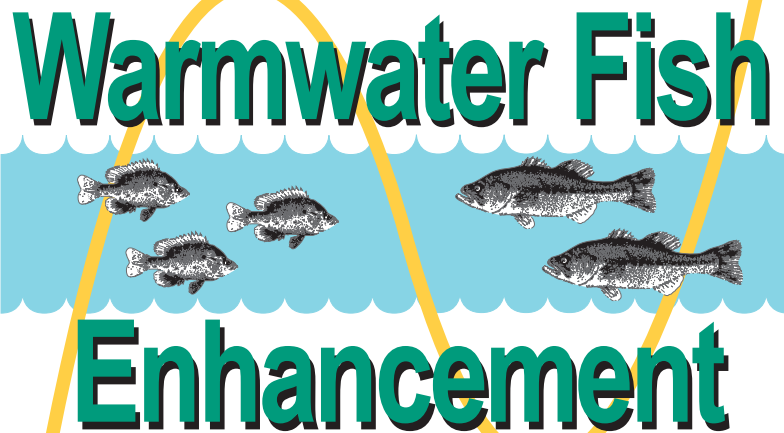


Summary Report of Warmwater Volunteer Angler Diaries 2012



Warmwater Fish Enhancement

by Bruce M. Baker



Washington Department of
FISH AND WILDLIFE
Fish Program
Fish Management Division

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Abstract

Five registered anglers and no guest anglers participated in the Volunteer Angler Diary Program in 2012. Useable data was submitted for 81 trips to 18 different bodies of water. A total of 78 Black Crappie were caught (77 were quality size) and 27% of these fish were released. No Channel Catfish and no Tiger Muskies were caught. A total of 77 Largemouth Bass were caught (59 were quality size) and 100% of these fish were released. A total of 181 Smallmouth Bass were caught (101 were quality size) and 100% of these fish were released. A total of 164 Walleye were caught (75 were quality size) and less than one percent of these fish were released.

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Introduction

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) initiated the Warmwater Volunteer Angler Diary program in 1990 as a cooperative effort between the Department's Fish Management Division and Washington's warmwater anglers. The program's primary objectives were to establish a database of catch information for warmwater fishes from a large cross-section of waters, and to improve communication and cooperation between the Department and the anglers. The program initially targeted Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, and Walleye. However, in 2000 the program was expanded to collect catch information on all six warmwater species managed under the Warmwater Enhancement Bill. The three additional species added were Black Crappie, Tiger Muskie, and Channel Catfish.

Volunteer angler diary data is used in conjunction with biological sampling and creel census information in order to monitor the condition of, and assess future management options for, warmwater fish populations in Washington state.

Methods

Participants in the Volunteer Angler Diary Program are issued a waterproof, 6-ring notebook with a set of removable data sheets, along with instructions on how to complete them (Figure 1). Volunteers agree to complete a data sheet for each fishing trip taken during the calendar year for any of the six warmwater species. The anglers are to complete the sheets regardless of their fishing success. Anglers may also complete data sheets for friends and/or family that fish with them, but are not actively participating in the program.

Volunteer anglers are asked to record their name, the date, water being fished, county, target species, number of each species caught, the length of each fish caught to the nearest quarter inch, the total number of hours fished for each species, and whether the fish caught was retained or released.

Completed data sheets are to be returned to WDFW by the end of each year. In return, new data sheets are mailed to each volunteer returning completed forms. Volunteer Angler Diary data is then entered into a computer database. Catch summaries, including catch rates and hours fished, along with length frequency distribution graphs for each species are produced and published in an annual report.

VOLUNTEER ANGLER DIARY

DATE: / /

YOUR NAME: _____

WATER: _____
(include pond name or address or small body)

COUNTY: _____

TARGET SPECIES: WAL LMB SMB BC TMK CC
(circle all that apply for this trip)

Catch Information

	WAL	LMB	SMB	BC	TMK	CC
Record Total Lengths to the Nearest 1/4 inch R = Released (Please circle if released)	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
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	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
	R	R	R	R	R	R
R	R	R	R	R	R	
Total Catch						
Hours Fished						

Please record comments or additional fish for this date on back.

Additional Catch Information (for the date on reverse)

	Species	Length	Species	Length	Species	Length
Record Total Lengths to the Nearest 1/4 inch R = Released (Please circle if released)		R		R		R
		R		R		R
		R		R		R
		R		R		R
		R		R		R
		R		R		R
		R		R		R
		R		R		R
		R		R		R
		R		R		R

Add additional fish to Total Catch on the front side

Comments:

Return completed diaries by end of year (or sooner)

Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Warmwater Fish Program
600 Capitol Way N.
Olympia, WA 98501-1091

Thank you!

