

Original: Fish Division

cc: Mr. Tucker

Mr. Tawse

Mr. Stewart

INSTITUTE FOR FISHERIES RESEARCH Mr. Ruhl  
DIVISION OF FISHERIES Mr. Beckman  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
COOPERATING WITH THE  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ALBERT S. HAZZARD, PH.D.  
DIRECTOR

ADDRESS  
UNIVERSITY MUSEUMS  
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

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REPORT NO. 602

THE NORTHERN PIKE SURVIVAL IN THE "FLY," AT  
WALLED LAKE, OAKLAND COUNTY

by

William C. Beckman

On April 5, 1940, Drs. Moffett and Brown, of the Institute staff, made an examination of the northern pike run and conditions for spawning at Walled Lake, Oakland County, (Report 593) at the request of Mr. E. E. Tucker, District Supervisor of the Division of Field Administration.

The writer was asked to make checkups on the area known as the "Fly," which is located on the east side of the lake, to determine if any pike fry returned to the lake.

The first visit to the area was on April 25, 1940. Mr. Eugene Goellner accompanied the writer and helped seine the pool and stream. Various minnows, bluegills, pumpkinseeds, and green sunfish were taken, but there was no sign of northern pike. The water in the pond was from 1 to 4 feet deep, and in the marsh was from 1 to 2 feet deep. The water temperature at 9:45 a.m. was 45° F.

Mr. A. T. Stewart, of the Drayton Plains Hatchery, drove up as we were seining. He informed us that a dam had been put across the stream.

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We were unable to find out when the dam was supposed to have been put in, or when it was removed. We found no evidence at the time of a dam.

The "Fly" was revisited on April 27, 29, and 30. No pike fry were seen or taken while seining on these visits. Largemouth black bass, bluegills, pumpkinseeds, green sunfish, and various minnows were taken. One pike, about 6 inches in length, was seen at the culvert under the road, but could not be captured. A good flow of water was still leaving the "Fly."

The next visit to the region was on May 10, 1940. At that time many pike fry were drifting down the stream. Many more were seen in the pond, ditch and marsh. There was no appreciable change in water level. A sample of fry was taken and preserved.

Another visit was made on May 14, 1940, and a few pike were seen coming down the stream. A west wind had caused the water to pile up on the east shore, and the stream from the "Fly" was backed up to form a slowly moving pool. This may have accounted for the few pike fry entering the lake on this date.

On June 3, 1940, one pike, about 2 1/2 inches in length was taken, and several others of about the same size were seen.

The writer talked with several of the local residents and was informed that the "Fly" dried up about one year in four or five.

The years that the "Fly" did dry up trapped the pike fry and they were lost. The loss of the pike in the years that the "Fly" would dry up, would be so greatly offset by the other years in which the fry could return to the lake, that this loss could be disregarded. As Dr. Brown states in his Report 593, the loss of a few adult pike to poachers may be a legitimate sacrifice for the young produced during normal years.

It is therefore recommended that the "Fly" be left open to pike runs in the future.

INSTITUTE FOR FISHERIES RESEARCH  
A. S. Hazzard, Director

By: William C. Beckman