



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Communication. That is the purpose of this newsletter. It lets you the angler know how your fisheries are doing and what your fish biologists are up to. By putting this information in a popular format we hope to get more feedback from anglers on our management programs.

Most of the material in this newsletter relates to the Game and Fish Casper Fisheries Region. This area covers the North Platte River from the head of Seminoe Reservoir to where the river leaves Wyoming near Torrington. All the mainstem reservoirs are included as well as 33 Mile country and streams from Bates Hole to Cottonwood Creek near Glendo Reservoir.

We manage Wyoming fisheries for the citizens of Wyoming so your input is very important. If you have any comments on the information in this newsletter, give us some feedback by phone (1-800-233-8544), letter (Angler Feedback, 3030 Energy Lane, Suite 100, Casper, WY 82604) or e-mail (pmavra@missc.state.wy.us).

Good Fishing!

FLUSHING FLOWS

For the last several years in the North Platte River below Gray Reef Dam, the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), the federal agency that controls the dams on the North Platte, has provided flushing flows when water was available in the spring and fall. These flushes do not affect overall storage or water rights.

A flushing flow is a release of water that is of sufficient volume to pick up and move fine sediments (silt, sand, etc.) downstream. The flushes last only five days with flows fluctuating from 500 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 4,000 cfs each day.

Fine sediments like silt will suffocate trout eggs. Sediment also harms fry that are emerging from redds and can decrease insect production. The flushes are designed to reduce fine sediments in spawning gravels, especially above Lusby Public Fishing Area where we believe most trout spawning occurs.

The spring flush is done in early March before the majority of rainbows spawn. The fall flush is done in mid October before brown trout spawn. We have documented many more wild trout in the river above Casper in recent years and flushing flows probably helped that happen.

GLENDO RESERVOIR CREEL SURVEY

If you fish at Glendo Reservoir in 2000, you may be contacted by Wyoming Game & Fish employees asking about your fishing trip. We are conducting a creel survey from April through September. We will be counting anglers and their catch to quantify the use at Glendo.

If a creel clerk contacts you, he or she will ask how long you fished, what you were fishing for, did you use a boat or fish from the bank, what kind of tackle you used and how many fish you caught. The clerk will also measure your fish so we can determine what size of fish anglers are harvesting. Clerks may also ask you questions about your fishing experience that day and what factors you consider necessary to make your fishing trip successful.

Thanks in advance for your help and time to provide us with good information. Your help will allow us to manage Glendo for you in the future.



NONGAME FISH

So what are nongame fish and why are they important? The definition of a nongame fish in the fishing regulations is “all fish not defined as game fish”. Most anglers can name nearly all the gamefish: trout, bass, walleye, sauger, catfish, perch, burbot, sunfish, pike, crappie, salmon, char, whitefish, grayling, sturgeon, drum and bullheads. I bet most anglers can come up with chubs, minnows and suckers but few other nongame fish. There are around 80 species of fish in Wyoming; game fish are less than half this total.

Nongame fish are important for a number of reasons. Many nongame fish are native to Wyoming and a natural part of the fishery. All fill a niche in the available habitat. Think of a niche as the place the fish lives and what it needs to survive. Most nongame fish are important in the food chain. They eat small organisms like plankton and algae. In turn, some are eaten by game fish like walleye and catfish. Without nongame fish, many of our game species would have little to eat.

A good example of a beneficial nongame fish is the Plains killifish. This fish is native to the Casper area and can live in very shallow water where many other fish cannot. It reaches maximum lengths of about 4 inches and primarily feeds on the surface of ponds and streams. One good thing about this fish is it feeds on mosquito larvae, thus reducing the adult mosquito populations. In the early 1990s, the Department of Health in Natrona County used killifish to help control mosquitoes in shallow ponds near town. The City of Riverton is currently using killifish to control mosquitoes in that area.

There are some nongame fish, like carp, that can be bad for a fishery. In most all cases, these undesirable nongame fish are not native to Wyoming. In the case of carp, they can become so large and numerous that they can hurt the fishery. Carp root around in the mud for their food. By doing this, they increase the turbidity of the water and decrease the productivity of plankton and subsequently zooplankton by reducing light transmission in the water.

Next time you're out fishing take some time to appreciate the fish you are not fishing for.



FLY FISHING THE CASPER REGION by Herb Waterman (Herb Waterman is a Casper resident and avid fisherman in the area)

Let me start this article with a few comments about bait fishing. Some of my best friends are bait fishermen and since I grew up on the North Fork of the South Platte that has no tailwaters, you either bait fished till around the first of July or you didn't fish. This past year I caught several rainbows near Amoco's old refinery with night crawlers.