Figure 1. Volunteer Angler Diary pages.

Results

Summary of General Results

Participation in the Volunteer Angler Diary program has fluctuated since the program's inception in 1990 (Table 1) and dramatically declined this past year. The goal of the program has been to enlist 100 anglers from all regions of the state that actively pursue warmwater game fish and to have them provide information about their fishing trips. We were only able to meet that goal once, and that was in 2000. Since the inception of the Volunteer Angler Diary program, the number of anglers participating in any given year has ranged from a low of five anglers (2012) to a high of 56 anglers (2005), with the average being about 28 participants per year. The number of registered anglers participating has ranged from a low of five (2012) to a high of 33 (2007) and has averaged about 20 registered anglers per year. A total of five anglers participated in the program in 2012 and all of these anglers were registered.

Table 1. Angler participation and number of trips from 1990-2012.

Year	No. of Registered Anglers	Anglers with Unknown Status	No. of Participating Anglers	No. of Registered Anglers Participating	No. of Guest Anglers Participating	No. of Trips
1990	no data	no data	14	14	0	210
1991	no data	no data	21	21	0	482
1992	no data	no data	27	27	0	760
1993	62	no data	27	27	0	655
1994	32	no data	17	17	0	361
1995	27	no data	12	12	0	235
1996	45	no data	21	21	0	583
1997	47	no data	14	14	0	281
1998	48	no data	13	13	0	201
1999	no data					
2000	113	no data	45	13	32	402
2001	95	82	33	28	5	271
2002	95	82	44	27	17	549
2003	84	82	42	26	16	493
2004	84	82	36	27	9	504
2005	83	82	56	28	28	509
2006	80	82	52	29	23	603
2007	71	82	70	33	37	697
2008	59	82	15	14	1	135
2009	45	82	28	15	13	276
2010	39	82	18	10	8	142
2011	39	83	9	9	0	87
2012	9	111	5	5	0	82

In 2012, the five anglers submitted data for a total of 82 individual fishing trips on 18 different bodies of water. A total of 77 Largemouth Bass, 181 Smallmouth Bass, 164 Walleye, 78 Black Crappie, no Tiger Muskies, and no Channel Catfish were reported being caught. Ninety-three percent (N=72) of the Largemouth Bass were released. One hundred percent of the Smallmouth Bass caught were released. Less than one percent (N=1) of the Walleye caught were released. Twenty-seven percent (N=21) of the Black Crappie caught were released.

Largemouth Bass

Catch Data

In 2012, a total of 77 Largemouth Bass were caught during 87.5 of fishing on 16 individual fishing trips to 10 different waters. Of that total, 59 were of quality size (12 inches or greater). Anglers reported two fishing trips with no fish caught, so catch and release information was available for 14 trips. Anglers reported practicing catch and release fishing on all (100%) of those trips. Ninety-three percent (N=72) of the Largemouth Bass caught that were of any size were released and all (100%) of the quality sized fish caught were released.

A complete summary of catch, hours fished and catch rates for Largemouth Bass 12 inches or greater are listed for each individual water fished in 2012 (Table 2).

Table 2. Summary of catch, hours fished, and catch rates (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Largemouth Bass 12 inches or greater for each individual water fished in 2012.

Water	County	No. of Trips	Hours Fished	No. of Fish Caught	CPUE	Avg. Trip Length (hrs)
Deadman	Adams	1	4.0	1	0.25	4.0
Desert	Grant	1	4.0	7	1.75	4.0
Evergreen	Grant	1	2.0	0	0.00	2.0
Hicks	Thurston	1	6.0	4	0.67	6.0
Pattison	Thurston	1	4.5	5	1.11	4.5
Potholes	Grant	1	5.0	6	1.20	5.0
Samish	Whatcom	1	8.0	0	0.00	8.0
Sammamish	King	1	3.5	1	0.29	3.5
St. Clair	Thurston	1	8.0	10	1.25	8.0
Terrell	Whatcom	7	42.5	25	0.59	6.1
Totals		16	87.5	59	0.67	5.5

Length Frequency Distributions

A total of 39 Largemouth Bass, ranging from 7 inches to 19 inches, were caught on seven fishing trips to Terrell Lake (Whatcom County) in 2012 (Figure 2).

