



Glenwood Area Fisheries Newsletter

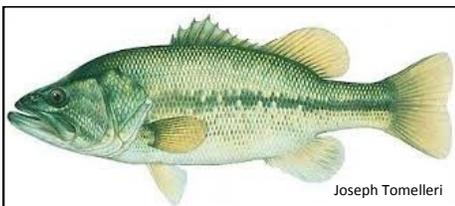
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Winter 2015

Summaries for Area lakes— species focused

Our mission is to manage the area’s aquatic resources and associated fish communities for their values and benefits to all people. Since anglers fund about 98-percent of our operations, they are an important part of our constituency. With this in mind, a brief summary of current notes and graphical summaries are presented for a few primary species of interest. Abundance data are described as number of fish collected per hour (electrofishing) or number per net. The size structure of fish populations is described as the percentage of fish captured that were greater than or equal to a certain size deemed desirable by anglers.

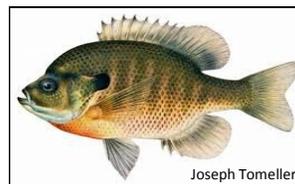
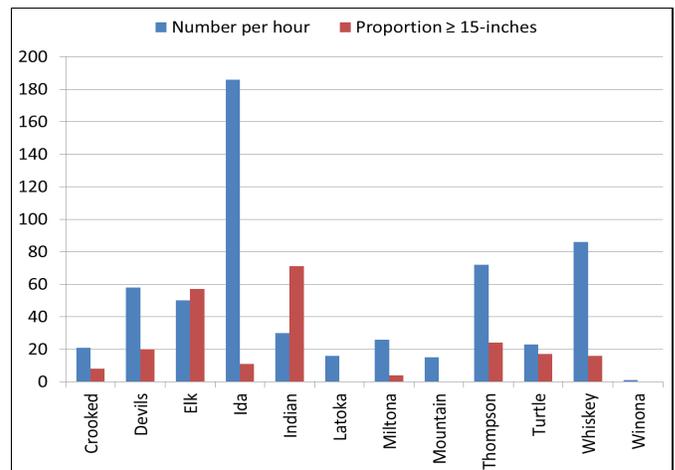
When analyzing fisheries data, it’s important to be cautious and not draw conclusions from a single sample. Just how the weather is different than climate, so too are data used to describe fisheries. Long-term data sets are best and usually provide the best information. The data provided in this newsletter are from individual surveys completed during the 2015 field season and will be formally published on the DNR website via Lakefinder in June 2016. Please send questions or comments to Al Schmidt: alan.schmidt@state.mn.us



Largemouth Bass

Electrofishing surveys were completed in the spring of 2015. Lakes that are scheduled to receive a standard survey (netting) during the summer also receive an electrofishing survey targeting bass in the spring. Typically, lakes with high catch rates (number per hour) have poor size structure—lots of small bass, very few large ones. We generally consider catch rates consist-

ently above 70 to be high and catch rates consistently below 30 to be low. Obviously a lake with consistently high bass abundance *and* good size structure would be one likely to provide the best fishing.



Bluegill

Abundant populations of small to average-sized

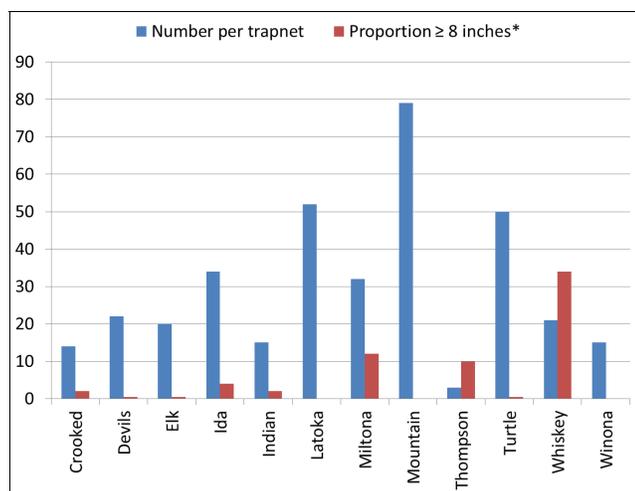
Sunfish are common in west central Minnesota to be sure, however, there are certain area lakes where we tend to see better-than-average sized Bluegill on a fairly consistent basis; the habitat in those lakes might surprise you.

