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THE RESULTS OF THE INTENSIVE CREEL CENSUS ON APRIL 25, 1942,
ON BASIN #3, KIMES LAKE, NEWAYGO COUNTY.

by

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The southeast basin of Kimes Lake, also known as Kimes Lake, Basin #3, Newaygo County, was found to be suitable for the maintenance of trout by members of the Institute for Fisheries Research staff during 1940 (see Institute Memorandum No. 119).

This body of water was treated with chemicals during September, 1941, to eliminate the existing fish population, in order that there might be no competition for food and space from other species after stocking with brook trout.

On November 3, 1941, Basin #3 of Kimes Lake was stocked with 1,000 legal brook trout from the Paris Hatchery of the Department of Conservation, with cooperation of the Institute for Fisheries Research. The trout ranged from 6.9 to 11.1 inches in length with an average length of 8.65 inches, and from 1.75 to 9.9 ounces in weight with an average weight of 4.45 ounces (figs. 1 and 2).

The United States Forest Service/^{Fire}Guard, Mr. Joe Mack, who lives near the lake, reported that approximately 30 trout were found dead along the shores of the lake shortly after the planting was done.

Also on April 25, 1942, when the lake was visited by the writer, one dead trout was picked up near the boat landing. This fish was in good condition and bore no outward signs of injury or disease. It is likely that at least 50 fish died during the winter.

On the opening day of the trout season, April 25, 1942, the writer took a complete census of all the fish taken from the lake by anglers between 12:01 A.M. and 10:30 P.M. There were three anglers on the lake when the writer left at 10:30 P.M. and these have been figured in as average fishermen based on the catches of the fishermen who were interviewed. Altogether there were 35 fishermen who used Basin #3 during the opening day of the season. These men fished a total of 82 hours, or an average of two hours and twenty minutes each. Each fisherman took an average of 12.1 trout, or a catch of 5.14 fish per hour. A total of 422 brook trout was removed from the lake during the opening day.

If it is considered that 50 fish died during the winter, the 422 trout removed from the lake the opening day of the trout season constituted 44.42 per cent of the total population of the lake.

Of the 32 anglers who were contacted, 18 took the limit of 15 trout, 2 thought that they had their limit but only had 14 fish, and only one was blanked. The one angler who was blanked was a woman fishing from shore and the probable reason that she caught no fish is that she couldn't reach the deep water with the gear she was using.

The fish taken from Kimes Lake Basin #3 during the opening day were in very good condition and had increased both in length and in weight as shown in figures 1 and 2.* These trout ranged from 7.9 to

* Filed with Institute copy at Ann Arbor.

11.9 inches and with an average length of 9.83 inches, and from 3.6 to 10.6 ounces with an average weight of 6.3 ounces. These figures, when compared with those of the fish stocked in November, 1941, show that in 172 days in the lake, the fish grew an average of 1.18 inches and gained an average of 1.85 ounces in weight.

Comments of Anglers

As the anglers were contacted to take the measurements of their respective catches, the writer was freely offered methods and means of managing the lake so that the angling would remain at the unusually high level experienced the opening day. These anglers all realized that if the fish were removed at the rate maintained during the first day of the season, the population would be depleted quite rapidly.

Messrs. J. Green, A. Bergklint, A. DeLong and Robert Bayle of Hesperia thought that the state ought to charge a fee of five dollars to each fisherman who used the lake. They thought the limit catch might be lowered and that the fees would amply cover the cost of raising the trout for restocking the lake. Each of these men took 15 fish April 25, and in addition to this, Mmes. Green and Bergklint took 8 and 7 trout respectively.

Mr. Joe Mack, R.F.D. #1, Hesperia, seemed more or less anxious concerning the plight of "his lake". He said that the limit of fish should be lowered.

Mr. J. C. Paulson, R.F.D. #1, Hesperia, thought the fishing was fine, and although he and his wife each took 15 trout on Saturday, April 25, they were coming back to do it all over again on Sunday and it was up to the Department of Conservation to keep the fishing at its present high level.

Messrs. H. Hoyt, Wm. Hoyt, M. Gilliland and R. Gilliland, of Fremont, thought the fishing was fine but said that they had enough for a while.

Conservation Officer Alger Cline, of White Cloud, was disgusted.

Elmer Thompson, of Brohman, formerly a conservation officer, thought the catch limit should be reduced.

Wilbur Barton, R.F.D. #2, Hesperia, said that the fisherman paid a dollar for his license and that it was up to the Department of Conservation to maintain the fishing. When asked what he thought of a lower catch limit, he said that he thought the limit should stay at 15 trout a day and the Department of Conservation should restock the lake as soon as the fish were caught out. Incidentally, Mr. Barton only took eleven fish in the hour and three quarters he fished, and had to stop then so that he could rent his boat to other anglers.

Chas. Hannebaum, R.F.D. #1, Hesperia, thought the Department of Conservation ought to keep a man at the lake to check violations. He also thought the limit was too high.

Theo. Cook and E. L. Jones, of Muskegon, thought it was great sport, but too good to last. Mr. Cook, formerly of Massachusetts, said there was nothing like it in that state. They both thought only artificial lures should be used.

D. Bacon and Max Kingsford, of Fremont, thought the limit was all right but that the fishing should be restricted to morning and evening fishing and only artificial lures used.

The writer caught 32 trout on April 25 and returned 28 of them to the water, unharmed. These fish were taken on dry flies, wet flies, bucktails, bass bugs, and on a spinner with worms. The fish were taken on dry and wet flies between 11:00 and 11:45 A.M. and on bucktail and

bass bugs between 1:00 and 2:30 P.M. So far as the writer could determine from the fishermen interviewed, all the fish taken on April 25 by the anglers, with the exception of 4 trout, were taken on a No. 0 or 1 spinner, either single or double, and worms; some fish were taken on worms alone. The four trout excepted were taken by H. and C. Reeves on wet flies.

Summary and Recommendations

On the first day of the trout season, April 25, 1942, a total of 422 fish (44.4 per cent of the total population) were removed by the anglers from Basin #3 of Kimes Lake. If 44.4 per cent of the existing population were removed each succeeding day, there would be about 15 fish remaining in the lake at the end of the first week.

The fish which were removed during the opening day, probably a random sampling of the population, showed an average increase of 1.18 inches in length and 1.85 ounces in weight since their introduction into the lake 172 days previously.

Kimes Lake should be restocked in the fall of 1942 with 1,000 brook trout from 5-7 inches in length. Some of these fish will be legal the following April.

It is strongly recommended that the catch limit be reduced to not more than 5 trout per day. Also, inasmuch as the writer, who is most inexperienced in the craft of fly fishing, took trout on both dry and wet flies during the heat of the day, it is recommended that only artificial lures be used by the anglers.

INSTITUTE FOR FISHERIES RESEARCH

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