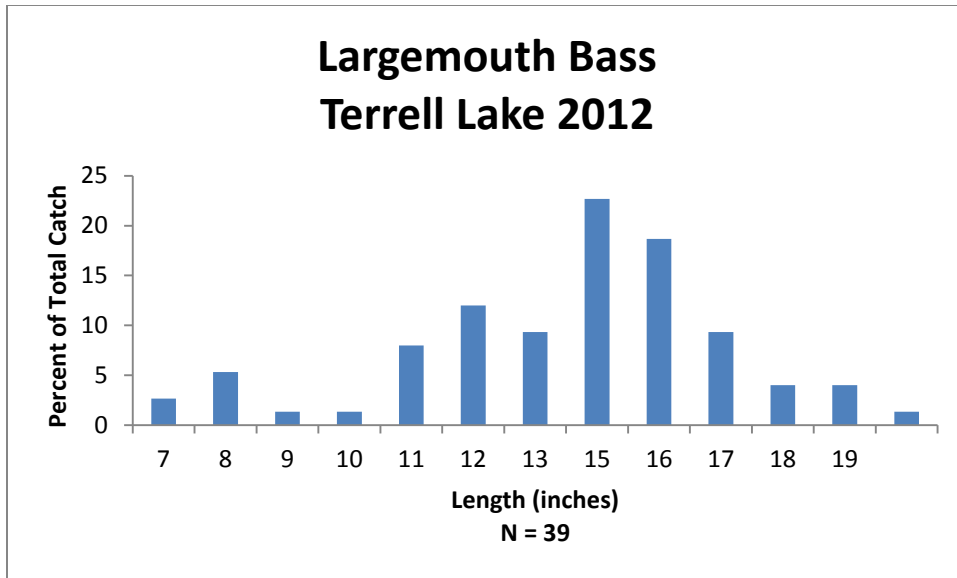


Figure 2. Length frequency of Largemouth Bass in Terrell Lake (Whatcom Co.) in 2012.

Comparative Catch Information

The statewide catch rate or catch per unit effort (CPUE) for Largemouth Bass of any size was 0.88 fish per hour in 2012. The statewide CPUE for Largemouth Bass of any size was highest in 2004 at 1.11 per hour and lowest in 2009 at 0.28 fish per hour. The CPUE for other years in which data was collected, ranged from 0.39 to 0.96 (Table 3). The statewide CPUE for Largemouth Bass 12 inches or greater was 0.67 fish per hour in 2012. This was the highest statewide catch rate for Largemouth Bass 12 inches or greater since the program’s inception. The lowest CPUE for Largemouth Bass 12 inches or greater was 0.14 fish per hour in 2011. The CPUE for other years in which data was collected, ranged from 0.16 to 0.59 (Table 3).

Table 3. Annual volunteer angler catch rate (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Largemouth Bass caught of any size and for Largemouth Bass 12 inches or greater, 1990-2012. Please note that it was discovered that the data prior to 2007 was based on fishing trips in which fish were caught and did not take into account the trips when no fish were caught.

Year	No. of Waters	Hours Fished	All Sizes		≥ 12 inches	
			No. Caught	CPUE	No. Caught	CPUE
1990	27	805.0	573	0.71	291	0.36
1991	48	1,985.0	1,148	0.58	589	0.30
1992	42	2,408.0	1,574	0.65	1,227	0.51
1993	40	1,953.0	1,505	0.77	1,149	0.59
1994	23	1,047.0	573	0.55	402	0.38
1995	16	617.5	290	0.47	186	0.30
1996	25	925.0	494	0.53	295	0.32
1997	23	751.0	316	0.42	145	0.19
1998	16	454.0	178	0.39	71	0.16
1999	no data					
2000	17	226.5	122	0.54	40	0.18
2001	30	462.8	336	0.73	168	0.36
2002	45	755.8	531	0.70	337	0.45
2003	47	792.4	744	0.94	369	0.47
2004	32	608.9	673	1.11	203	0.33
2005	37	586.3	564	0.96	253	0.43
2006	39	595.0	434	0.73	231	0.39
2007	37	648.9	291	0.45	182	0.28
2008	14	144.0	102	0.43	64	0.27
2009	18	249.5	70	0.28	46	0.18
2010	9	108.5	36	0.33	23	0.21
2011	6	73	29	0.40	10	0.14
2012	10	87.5	77	0.88	59	0.67

Smallmouth Bass

Catch Data

In 2012, a total of 183 Smallmouth Bass were caught during 213.5 hours of fishing on 47 individual fishing trips to nine different waters. Of that total, 103 were of quality size (11 inches or greater). Anglers reported one fishing trip with no fish caught, so catch and release information was available for 46 trips. Anglers reported practicing catch and release on 45 (96%) of these trips because no fish were caught on two trips. Catch and release information was available for 183 individual Smallmouth Bass of all sizes caught. One hundred percent of those fish were released. Catch and release information was also available for 103 individual Smallmouth Bass 11 inches or greater. One-hundred percent of those fish were released as well.