When talking Bluegill size structure, abundance seems to be the overriding factor— in other words, high abundance almost always means small average size. So what determines abundance? Usually it’s the amount of quality spawning habitat that a lake has. Small to medium-sized, clear-water lakes with abundant vegetation and firm bottom substrates usually produce bumper crops of Bluegill year in and year out. Since predators generally do not prefer sunfish as prey, you

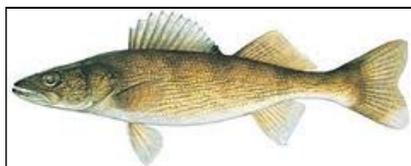
Bluegill, cont'd from page 1

can guess what happens to their abundance. On the other hand, lakes that have poor water clarity with less than ideal spawning habitat, often produce Bluegill populations with a higher quality size structure.

Summary of Bluegill trapnetting 2015:



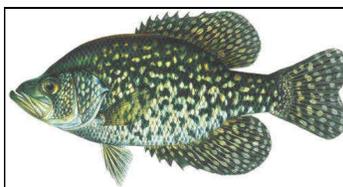
*Includes fish from gillnets and trapnets



Walleye

Gillnetting assessments in 2015 produced very good numbers of Walleye in Lakes Miltona, Ida, Turtle and Thompson (Grant Co.). Devils Lake had the most impressive size structure, with 50% of the sample measuring 15-inches or better.

When interpreting and comparing Walleye catch rates among different lakes, remember that the Alexandria/Glenwood Area has many different types of water bodies. Lakes in the western portion of our Area (Grant and Stevens Counties) are very fertile and can produce more walleyes per acre than a lake like Latoka or Mina. Additionally, those western lakes often have fewer bass and pike which prey and compete with Walleye. A good rule of thumb for this area is that gillnet catches exceeding 10/net are usually considered to have an above average number of Walleyes.

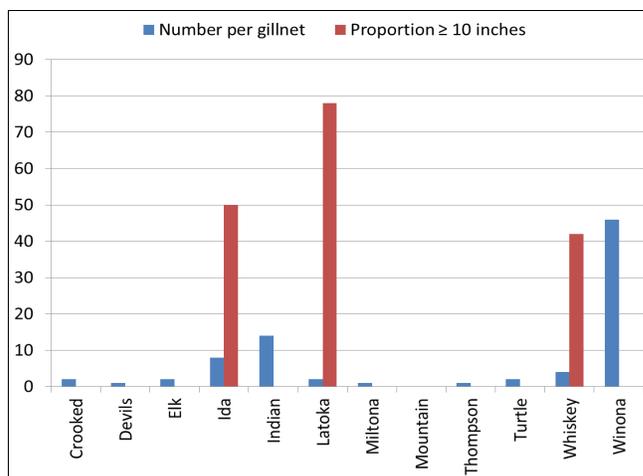


Black Crappie

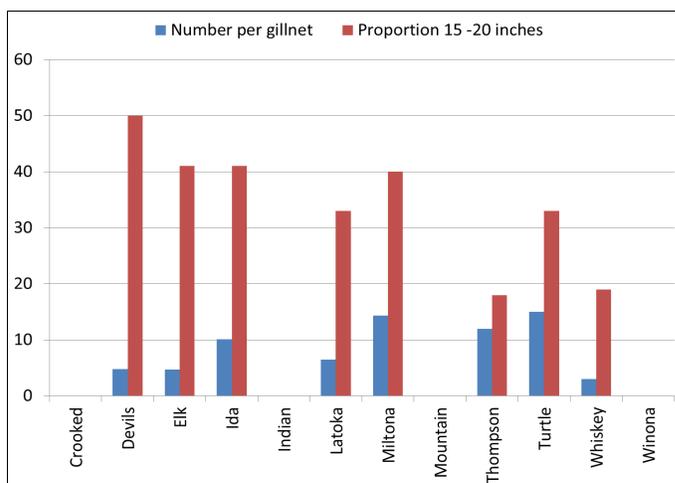
Assessment netting for this species has typically been difficult during the summer months in Minnesota. Sample sizes are usually quite small making it difficult to estimate population characteristics.