One of the knocks against fly fishing is the expense of the equipment. However, there are starter combinations that include the rod, reel and line for well under \$100. If you fish in the warmer months, it is possible to forego all the wading equipment and simply wade wet. Wading wet on small creeks is a most enjoyable experience. However, eventually you will need some sort of wading paraphernalia. You don't necessarily need a fly rod to effectively fish with flies. A spinning rod used with a bubble or some sort of sinker enables a person to fish on the surface (dry flies) or beneath the surface (wet flies, nymphs or streamers). Nevertheless, fishing with a fly rod is still the ultimate to most of us fly fisher folk.

A unique happening the fly fishermen get to witness and hopefully exploit is the hatch of aquatic insects. These creatures go from nymph or larval forms living on the bottom of a stream, lake or pond to an almost adult form. This happens when the insect sheds its skin in the surface film (during the nymph stage) and then pops out as a delicate adult. Many of the small ponds in the Casper area are witness to this hatching process.

As early as April and May, a tremendous midge hatch takes place at Dome Rock Reservoir. This is a rather large midge, the pupal stage being 10-12 millimeters long. During June in many of the area's stock ponds the damsel fly nymphs start their migration to shore to crawl out on near-shore vegetation to develop into a beautiful adult damsel. Toward the end of June and into July just before dusk a small motorboat insect skirts around on the local ponds. This ½ to ¾ inch long pond caddis excites trout like few other insects do. The fish will almost chase the bugs up on to shore. Numerous hatches also occur at the area's streams.

Fly fishing the North Platte River in the Casper area can be a frustrating experience for the uninitiated and sometimes even the experienced fishermen. It is usually necessary to dredge the bottom of the river with nymphs or streamers to achieve success, especially when it comes to catching larger trout. It is important to record when the hatches of various insects take place, since the hatches usually occur near the same time each year.

A great way to learn about fly fishing is to join one of the numerous fly fishing clubs in Wyoming. In Casper, the Wyoming Fly Casters have been in existence for over 20 years. The club meets on the second Wednesday each month at the Izaak Walton clubhouse. New members are always welcome.

BURLINGTON RESERVOIR



Anglers have told us there is a growing interest in fishing for warmwater fish like bass and sunfish. Because anglers requested more warmwater fishing opportunities and the habitat could support it, largemouth bass and hybrid sunfish were stocked at Burlington Reservoir (near the town of Powder River) in 1997. Table 1 shows the catch from netting in August in 1999. The largemouths are growing well, increasing from 7.7 inches in 1998 to 10.4 inches. The hybrids are also reaching sizes that anglers will start taking them home for a meal. Rainbows have continued to be stocked and their growth is really good. We netted several rainbows that were over 20 inches and weighed 4-5 pounds.

Table 1. Net catch from Burlington Reservoir, August 1999.

Species	Avg. Length (in.)	Length Range
LM Bass	10.4	9.9 – 10.8
Hybrid Sunfish	6.3	4.7 – 7.8
Rainbow Trout	12.8	8.0 – 22.3

On the downside, water levels continued to fall in 1999. There just wasn't much moisture in the drainage. With low water levels, the possibility of a winterkill during the 1999-2000 winter is very real. A winterkill happens when snow covers the ice and blocks out the light. This causes the plants to die and as they decompose, all the oxygen in the water is used up. Since fish need oxygen to live, the fish die too. This happened at Burlington Reservoir in 1996 and we are concerned a similar die-off may occur this winter. Hopefully a winterkill will not occur and you will be able to go and catch some bass, sunfish and trout when the reservoir opens for fishing. If the reservoir does winterkill, we will have to start over. Burlington is open to fishing from May 1st to August 31st and internal combustion motors are prohibited.

SEMINOE RESERVOIR

Seminole Reservoir is looking good in 2000, especially for large walleye. Netting results from 1999 showed a good trout population (Table 2). We've seen the trout move up-reservoir as water temperatures warm in the summer. We don't yet understand why this movement is happening and we have several sampling trips scheduled in 2000 to try to figure it out.

Seminole is probably the best chance in this area, and perhaps the state, to catch a trophy size walleye. Anglers reported several walleye over 10 pounds in 1999. Netting found larger walleye in the Red Hills and dam area. The river arms appear to have higher walleye densities but they are smaller than the walleye closer to the dam.

Table 2. Seminole gill net summary, September 1999.