A complete summary of catch, hours fished and catch rates for Smallmouth Bass 11 inches or greater are listed for each individual water fished in 2012 (Table 4).

Table 4. Summary of catch, hours fished, and catch rates (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Smallmouth Bass 11 inches or greater for each individual water fished in 2012.

Water	County	No. of Trips	Hours Fished	No. of Fish Caught	CPUE	Avg Trip Length (hrs)
Curlew	Ferry	1	5.0	2	0.40	5.0
Evergreen	Grant	1	2.0	1	0.50	2.0
Long	Spokane	3	22.5	20	0.89	7.5
Potholes	Grant	1	5.0	4	0.80	5.0
Samish	Whatcom	1	8.0	5	0.63	8.0
Sammamish	King	1	3.5	0	0.00	3.5
Tapps	Pierce	1	4.0	5	1.25	4.0
Washington	King	1	3.0	1	0.33	3.0
Whatcom	Whatcom	37	160.5	145	0.93	4.5
Totals		47	213.5	183	0.86	4.5

Length Frequency Distributions

A total of 145 Smallmouth Bass, ranging from 4 inches to 22 inches, were caught on 37 fishing trips to Lake Whatcom (Whatcom County) in 2012 (Figure 3).

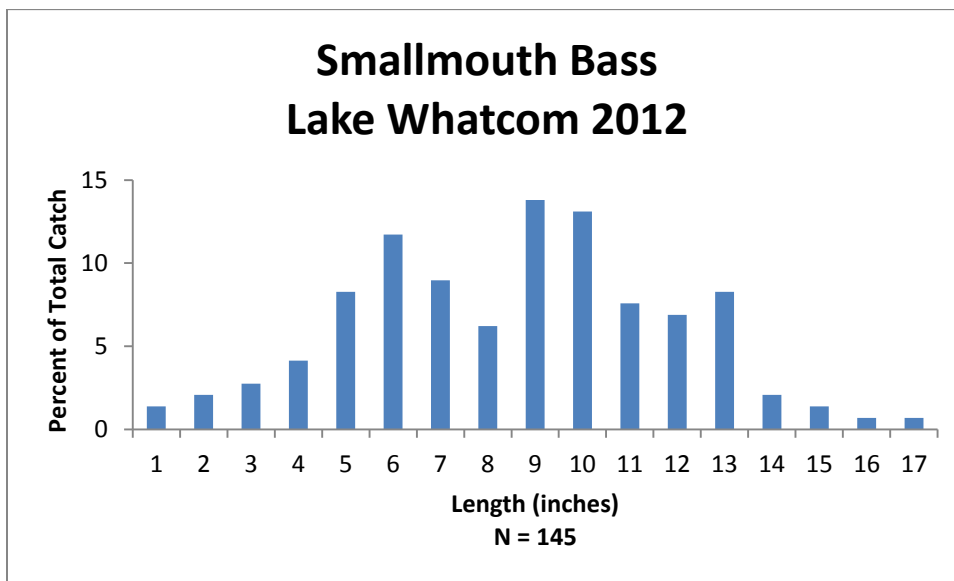


Figure 3. Length frequency distribution of Smallmouth Bass caught in Lake Whatcom (Whatcom Co.) in 2012.

Comparative Catch Information

The statewide CPUE for Smallmouth Bass of any size was 0.86 fish per hour in 2012. The statewide CPUE for Smallmouth Bass of any size was highest in 1995 at 1.31 fish per hour. The CPUE for all other years in which data was collected, ranged from 0.34 to 1.23 (Table 5). The statewide CPUE for Smallmouth Bass 11 inches or greater was 0.48 fish per hour in 2012. The statewide CPUE for Smallmouth Bass 11 inches or greater was highest in 1995 at 1.11 fish per hour. The CPUE for other years in which data was collected, ranged for 0.25 to 1.01 fish per hour (Table 5).

Table 5. Annual volunteer angler catch rate (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Smallmouth Bass caught of any size and for Smallmouth Bass 11 inches or greater, 1990-2012. Please note that it was discovered that the data prior to 2007 was based on fishing trips in which not fish were caught and did not take into account the trips when no fish were caught.

