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INSTITUTE FOR FISHERIES RESEARCH  
DIVISION OF FISHERIES  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
COOPERATING WITH THE  
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Report No. 63

ORIGINAL SIZE OF DRESSED PERCH SUBMITTED BY OFFICER KEAR

On May 15, Conservation Officer Duane Kear of Owosso wrote that he had sent a two-quart jar of dressed perch which had been taken from a commercial fisherman, and asked to be informed of their original length, head and tail complete. The specimens were well preserved in formaldehyde.

The report has been prepared by Dr. Hubbs, and has been somewhat delayed on account of his absence in the East.

The perch had been thoroughly cleaned, the dorsal fin cut out and the head and the tail fin cut off with some of the adjacent part of the body. In order to obtain an estimate of their original length, it was thought necessary to compare the length of a given base on the cleaned fish with the length of the same base on a preserved perch specimen of known total length. The best base was the number of vertebrae on each side of the dividing line between the trunk and tail portions of the body. These figures are given in the second column of the table. The length of this portion of the backbone is then given in the third column, in millimeters for ease of computation. Then follows the length of the exactly corresponding portion of the vertebral column in two perch of known length, one from Saginaw Bay and one from Lake Erie.

Then by direct proportion we can obtain a fairly close estimate of the original length of the dressed fish, in millimeters. This length we then give in inches.

The estimated lengths of the fish vary to some degree. As the Lake Erie fish used had relatively longer vertebrae as compared to its total length, the computations based on measurements of this specimen are a little lower than those based on the Saginaw Bay specimen. The Saginaw Bay specimen is 8 3/8 inches (213 mm), and the Lake Erie one is 8 1/8 inches (206 mm.) long.

No.	Whole vertebrae	Length of same	Length of corresponding portion of backbone in:		Computed length from comparison with specimens from:			
			Saginaw Bay specimen	Lake Erie specimen	Saginaw Bay		Lake Erie	
		mm.	mm.	mm.	mm.	in.	mm.	in.
1	13 + 15	106	94	96	240	9 7/16	227	8 15/16
2	14 + 16	101	101	103	213	8 3/8	202	7 15/16
3	13 + 15	105	94	96	239	9 3/8	225	8 7/8
4	13 + 14	104	91	93	243	9 9/16	230	9 1/16
5	14 + 15	109	98	100	237	9 5/16	225	8 3/4
6	15 + 19	121	112	115	230	9 1/16	217	8 9/16
7	15 + 19	118	112	115	224	8 13/16	211	8 5/16
8	13 + 15	105	94	96	238	9 3/8	225	8 7/8
9	14 + 14	110	95	98	247	9 3/4	231	9 1/16
10	14 + 14	109	95	98	244	9 5/8	229	9
11	16 + 15	115	105	106	233	9 3/16	223	8 3/4
12	14 + 14	108	95	98	242	9 1/2	227	8 15/16
13	16 + 16	113	108	109	223	8 3/4	214	8 7/16
14	15 + 15	108	102	104	226	8 7/8	214	8 7/16

We conclude that the original length of the dressed perch was very close to the legal limit of 9". One of them (No. 2) of the list was almost certainly below legal size, probably about one inch short, and some others were probably also under the 9 inch size.

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Copies to:  
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