Lakes Ida and Latoka both had relatively nice-sized Crappies caught in gillnets. Lake Winona had good numbers (46/gillnet) but nearly all were less than 10-inches. Conclusions drawn from netting data must be interpreted with caution.

Summary of Black Crappie gillnetting 2015:



Summary of Walleye gillnetting 2015:

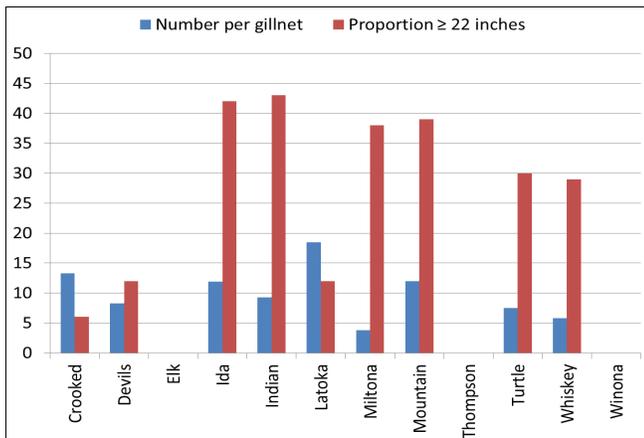




Northern pike

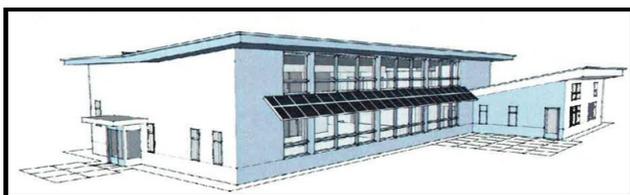
Generally speaking, survey results for northern pike are similar to what anglers see— good numbers but small average size. Minnesota DNR Fisheries is working on a statewide project aimed at improving this situation (see page 5). Despite seemingly poor fishing quality for pike in the area, there are lakes that tend to produce better sizes than others. In the graph below, pike measuring 22 inches or better are used as a descriptor to indicate a fishery that could perhaps produce quality fishing. Anglers in this region of the state are always encouraged to keep small pike as it is these fish that are often overly abundant.

Summary of northern pike gillnetting 2015:



New office construction to begin in 2016

The Glenwood Area fish and wildlife office will be housed in a new building scheduled to be completed by



the end of 2016. The location will remain the same on Lakeshore Drive as the old house was demolished

making way for the new building. The new office will provide improved space for existing fish and wildlife staff as well as staff from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and a DNR hydrologist. The historical buildings near the trout ponds, including the hatchery will continue to serve in their current capacity with some improvements. For the time being, a temporary office has been established at 10 1st Avenue SW in Glenwood, across from Minnewaska Meats.

2016 lake survey schedule

Each year, Glenwood Fisheries conducts 12-18 lake surveys on Area lakes. These surveys are the backbone of our fisheries management activities. Data are collected using gillnets, trapnets and electrofishing equipment. Fisheries surveys essentially fall into one of two categories: standard surveys (SS) are the most common and evaluate the relative abundance and size structure of the fish community and targeted surveys (TS) focus on collecting information using sampling gear that targets a particular species of interest. The most common example of a targeted survey is our young-of-year walleye electrofishing used to evaluate natural reproduction and/or survival of fry that were stocked earlier in the year. These targeted surveys are completed annually on our nine “core” walleye lakes which include: Miltona, Ida, Big Chippewa, Osakis, Reno, Minnewaska, Andrew, Mary and Pelican (Grant Co).