Year	No. of Waters	Hours Fished	All Sizes		≥ 11 inches	
			No. Caught	CPUE	No. Caught	CPUE
1990	19	432.0	378	0.88	240	0.56
1991	25	864.0	525	0.61	315	0.36
1992	19	610.0	525	0.86	403	0.66
1993	21	851.0	900	1.06	609	0.72
1994	17	535.0	294	0.55	227	0.42
1995	6	227.0	297	1.31	253	1.11
1996	14	609.0	563	0.92	512	0.84
1997	11	548.5	344	0.63	253	0.46
1998	8	282.5	96	0.34	71	0.25
1999	no data					
2000	14	529.5	418	0.79	295	0.56
2001	21	417.5	323	0.77	190	0.46
2002	33	1,435.5	959	0.67	815	0.57
2003	28	846.0	787	0.93	648	0.77
2004	23	742.0	420	0.57	290	0.39
2005	22	488.5	366	0.75	264	0.54
2006	23	1103.3	748	0.68	404	0.37
2007	20	802.3	678	0.85	348	0.43
2008	12	165.3	135	0.82	85	0.51
2009	12	659.0	469	0.71	295	0.45
2010	7	239.8	183	0.76	136	0.57
2011	6	151.5	101	0.67	77	0.51
2012	9	213.5	183	0.86	103	0.48

Walleye

Catch Data

In 2012, a total of 164 Walleye were caught during 111.0 hours of fishing on 21 individual fishing trips to two different waters. Of that total, 75 were of quality size (15 inches or greater). There were no fishing trips with no fish caught that were reported by the anglers, so catch and release information was available for all of the trips. Anglers reported practicing catch and release fishing on Walleye during no (0%) trips. Catch and release information was available for 164 Walleye of all sizes caught. Less than one percent (1) of those fish were released. Catch and release information was also available for 75 Walleye 15 inches or greater caught. Less than one percent (1) of those fish were released as well.

A complete summary of catch, hours fished and catch rates for Walleye 15 inches or greater are listed for each individual water fished in 2012 (Table 6).

Table 6. Summary of catch, hours fished, and catch rates (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Walleye 15 inches or greater for each individual water fished in 2012.

Body of Water	County	No. of Trips	Hours Fished	No. of Fish Caught	CPUE	Avg. Trip Length (hrs)
Roosevelt	Stevens	20	108.5	162	1.49	5.4
Umatilla	Klickitat	1	2.5	2	0.80	2.5
Totals		21	111.0	164	1.48	5.3

Length Frequency Distributions

A total of 162 Walleye, ranging from 11 inches to 23 inches, were caught on 20 fishing trips to Lake Roosevelt (Ferry, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan, Spokane, and Stevens Counties) in 2012 (Figure 4).

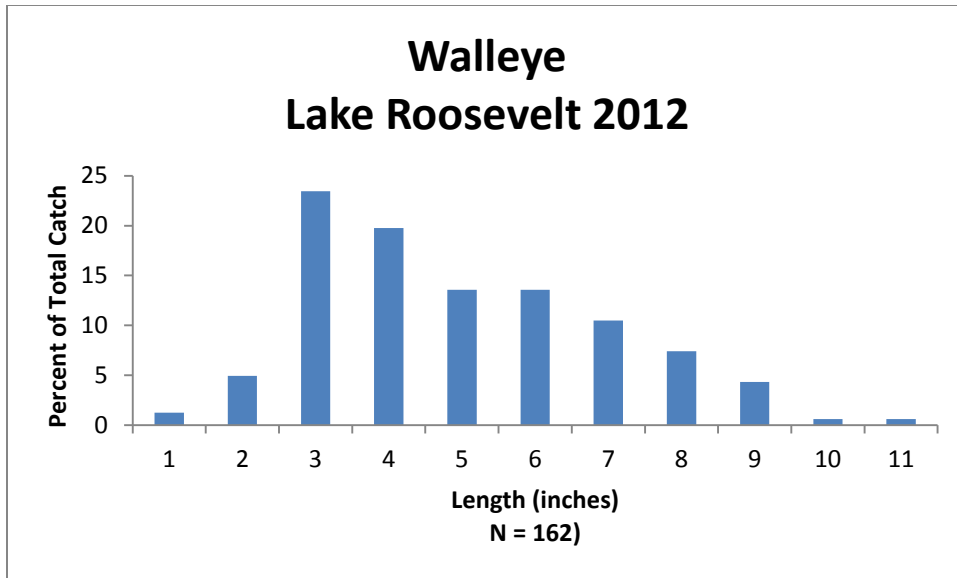


Figure 4. Length Frequency distribution of Walleye caught in Lake Roosevelt (Ferry, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan, Spokane, and Stevens Cos.) in 2012.

