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THE GROWTH OF FISH IN WILE'S LAKE, WASHTENAW COUNTY*

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A small number of fish were taken from Wile's Lake by seining during April, 1938, to determine the rate of growth of these fish. They were taken by Dr. A. S. Hazzard, W. F. Carbine, Karl Lagler and the writer. Age determinations were made by Dorothy Woodbury. The fish included 2 large-mouthed bass, 20 bluegills and 37 pumpkinseed sunfish.

The two bass had an average length of 9.5 inches. Examination of the scales indicated that these fish had three annuli, i.e. that they were in their fourth summer of life. At or near the end of their third growing season, bass in Howe Lake (Crawford County) averaged 10.2 inches; in Wintergreen Lake (Kalamazoo County) they averaged 11.3 inches; the average for 4 lakes and a river in southern Wisconsin was 11.9 inches. The growth of the two bass in Wile's Lake, therefore, was relatively slow.

Seven bluegills had completed their first growing season and 12 had finished the second. The former had an average length of 1.6 inches, the latter averaged 3.8 inches. Length of bluegills (in inches) in

* This brief study of a private lake was made at request of former Conservation Commissioner Philip Schumacher and in exchange for a stock of golden shiners which we were permitted to seine from the lake for use in Carbine's forage fish work.

Deep Lake and Baker Lake (Barry County) and Cassidy Lake, Mill Lake and Mirror Lake (Washtenaw County) at the end of the first year were respectively 0.8, 0.7, 0.8, 0.8 and 0.8 and for the second year were 2.2, 1.9, 2.2, 1.9 and 2.2. The growth of bluegills in Wile's Lake was therefore more rapid in the first 2 years than was the growth of these fish in the several other lakes mentioned. A single specimen 7.9 inches long was 6 (possibly 5) summers old--reasonably good growth for a bluegill of this size.

For pumpkinseed sunfish the age and size is listed as follows:

<u>Age in Summers</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Length (inches)</u>
1	1	1.8
2	8	3.5
3	7	4.3
4	17	4.7
5	2	5.2
6	2	6.9

In Howe Lake pumpkinseed sunfish had attained an average length of 3.5 inches near the end of their second summer but the three-summer old fish were above the minimum legal length of 6 inches. In Wintergreen Lake the size for the first six growing seasons was recorded (in inches) as follows: 2.0, 4.5, 6.9, 7.5, 8.2 and 8.2.

It appears therefore that the sunfish in Wile's Lake were growing reasonably well during their first several growing seasons but were doing poorly in later years. Bluegills, likewise, were growing well during their first two summers but whether or not reasonably rapid growth continued after the second growing season could not be adequately determined because fish older than two years were not taken except for the one individual which showed moderately good growth.