

Cowanesque Lake

Tioga County

2021 Striped Bass Gill Net and Black Bass Night Boat Electrofishing Survey's



Biologist Garret Kratina with a 35-inch Striped Bass caught during spring gillnetting on Cowanesque Lake (May 2021).

The Area 4 Fisheries Management Office conducted gillnetting at Cowanesque Lake on May 4-6, 2021. The objective of this survey was to evaluate the success of Striped Bass stockings. Striped Bass stocking was initiated in 2012 after Alewife were found in the lake. Striped Bass fingerlings have been stocked in 6 of the past 10 years at varying rates (Table 1).

Table 1. Cowanesque Lake Striped Bass fingerling stocking history.

Year	Life Stage	Total Stocked	Stocking Rate
2012	Fingerling	11,000	10.1
2015	Fingerling	11,000	10.1
2016	Fingerling	11,000	10.1
2017	Fingerling	11,000	10.1
2019	Fingerling	15,062	30.3
2021	Fingerling	62,562	57.4

We set 17 gillnets for a total of 122.25 hours. A total of 284 fish were captured representing 18 fish species (Table 2).

Table 2. Abundances and size ranges of species caught during gillnetting at Cowanesque Lake during 2021 spring gillnetting.

Species	Count	Size Range (in)
Black Crappie	78	5-13
White Crappie	53	6-14
Golden Shiner	40	6-8
Common Carp	26	13-26
Yellow Bullhead	22	7-13
Brown Bullhead	14	9-14
Tiger Muskellunge	13	26-40
Striped Bass	8	26-35
Walleye	8	9-28
Bluegill	4	3-6
Channel Catfish	3	10-28
Pumpkinseed	3	2-4
Largemouth Bass	3	19-20
Quillback	3	15-19
Yellow Perch	2	7-11
Rock Bass	2	6-7
Alewife	1	6-7
Smallmouth Bass	1	12-13

A total of 8 Stripped Bass were caught ranging from 26 to 35 inches. Five were ≥ 30 inches with the largest at 35 inches and 15.2 pounds. There were several size classes of Stripped Bass captured indicating that there was survival from the various years of stockings. The population should continue to build as regular stockings are planned.

Also caught were 13 Tiger Muskellunge up to 40 inches and 8 Walleye up to 28 inches. Also noted were good numbers and quality Black Crappie and White Crappie.



Biologist Garret Kratina with a 38-inch Tiger Muskellunge caught during spring gillnetting on Cowanesque Lake (May 2021).



Biologist Garret Kratina with a 14-inch White Crappie caught during spring gillnetting on Cowanesque Lake (May 2021).

The black bass population was assessed with night electrofishing on June 10-16, 2021. Electrofishing occurred at 15 different locations with sampling effort totaling 2.9 hours. A total of 155 black bass were captured composed of 110 Largemouth Bass and 45 Smallmouth Bass. Total black bass catch rate was 54.1/hour with Largemouth Bass captured at 38.4/hour and Smallmouth Bass captured at 15.7/hour. The largest Largemouth Bass was 19.4 inches and 5.2 pounds, and the largest Smallmouth Bass collected was 20.0 inches and 3.9 pounds. Total catch rates for Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass combined were lower than the previous [2016](#) survey but higher than in [2010](#) (Table 3.). For Largemouth Bass catch rates were lower for all size classes than in 2016. For Smallmouth Bass total catch rate was higher than in 2016, but catch rate was lower among the larger size classes.

Table 3. Catch per Hour (CPH) of Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass caught during surveys in 2010, 2016, and 2021.

Species	Length Group (in)	Catch per Hour		
		2021	2016	2010
Largemouth Bass	Total Catch	38.39	46.43	12.12
	> 12 in	17.10	34.17	10.44
	> 15 in	5.93	20.59	4.04
Smallmouth Bass	Total Catch	15.71	13.58	8.08
	> 12 in	2.79	9.20	5.39
	> 15 in	2.44	4.82	3.03

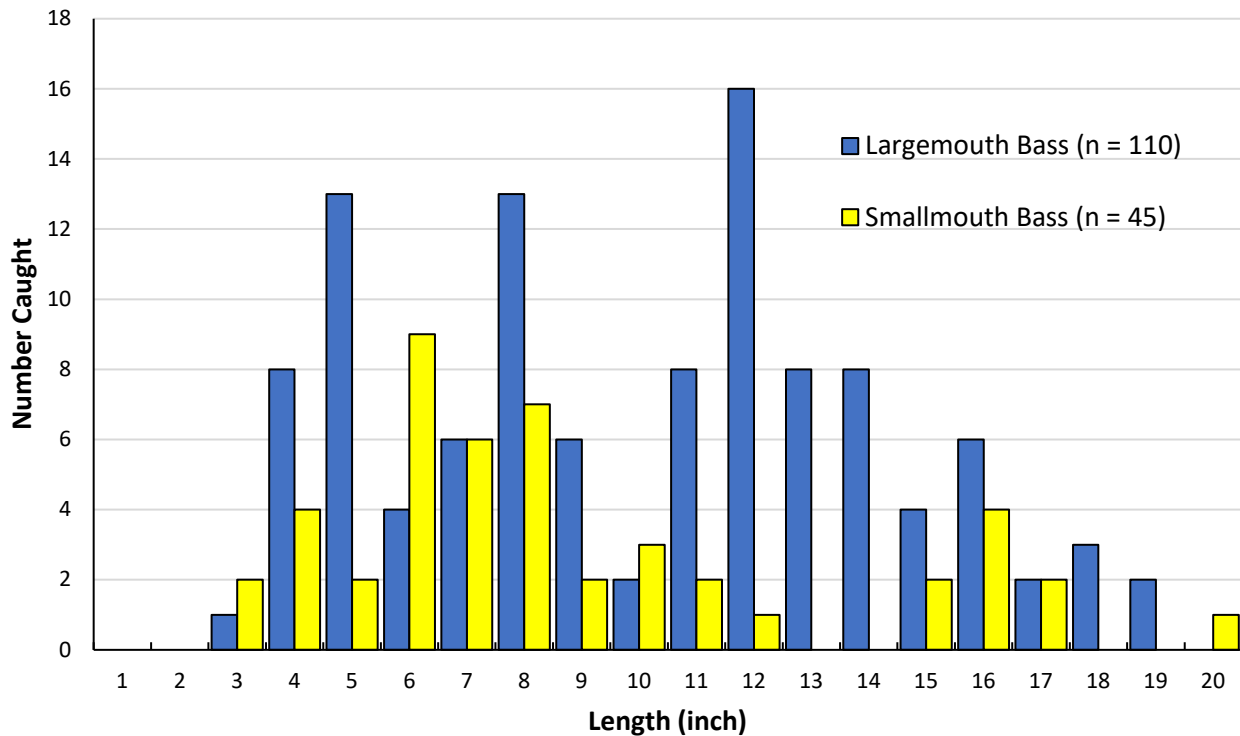


Figure 1. Cowanesque Lake Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass length frequency distributions from June 2021 sampling.

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