Comparative Catch Information

The statewide CPUE for Walleye of any size was 01.48 fish per hour in 2012. The statewide CPUE for Walleye of any size was highest in 2008 at 1.58 per hour. The CPUE for all other years, in which data was collected, has ranged from 0.24 to 1.36 (Table 7). The statewide CPUE for Walleye 15 inches or greater was 0.68 fish per hour in 2012. The statewide CPUE for Walleye 15 inches or greater was highest in 2011 at 0.84. The CPUE for other years in which data was collected, ranged for 0.14 to 0.83 fish per hour (Table 7).

Table 7. Annual volunteer angler catch rate (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Walleye caught of any size and for Walleye 15 inches or greater, 1990-2012.

Year	No. of Waters	Hours Fished	All Sizes		≥ 15 inches	
			No. Caught	CPUE	No. Caught	CPUE
1990	7	272.0	89	0.33	78	0.29
1991	9	323.0	440	1.36	160	0.50
1992	9	1,607.0	1,680	1.05	810	0.50
1993	13	1,584.0	1,335	0.84	804	0.51
1994	10	691.0	927	1.34	466	0.67
1995	7	436.0	506	1.16	297	0.68
1996	10	1,721.0	1539	0.89	1,003	0.58
1997	5	568.0	311	0.55	214	0.38
1998	9	588.3	349	0.59	197	0.33
1999	no data					
2000	13	1,382.8	334	0.24	210	0.15
2001	11	641.0	163	0.25	88	0.14
2002	17	856.3	342	0.40	261	0.30
2003	12	916.5	541	0.59	370	0.40
2004	10	1,179.5	994	0.84	554	0.47
2005	9	1233.0	1096	0.89	690	0.56
2006	14	1383.0	1263	0.91	811	0.59
2007	8	847.4	724	0.85	491	0.58
2008	6	190.3	300	1.58	157	0.83
2009	7	158.0	83	0.53	31	0.20
2010	3	50.0	14	0.28	13	0.26
2011	2	104.5	163	1.56	88	0.84
2012	2	111	164	1.48	75	0.68

Black Crappie

Catch Data

In 2012, a total of 78 Black Crappie were caught during 28.5 hours of fishing on four individual fishing trips to one body of water. Of that total, 77 fish were of quality size (8 inches or greater). There were no fishing trips with no fish caught reported by anglers, so catch and release information was available for all of the trips. Anglers reported practicing catch and release fishing on Black Crappie on no (0%) trips. Catch and release information was available for 78 Black Crappie of all sizes caught. Twenty-seven percent (N=21) of those fish were released. Catch and release information was also available for 77 Black Crappie 8 inches or greater caught. Twenty-seven percent (N=21) of those fish were released.

A complete summary of catch, hours fished and catch rates for Black Crappie 8 inches or greater is listed for each individual water fished in 2011 (Table 8).

Table 8. Summary of catch, hours fished, and catch rates (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Black Crappie 8 inches or greater for each individual water fished in 2012.

Water	County	No. of Trips	Hours Fished	No. of Fish Caught	CPUE	Avg. Trip Length (hrs)
Long	Spokane	4	28.5	77	2.70	7.1
Totals		4	28.5	77	2.70	7.1

Length Frequency Distribution

A total of 78 Black Crappie, ranging from 8 inches to 14 inches, were caught on four fishing trips to Long Lake (Spokane County) in 2012 (Figure 5).