Aaron		SS
Andrew		SS,TS
Big Chippewa		TS
Brophy		SS
Carlos		SS
Charlotte		SS
Darling		SS
Emily		SS
Geneva		SS
Ida		TS
Johanna		SS
Gilbert		SS
Le Homme Dieu		SS
Mary		TS
Miltona		TS
Minnewaska		TS
Moses		SS
Osakis		TS
Pelican (Pope Co.)		SS
Pelican (Grant Co.)		TS
Reno		TS
South Union		SS
Victoria		SS



A reminder of area lakes with special fishing regulations

Following is a list of area lakes with special fishing regulations that are different from statewide norms:

- **Agnes and Henry** Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass: All from 12-20" must be immediately released. One over 20" allowed in possession.
- **Christina** Closed to fishing.
- **Maple** Crappie: Minimum size limit 10". Possession limit five.
- **Osakis and Little Osakis** Walleye: Minimum size limit 15".
- **Rachel and Little Rachel** Northern Pike: All 24-36" must be immediately released. One over 36" allowed in possession.

Glenwood DNR's walleye stocking 2015

Each year, Glenwood DNR stocks an enormous number of Walleyes. It's important to remember that most lakes in this area are bass/panfish lakes— meaning the habitat is best suited for sunfish and Largemouth Bass. Angler demand for more and more Walleyes however usually results in very few lakes that aren't stocked.

Abbreviations include fry (just hatched), fingerling (age zero, 4-7" long), yearling (yrl) and adult (> 1 yr old). The following lakes were stocked with Walleye in 2015:

Lake	Number of fry stocked	Pounds of fgl, yrl or adl stocked	Number of fgl, yrl or adl stocked
Aaron		467	1,164
Ann	185,000		
Barrett	422,000		
Carlos		955	3,979
Darling		561	2,588
Devils*		286	4,290
Elk (Lower)	131,000		

Lake	Number of fry stocked	Pounds of fgl, yrl or adl stocked	Number of fgl, yrl or adl stocked
Freeborn	248,000		
Geneva		295	3,207
Gilbert	190,000		
Gilchrist		418	7,074
Grove		592	4,013
Hattie	464,000		
Ida	2,707,000	1,828	9,840
Indian		140	2,240
Irene		495	1,363
Le Homme Dieu		880	6,237
Linka		142	2,802
Little Chippewa*		198	2,970
Lobster		1,505	4,541
Long (Douglas)	202,000		
Long (Douglas)*		165	2,475
Mary	2,040,000		
Miltona	2,759,000	928	11,284
Miltona*		766	15,320
Mina		316	5,218
Minnewaska	3,445,086	3,407	20,083
Moses		787	2,575
Moon*		90	1,350
Osakis	7,000,000		
Oscar		1,158	6,601
Pelican (Grant Co.)	3,042,000		
Pelican (Pope Co.)		979	9,955
Perkins	517,000		
Pomme de Terre	2,419,500		
Rachel		260	1,822
Red Rock		659	3,411
Reno	2,029,000		
Scandinavian		460	7,993
Smith		728	2,753
Signalness		83	1,328
Stowe*		220	3,300
Victoria		170	1,200
Thompson		149	2,344
Turtle		248	1,263
Whiskey*		73	1,095

* Denotes walleyes stocked by private sector

Statewide special northern pike regulations— what to expect for the Alexandria/Glenwood Area

Catching big northern pike in central Minnesota is almost unheard of. That's because too many lakes are filled with hammer-handle sized pike that can be more of a nuisance than exciting to catch. A statewide initiative by the DNR Section off Fisheries aims to change that by instituting spe-



cial management strategies tailored to 3 distinct regional zones: The Northeast, North-Central and South. The northeast zone still has lakes that produce big pike so management there will focus on maintaining those quality pike fisheries. The south zone has fast growing pike, but abundance is low and reproduction is poor so management will focus on stocking and protecting small to medium sized fish. The northcentral zone, which includes the Alexandria/Glenwood Area has the most serious problem of small, over-abundant, slow-growing pike. The management objective here will be to reduce small pike abundance and improve size distributions to include larger fish. New recommended regulations to achieve this will be a 10-fish expanded bag limit and a 22-26 inch protected slot with two fish over 26-inches allowed.

