



## WISCONSIN VALLEY IMPROVEMENT COMPANY FISHERIES INFORMATION SHEET



**LAKE:** LITTLE ST. GERMAIN

**COUNTY:** VILAS

**YEAR:** 2004

Wisconsin Valley Improvement Company (WVIC) and the Wisconsin DNR conducted a panfish survey of Little St. Germain in September 2004. Little St. Germain has a surface area of 980 acres, 15 miles of shoreline and a maximum depth of 53 feet in West Bay. The shoreline is predominately sand and gravel, with scattered areas of rock and muck. Dense aquatic plant beds are common in the shallow bays. The survey design focused on sampling panfish (bluegill, pumpkinseed and black crappie) with fyke-nets, which were fished for 4 days. The purpose of the survey was to determine the population characteristics of panfish and the diversity of other fish species present.

### **Bluegill**

Density – A total of 6,048 bluegill was collected which equals a density of 126 fish per net per day (CPE). This is a very high density compared to larger lakes and reservoirs in the area, but comparable to some area lakes of similar size, such as Pickerel (204 CPE) and Squirrel (80 CPE). In larger reservoirs such as, Rainbow, Willow and Rice Reservoirs and the Sugar Camp Chain, bluegill densities are 5 to 12 fish per net per day, however bluegills from 8 to 10 inches are common in these reservoirs.

Length Frequency & Age - Bluegill size ranged from 3.2 to 7.7 inches, with a mean length of 5.6 inches. The age of bluegills ranged from 1 to 6 years, with age 5 fish (5 to 7 inches) the most abundant followed by Age 3 fish. Age 5 fish would have been spawned in 1999 and Age 3 fish in 2001. Mean length-at-age was below the regional mean for all ages except Age 1. This means bluegills for all ages except age 1 are growing at a slower rate when compared to bluegill throughout the region. This is generally indicative of an over abundance of bluegill and/or lack of predation to maintain a more balanced fishery. The general lack of bluegill greater than 8 inches is probably related to angler harvest. In the last (1997) WDNR creel survey it was estimated that anglers harvested 12,125 bluegill. Of these fish 55% were less than 7 inches in length.

### **Pumpkinseed**

Density – A total of 2,122 pumpkinseed was collected which equals a density of 44 fish per net per day. This is also a very high density compared to some area lakes of similar size, such as Pickerel (33 CPE) and Squirrel (13 CPE) and compared to larger lakes and reservoirs in the area. For example, in Rainbow, Willow and Rice Reservoirs and the Sugar Camp Chain, pumpkinseed densities are 2 to 5 CPE, however pumpkinseeds from 6 to 8 inches are common in these reservoirs.

Length Frequency & Age –

Pumpkinseed size ranged from 3.3 to 7.3 inches, with a mean length of 5.3 inches. The age of pumpkinseeds ranged from 2 to 6 years, with age 3 fish (4 to 6 inches) the most abundant with no Age 1 fish collected. Age 3 fish would have been spawned in 2001. Mean length-at-age was less than the regional mean for all ages. This means pumpkinseeds are growing at a slower rate when compared to pumpkinseed throughout the region. Like bluegill, this is also indicative of an over abundance of pumpkinseed and/or lack of predation to maintain a more balanced fishery.

**Black Crappie**

Density – A total of 452 black crappie was collected which equals a density of 9 fish per net per day. This is moderate density and comparable to some area lakes of similar size, such as Pickerel (11 CPE) and Squirrel (13 CPE) and similar to larger lakes and reservoirs in the area. For example, in Rainbow, Willow and Rice Reservoirs and the Sugar Camp Chain, black crappie densities generally range from 7 to 13 CPE and fish from 10 to 14 inches are common.

Length Frequency & Age – Black crappie size ranged from 4 to 10.8 inches, with a mean length of 7.3 inches. The age of black crappie ranged from 1 to 6 years, with ages 3 and 4 fish (6.5 to 10 inches) the most abundant. Age 3 and 4 fish would have been spawned in 2001 and 2000, respectively. Mean length-at-age was less than the regional mean for all ages.

This means black crappie are growing at a slower than average rate when compared to black crappie throughout the region. There does not appear to be an over abundance of black crappie and the scarcity of individuals greater than 10 inches may be a function of harvest.

Once they reach 5 inches anglers start harvesting them. In 1998 a WDNR survey estimated that anglers harvested 19,245 (19.6/acre) black crappie from the lake in that single year.

**Other Species**

A total of 13 species of fish was collected including the three panfish species and the bluegill x pumpkinseed hybrid:

White Sucker	Bluegill
Black Bullhead	Psd x Bgl hybrid
Yellow Bullhead	Largemouth Bass
Northern Pike	Black Crappie
Muskellunge	Yellow Perch
Rock Bass	Walleye
Pumpkinseed	

Yellow bullheads were very abundant with 2,031 fish collected. Many fish over 12 inches were captured with the largest measuring 14.5 inches in total length. Bullheads remain a major part of this fishery, but are not sought out by anglers even though they are above average in size. In the 1997 creel survey only 162 were harvested.

Other common species were northern pike, walleye and yellow perch. Eighty-eight walleye were collected and exhibited good size distribution from 8.4 inches to 29.3 inches. Eleven walleye had fin clips from previous DNR walleye surveys. These marked fish were between 19.6 and 23.8 inches. Eleven musky were also collected which ranged from 11.2 to 45 inches. All musky except for the 11.2 inch fish were greater than 30 inches with three fish exceeding 40 inches. Eighteen largemouth bass were collected that ranged from 5.2 to 18.6 inches.