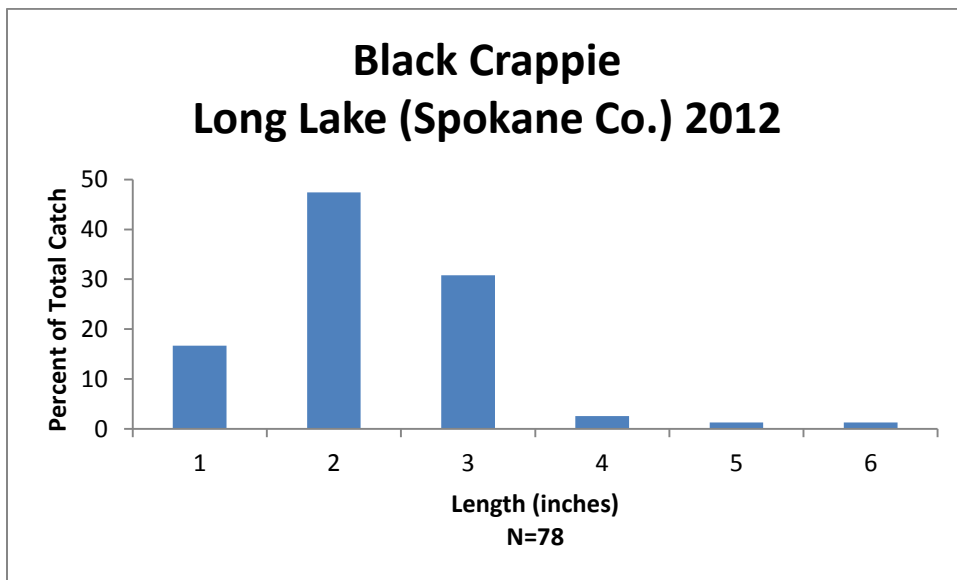


Figure 5. Length frequency distribution of Black Crappie caught in Long Lake (Spokane Co.) in 2012.

Comparative Catch Information

The statewide CPUE for Black Crappie of any size was 2.74 fish per hour in 2012. The highest CPUE for Black Crappie of any size was 2.97 fish per hour in 2008. The CPUE for the other years in which data was collected, ranged from 0.26 to 2.36 fish per hour (Table 9). The statewide CPUE for Black Crappie 8 inches or greater was 2.70 fish per hour in 2012. The CPUE for Black Crappie 8 inches or greater was highest in 2008 at 2.97 fish per hour. The CPUE for the other years in which data was collected, ranged from 0.13 to 1.25 fish per hour (Table 9).

Table 9. Annual volunteer angler catch rate (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Black Crappie caught of any size and for Black Crappie 8 inches or greater, 1991-2012 (No data collected prior to 2000).

Year	No. of Waters	Hours Fished	All Sizes		≥ 8 inches	
			No. Caught	CPUE	No. Caught	CPUE
2000	0					
2001	4	81.8	193	2.36	102	1.25
2002	5	46.0	65	1.41	56	1.22
2003	6	37.8	71	1.88	5	0.13
2004	3	47.5	49	1.03	39	0.82
2005	6	61.0	64	1.05	37	0.61
2006	5	28.5	22	0.77	15	0.53
2007	8	47.4	105	2.22	46	0.97
2008	6	18.5	55	2.97	55	2.97
2009	4	23.5	44	1.87	38	1.62
2010	4	19.0	5	0.26	4	0.21
2011	1	2.0	1	0.50	1	0.50
2012	1	28.5	78	2.74	77	2.70

Tiger Muskie

Catch Data

In 2012, no Tiger Muskies were caught during 13.0 hours of fishing on two individual fishing trips to two different waters.

A complete summary of catch, hours fished and catch rates for Tiger Muskies 36 inches or greater are listed for each individual water fished in 2012 (Table 10).

Table 10. Summary of catch, hours fished, and catch rates (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Tiger Muskies 36 inches or greater for each individual water fished in 2012.

Water	County	No. of Trips	Hours Fished	No. of Fish Caught	CPUE	Avg. Trip Length (hrs)
Curlew	Ferry	1	5.0	0	0.00	5.0
Merwin	Cowlitz	1	8.0	0	0.00	8.0
Totals		2	13.0	0	0.00	6.5

Length Frequency Distribution

N/A

Comparative Catch Information

The statewide CPUE for Tiger Muskies of any size was 0.00 fish per hour in 2012. The statewide CPUE for Tiger Muskies of any size was highest in 2002 at 0.50 fish per hour. The CPUE for other years in which data was collected ranged from 0.04 to 0.33 fish per hour (Table 11). The statewide CPUE for Tiger Muskies 36 inches or greater was 0.00 fish per hour in 2012. The statewide CPUE for Tiger Muskies 36 inches or greater was highest in 2002 at 0.25 fish per hour. The CPUE for other years in which data was collected, ranged from 0.00 to 0.20 fish per hour (Table 11).

Table 11. Annual volunteer angler catch rate (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Tiger Muskie caught of any size and for Tiger Muskie 36 inches or greater, 2000-2012 (no data collected prior to 2000).