For more detailed information about the initiative, please follow this link to the MNDNR website:
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/pike/index.html>

News from our research unit

Fisheries research in Glenwood has been working on several different projects. Among other things, **Mike McInerney** is studying the effectiveness of our sampling gears including gillnets, trapnets and electrofishing. He's found that trapnetting abundance data for Black Crappie appears to be best if done during the months of April, May and September. He also has been working extensively on fish aging data derived from the scales of crappies and bass. Generally, he's determined that crappie scales can accurately be read up to about age-4 while bass scales can be read up to about age-3. Larger, older fish cannot be accurately aged

unless the fish is sacrificed in order to examine the *otoliths* which are similar to ear bones in humans. **Jeff Reed** has been involved with a number of projects including one that examines gut buckets at Lake Carlos State Park to determine the species, size and ages of fish that are being harvested from Lake Carlos. Jeff's also been experimenting with remote time-lapse cameras as a tool to obtain fishing pressure estimates on small lakes.

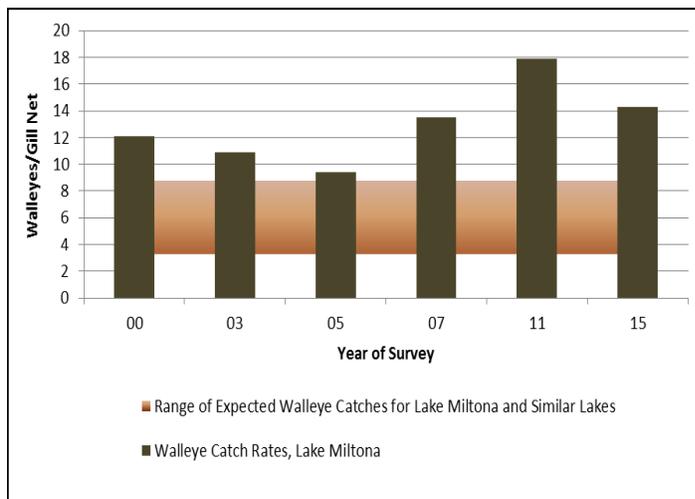
Muskellunge minimum length limit goes to 54-inches



Minnesota is fast becoming the premier destination in the United States to catch a trophy muskie. The MNDNR has instituted a 54-inch minimum length limit effective statewide except for the Twin Cities Metro area. The Alexandria/Glenwood Area has three lakes that are managed for muskellunge: Miliona, Lobster and Oscar. If you're planning a trip to these lakes, remember that any muskie measuring less than 54-inches must be immediately released.

There are plenty of questionable perceptions floating around that depict muskellunge as dreaded monsters that endanger swimmers and gobble up walleyes. Scientific data however do not validate this claim. In the Alexandria area, long-term survey data from Lake Miliona indicate a healthy walleye population coexisting alongside a premier muskellunge fishery:

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Employee spotlight— Chris Uphoff



Chris Uphoff joined the Glenwood Office as a Fisheries Specialist in October 2015. Chris was hired to help fill recently created vacancies, including Ryan Kessler's retirement and Jerry Wendlandt accepting a position in Aquatic Plant Management. Chris comes from New Munich, MN, just a short drive to the east of Glenwood. Growing up

Chris spent a lot of time outdoors and his interest in outdoor activities led him to a career in natural resource management.

After graduating from Melrose Area High School in 2007, Chris attended South Dakota State University where he obtained a B.S. degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences in 2009. During undergraduate school he had internship stints with the Glenwood Fisheries Office and Bluedog State Fish Hatchery in Waubay, SD. To further his edu-

cation, Chris went on to graduate school at the University of Nebraska at Kearney and graduated with a M.S. degree in Fisheries Biology in 2012. His thesis research focused on how food habits affect growth rates of juvenile Walleye.

Chris has been with the MN DNR since 2012. He was first hired after graduate school as an Invasive Carp Specialist in St. Paul, MN. In 2013 Chris accepted a Fisheries Specialist position in Hinckley, MN, where his job duties were similar to what he will be doing in Glenwood: assisting with fish production and lake survey, managing Aquatic Management Areas, and data analysis and report writing.

After fishing many of the lakes in the area while growing up, Chris is excited to be able to help manage the local fisheries. Chris and his wife, Cathryn, are happy to have moved closer to family and are looking to settle down in the area. In his spare time he hopes to check out his old fishing spots in between time spent hunting, trapping and numerous other outdoor activities.

The Glenwood Area Fisheries Office is temporarily located at:

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