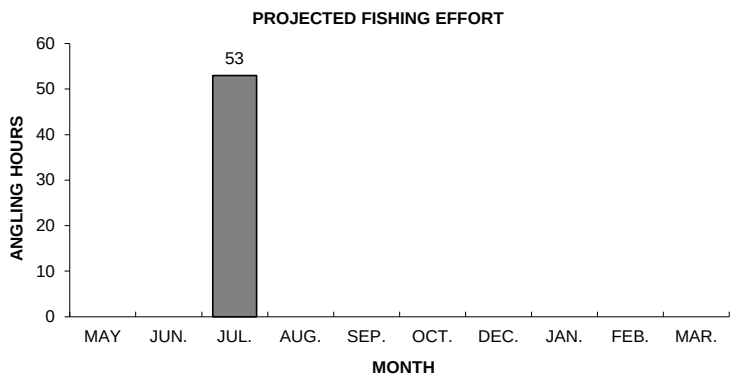
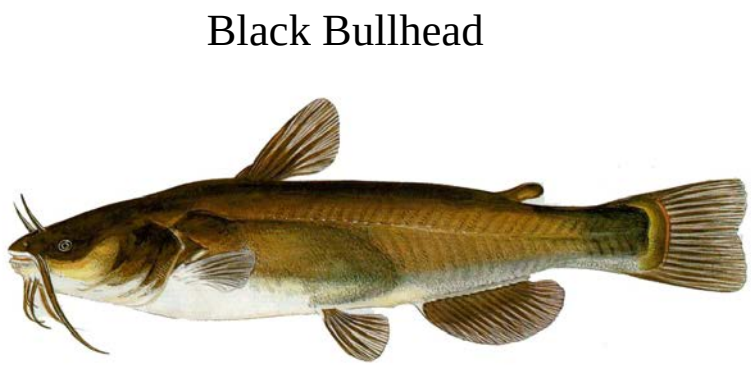
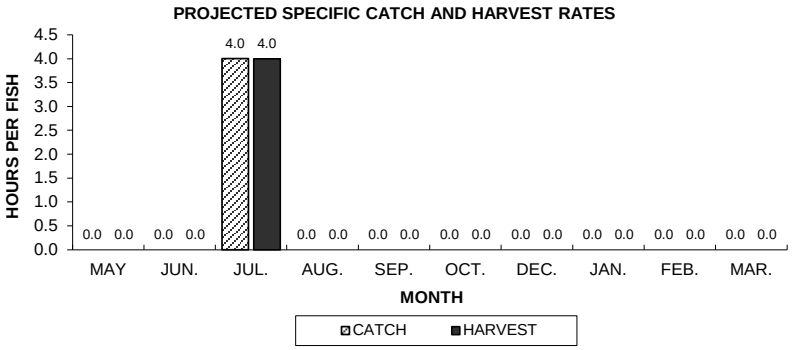
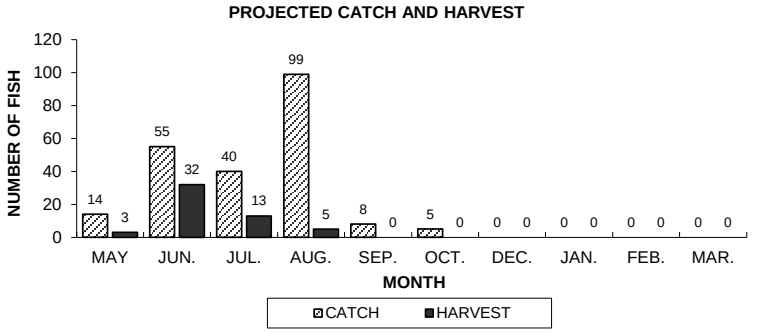


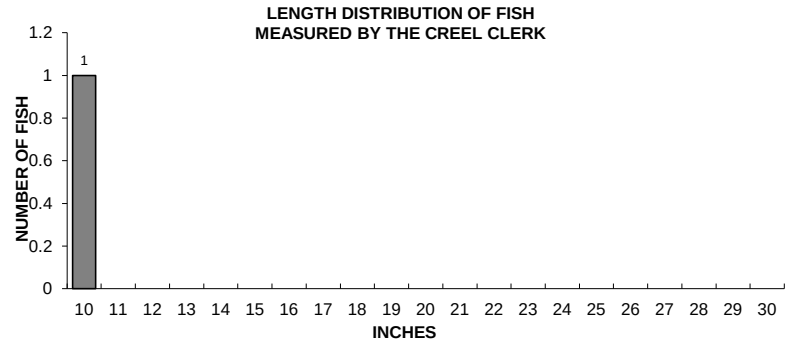
Figure 8. Bluegill sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2013-14.











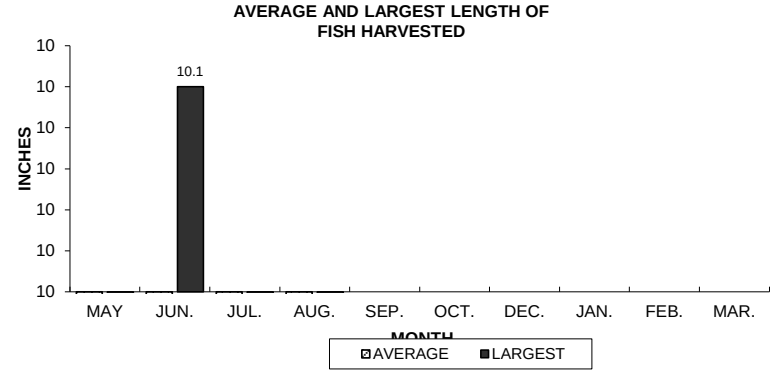


Figure 9. Black Bullhead sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2013-14.