

Original: Fish Division
cc: Mr. Ruhl
Mr. Eschmeyer

INSTITUTE FOR FISHERIES RESEARCH
DIVISION OF FISHERIES
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
COOPERATING WITH THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

A. S. HAZZARD
DIRECTOR

ADDRESS
UNIVERSITY MUSEUMS
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

May 24, 1937

REPORT NO. 418

CREEL CENSUS ON INDIAN LAKE,
SCHOOLCRAFT COUNTY, WINTER OF 1937

A census was taken on the winter fishing on Indian Lake from January 16 to March 31st. The lake had been closed to winter fishing since December 31, 1933, but was "re-opened" to fishing on January 16th. During the last winter it yielded, to the anglers, a total of 5,073 fish, a catch of only a little more than one fish per two acres. It appears that this small "crop" is too insignificant to seriously affect summer fishing and that, so far as the removal of fish by legal methods is concerned, the Commission's decision to reopen the lake to winter fishing was entirely justified. The fish had an average length of 9.7 inches and most of them (over 85 per cent) were perch. Only 602 northern pike and walleyes, an average of one per 13 acres, were taken.

The census was taken by Camp Manistique, under the general direction of Chief Foreman Steve McDonald. It is assumed that the 1409 fishing records provided by Camp Manistique represent all or nearly all of the fishing on Indian Lake during that portion of the winter when fishing was permitted.

It will be noted in Table 1 that of the 1,409 fishermen 42% caught no fish. The 5,073 fish caught were taken at the average rate of less than one fish (0.8) per hour. In an average fishing day (4.5 hours) the fishermen caught, on the average, 3.6 fish each. Only 47 (less than 4%) of the fishermen were women.

The catch consisted of 4469 perch of an average length of 8.3 inches, 323 walleyes averaging 17.4 inches long and 279 northern pike averaging 22.2 inches in length. Two rock bass were also caught.

Fishing was almost entirely by local residents; 95 per cent of all fishermen were from Schoolcraft County, the others were from Delta County.

Fishing was poor during the first month when the catch averaged only one fish per three hours of fishing. During the remainder of the winter the catch averaged one fish per hour.

A census is not available of the summer fishing for comparison with the winter fishing.

INSTITUTE FOR FISHERIES RESEARCH

R. W. Eschmeyer

Table 1

Monthly Analysis of Fishing on Indian Lake, Schoolcraft County, Winter, 1937

Date	No. of fishermen	Number fishermen taking no fish		No. legal fish	No. hours fished	Catch per hour	No. of fish per fisherman	Ave. size of fish	Hours per fisherman-day
		No.	%						
January 16-31	281	184	65	356	1061.50	0.3	1.3	12.0	3.8
February 1-15	145	92	63	190	635.25	0.3	1.3	10.6	4.4
February 16-28	190	78	41	895	860.75	1.0	4.7	9.4	4.5
March 1-15	421	117	28	2040	2138.00	1.0	4.8	9.1	5.1
March 16-31	372	124	33	1592	1583.25	1.0	4.3	9.9	4.3
Totals or Averages	1409	595	42	5073	6278.75	0.8	3.6	9.7	4.5

Table 2

Catch by Species and Average Size, Indian Lake, Schoolcraft County, Winter of 1937

Date	Yellow Perch		Walleyes		Northern Pike		Rock Bass	
	Number	Ave. Size	Number	Ave. Size	Number	Ave. Size	Number	Ave. Size
January 16-31	254	7.8	30	19.2	72	23.6
February 1-15	156	8.2	8	18.8	26	22.5
February 16-28	852	8.7	7	18.6	36	23.1
March 1-15	1886	8.3	80	18.0	74	21.2
March 16-31	1321	8.3	198	16.8	71	21.1	2	8.5
Totals or Averages	4469	8.3	323	17.4	279	22.2	2	8.5