



WISCONSIN DNR
FISHERIES INFORMATION SHEET

LAKE: BALLARD

COUNTY: VILAS

YEAR: 2011

The Department of Natural Resources surveyed Ballard Lake, Vilas County, from April 23 through May 13, 2011, to determine the health of its fishery. Estimating walleye and muskellunge abundance was the primary objective of the survey. Ballard Lake is a drainage lake with predominantly sand and gravel substrate and a moderate density walleye population. It has a surface area of 505 acres, 5.5 miles of shoreline and a maximum depth of 25 feet.

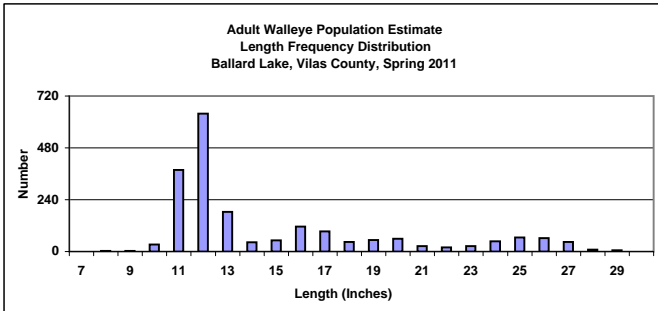


Figure 1. Length frequency distribution of 2004 adult* walleye estimated to be in Ballard Lake, Vilas County, based on a spring 2011 survey.

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

Walleye

We conducted a mark-recapture survey of Ballard Lake's adult* walleye population from April 23-28, 2011. We captured and marked (fin clipped) 657 adult walleye in six days of fyke netting. Two crews sampled Ballard Lake with electro-fishing boats on April 28th and captured 216 adult walleye. Approximately 31% (67 of 216) of those walleye bore the fin clip given during fyke netting.

Based on those results, we estimated that Ballard Lake is home to 2,004 adult walleye (4.0/acre). Approximately 36% (722 of 2,004) of adult walleye were 14 inches long or larger. The largest walleye we captured was a 29.2-inch female.

Smallmouth Bass

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

We captured 5 smallmouth bass, 8 inches or larger, during our fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Ballard Lake. The largest smallmouth bass we captured was 19.7 inches long.

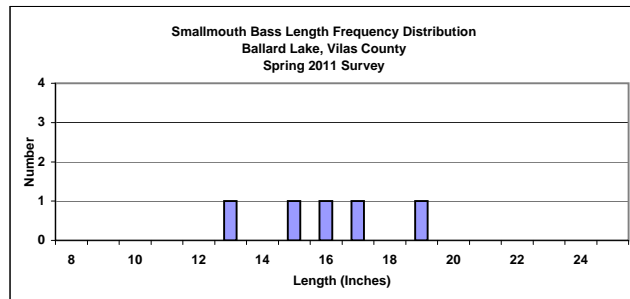


Figure 2. Length frequency distribution of five smallmouth bass \geq 8" captured during a fisheries survey of Ballard Lake, Vilas County, in spring 2011.

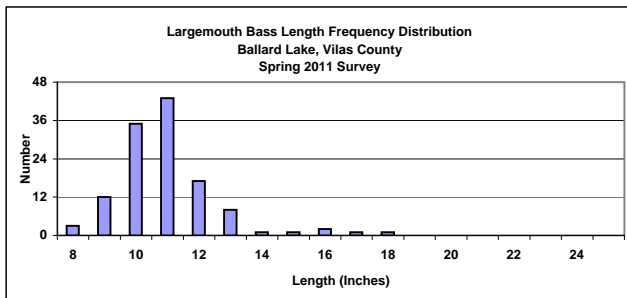


Figure 3. Length frequency distribution of 124 largemouth bass \geq 8" captured during a fisheries survey of Ballard Lake, Vilas County, in spring 2011.

Largemouth Bass

Our sampling of Ballard Lake was also done outside the spawning period for largemouth bass. We captured 124 largemouth bass, 8 inches or larger, during our fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Ballard Lake. Roughly 5% (6 of 124) of those largemouth were 14 inches long or larger. The biggest largemouth bass we captured was 18.7 inches long.

Northern Pike

We captured 24 adult* northern pike during our fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Ballard Lake. Twenty-three of the adult northern pike we captured were less than 26 inches long. The largest northern pike we captured was a 29.8-inch female.

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

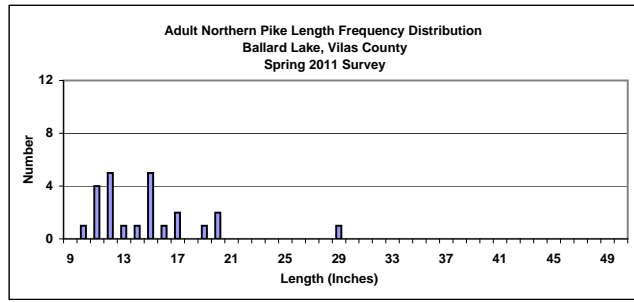


Figure 4. Length frequency distribution of 24 adult* northern pike captured during a fisheries survey of Ballard Lake, Vilas County, in spring 2011.

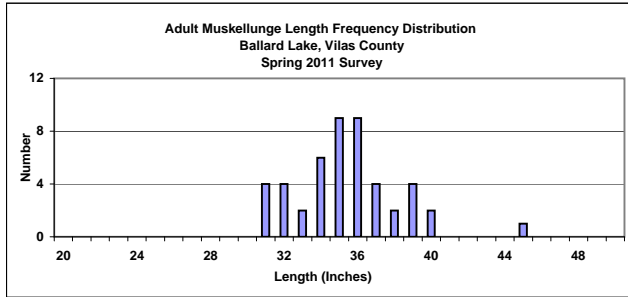


Figure 5. Length frequency distribution of 47 adult* muskellunge captured during a fisheries survey of Ballard Lake, Vilas County, in spring 2011.

Muskellunge

We captured 47 adult* muskellunge during our fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Ballard Lake. Nearly 79% (37 of 47) of the adult muskellunge we captured were 34 inches long or larger. Three of those muskellunge were 40 inches long or larger. The largest muskellunge we captured was a 45.1-inch female.

* Note: Adult muskellunge are defined using PSD stock size as all sexable muskellunge and muskellunge of unknown sex \geq 20 inches.

Other Species

We captured eight species of fish in our fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Ballard Lake in addition to the game fish mentioned above. Yellow perch were the most abundant species in our fyke net catches. We also caught black crappie, bluegill, golden shiner, mottled sculpin, rock bass and white sucker. In-water sampling will conclude with a survey of young-of-year walleye in fall 2011.

We are also conducting a creel (angler harvest) survey on Ballard Lake this year. Creel clerk John Logan will count and interview anglers and examine their catch throughout the 2011 open-water fishing season.

Table 1. General Fishing Regulations for Ballard Lake, Vilas County, 2011

FISH SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	DAILY LIMIT	MINIMUM LENGTH
Walleye	May 7 - March 4	3	15 inches
Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass	May 7 - June 17 (C&R) June 18 - March 4 (Harvest)	None 5 in total	14 inches
Muskellunge	May 28 - Nov. 30	1	34 inches
Northern Pike	May 7 - March 4	5	None

A brief summary of selected fishing regulations for Ballard 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 2012. Watch for survey summaries at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/nor/northern.html> or contact:

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For answers to questions about fisheries management activities and plans for Ballard Lake, Vilas County, contact:

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