

LILLY LAKE NEWS

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New Panfish Regulations

According to the DNR studies, the size of panfish has decreased over time in many Midwestern lakes.

Beginning April 1, 2016 new regulations will go into effect regarding panfish for a few lakes in WI, but **not** Lilly Lake. The closest are Bohners and Paddock Lakes. The regulation reduces the number of fish that can be harvested. DNR plans to review the results in 2021.

For more information:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/documents/outreach/PanfishFactSheetMay15.pdf>

What are the current fish regulations for Lilly Lake?

Lilly Lake follows the statewide regulations, which are (daily limit):

- ◆ Panfish—25
- ◆ Northern Pike—2
- ◆ Bass—5

FISH SURVEY RESULTS—2013

Anyone who has walked to the end of the fishing pier at Lilly Lake and looked in the water knows the lake has an abundance of panfish (mainly bluegill, but also pumpkinseed). If you happened to toss a fishing line in and caught some of these fish you will also have experienced their relatively small size. Those experiences were confirmed in a fish survey completed by the Wisconsin DNR Fisheries staff in 2013.

The survey was conducted in May and October using electrofishing, in which probes are inserted into the water that emit an electrical current temporarily stunning the fish. As the fish float to the top, they are collected by biologists who then weigh and measure the fish before returning them unharmed back into the water.

The survey is a “snapshot” of how the main gamefish populations are doing. Luke Roffler, a WDNR Fisheries Biologist, in an email summarizing the survey, stated that “the bluegill in Lilly Lake exhibit the same small size structure that seems to be common in many area lakes”.

Largemouth bass were also found in low numbers, but Mr. Roffler stated that the bass caught “seemed to exhibit good size structure compared to other lakes”. The largest bass caught during the survey was 20 inches long.

As a result of the survey, WDNR will continue to stock fingerling northern pike. In 2015 a maximum of 174 will be stocked. The last stocking was in 2013 when 198 northern were stocked (see page 2 for a historical summary). Mr. Roffler stated that the Association could consider stocking additional northern pike or bass. Permission would be needed from the DNR if this option were pursued.

The purpose of stocking predators like northern and bass is not only for better fishing for those species. These fish will prey on the smaller bluegill. This has implications for both improving the fishery as well as the overall health of the lake. Panfish feed on many things, but the smaller ones feed heavily on zooplankton, which are the microscopic creatures in the water. Many of these tiny animals subsequently graze on algae. So, if there are too many bluegill, there will be less zooplankton to eat the algae. Over time, the lake will have more algae, decreasing the water clarity and overall health.

Improving the fish structure in a lake takes time and a sustained effort. However, having more top predators in the lake will ultimately make for a better fishing experience, including better bluegill.



FISH CONSUMPTION

We all know eating fish is healthy and there is something quintessential about eating fish in Wisconsin (we invented the fish fry didn't we?). However, some fish contain contaminants at levels that can pose health risks to people who eat fish frequently. To reduce your exposure to these contaminants, the state issues advice to help you plan what fish to keep as well as how often and how much fish to eat. Fish consumption advice is provided for fish that may contain mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and other compounds.

The following can also be found at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/consumption/>

Safe-eating guidelines - for most of Wisconsin's inland (non-great lakes) waters

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| <p>Women of childbearing years, nursing mothers and all children under 15 may eat:</p> <p>1 meal per week - Bluegill, crappies, yellow perch, sunfish, bullheads and inland trout;</p> <p>and</p> <p>1 meal per month - Walleye, pike, bass, catfish and all other species.</p> <p>Do not eat - Muskies.</p> | <p>Women beyond their childbearing years and men may eat:</p> <p>Unrestricted* - Bluegill, crappies, yellow perch, sunfish, bullheads and inland trout;</p> <p>1 meal per week - Walleye, pike, bass, catfish and all other species;</p> <p>and</p> <p>1 meal per month - Muskies.</p> |
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Black Crappie



Bluegill



Muskie



Channel Catfish



Historic Fish Stocking in Lilly Lake (data from:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/stocking>)

All stockings were conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Additional stockings are allowed, but under certain regulations. A permit from the DNR is required.

As a reminder, it is illegal to introduce a fish caught in a different lake. Do not release unused live bait (e.g., minnows, shiners). There are specific rules on when you can reuse live bait; check the regulations.

Never release any aquarium species (this includes fish, plants, and snails)!



| Year | Species | Number |
|------|-----------------|--------|
| 2013 | Northern Pike | 198 |
| 2006 | Northern Pike | 975 |
| 2001 | Northern Pike | 232 |
| 1999 | Northern Pike | 209 |
| 1994 | Northern Pike | 174 |
| 1992 | Northern Pike | 176 |
| 1991 | Northern Pike | 577 |
| 1989 | Northern Pike | 440 |
| 1986 | Northern Pike | 450 |
| 1985 | Northern Pike | 450 |
| 1984 | Northern Pike | 450 |
| 1983 | Northern Pike | 450 |
| 1982 | Northern Pike | 200 |
| 1984 | Largemouth Bass | 8,000 |
| 1983 | Largemouth Bass | 5,000 |
| 1980 | Largemouth Bass | 10,000 |

Planning for 2015

Do you have an idea for our community? Want to include something in the newsletter?

Please contact:
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