Year	No. of Waters	Hours Fished	All Sizes		≥ 36 inches	
			No. Caught	CPUE	No. Caught	CPUE
2000	0					
2001	2	51.0	5	0.10	4	0.08
2002	1	4.0	1	0.25	1	0.25
2003	2	24.0	0	0.00	0	0.00
2004	4	65.5	13	0.20	3	0.05
2005	5	153.6	17	0.11	14	0.09
2006	7	751.0	37	0.05	20	0.03
2007	5	517.3	116	0.22	66	0.13
2008	5	145.0	6	0.04	3	0.02
2009	7	664.3	24	0.04	12	0.02
2010	7	391.8	27	0.07	5	0.01
2011	5	90.8	14	0.15	4	0.04
2012	2	13.0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00

Channel Catfish

Catch Data

In 2012, there were no trips targeting Channel Catfish nor were there any trips in which Channel Catfish were caught as by-catch.

Comparative Catch Information

There is no comparative catch information for 2012 (Table 12).

Table 12. Annual volunteer angler catch rate (catch per unit effort (CPUE)) for Channel Catfish caught of any size and for Channel Catfish 16 inches or greater, 2000-2012 (No data collected prior to 2000).

Year	No. of Waters	Hours Fished	All Sizes		≥ 16 inches	
			No. Caught	CPUE	No. Caught	CPUE
2000	0					
2001	1	7.0	0	0.00	0	0.00
2002	1	10.0	12	1.20	10	1.00
2003	1	37.8	71	1.88	5	0.13
2004	0					
2005	0					
2006	3	38.0	10	0.26	6	0.16
2007	5	66.0	18	0.27	16	0.24
2008	1	5.0	1	0.20	1	0.20
2009	0					
2010	0					
2011	0					
2012	0					

Discussion

The number of anglers participating has decreased since the record high of 70 in 2007. Anglers are losing interest in the program as well. It was suggested by some anglers that supplying envelopes with pre-paid postage would increase participation. That was implemented, but rescinded two years later after agency budget cuts. There did not appear to be any increase in the number of anglers that submitted data sheets, nor in the number of data sheets that were submitted. However, for those anglers that did not have any data to submit, I got more responses in regard to whether they wanted to stay in the program or quit the program. The form letter that was sent out had also been modified to simply things. Anglers were asked to provide their name and check one of for check boxes which ranged from wanting to quit participating in the program to stating they wanted to continue in the program and to also be provided with more data sheets. Thirty-nine letters were sent out requesting data this year. Only eleven anglers responded. Two of those anglers quit the program, so the program now has nine registered anglers and 111 anglers of unknown status.

The number of fishing trips taken in 2012 was five less trips than taken the previous year. However there were also four fewer anglers participating, so there were actually more trips per angler taken, which is an encouraging sign. The number of trips per angler has averaged 13.8 since 1990 and the average number of anglers participating has been 28.1. The average number of trips per angler was 16.4 in 2012. Anglers could be adjusting to the higher costs associated with fuel, but they are limiting the distances they are traveling to go fishing.

Despite the small number of anglers, it looked like anglers took trips to all regions across the state. Although fishing did not occur from a large cross-section of bodies of water, eastern and western Washington were almost equally represented; ten bodies of water from western Washington and eight bodies of water from eastern Washington. Approximately twice the number of fishing trips taken occurred in western Washington (51 versus 30), likely because most of the state's population resides in western Washington. The majority of trips occurred in Regions 4 and 1, which are two regions of the state with the largest large population (Region 4, 46 trips; Region 1, 25 trips). The two other western Washington regions, Region 5 and Region 6, had one and four fishing trips, respectively. The two other eastern Washington regions, Region 2 and Region 3, had four and one fishing trip respectively.

Discussions have been held about what to do with the program and to increase participation. There has been a backlog in getting the summary reports approved and posted on the agency's website (the last posted report was 2006) and because of this, some anglers have thought that the program was discontinued. Another deficiency of the program has been the ability to reach out

to anglers that target other warmwater species such as catfish and black crappie. Unlike the bass and walleye anglers which are more high profiled and have many clubs, the crappie and catfish anglers are less high profiled and there aren't any clubs that we know of.

The Volunteer Angler Diary program as it now stands, has been temporarily stopped as the agency is looking at expanding it species-wise (include all game fish) and making it more angler friendly by enabling the anglers to enter their fishing trip information electronically and providing the anglers with the ability to post pictures to and make comments on the agency's Facebook page. It is the agency's hope that these changes will create renewed excitement and interest in the Volunteer Angler Diary program.



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