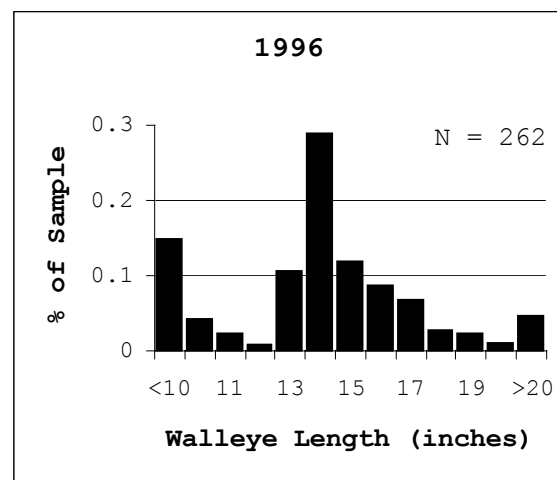
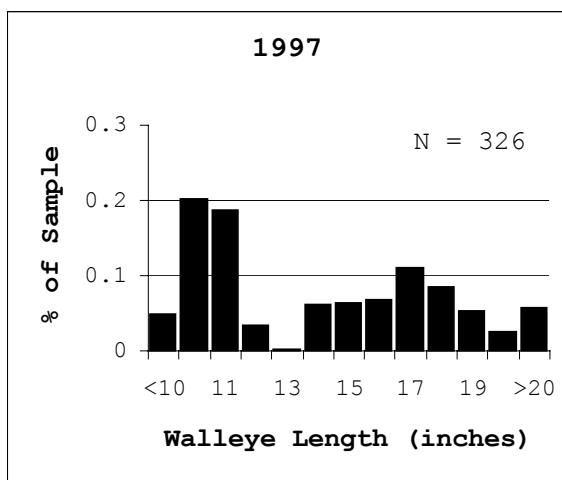
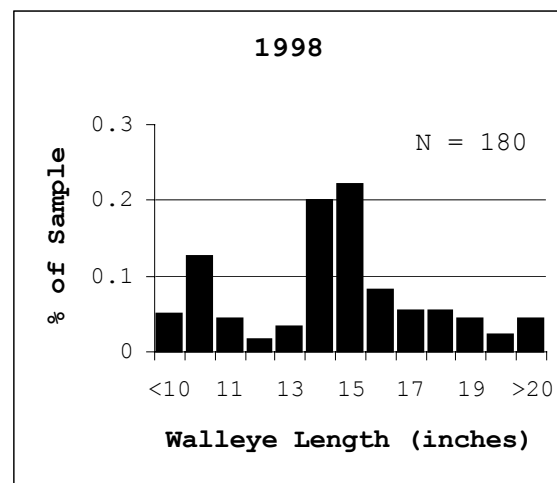
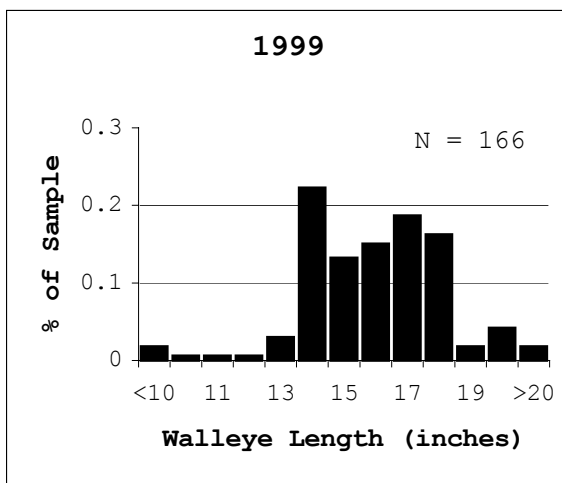
Species	Number Caught	Catch/ Hour	Avg. L (in.)	Largest (in.)	Avg. Wt (lbs.)	Largest (lbs.)	Avg. C
Rainbow Trout	148	0.46	14.1	19.0	1.07	2.33	37.9
Cutthroat Trout	13	0.04	14.9	17.5	1.32	2.12	38.9
Brown Trout	7	0.05	19.2	21.7	2.56	3.53	34.6
Walleye	82	0.55	14.9	29.8	1.82	11.53	33.9



GLENDO RESERVOIR



The walleye fishing at Glendo was fabulous in 1999; these are the good ol' days. It is hard to imagine how the fishing could get better in 2000 but it very well might. We think the fishery is in good shape when we see one strong year class every five years or so. In 2000, there are several strong year classes in the walleye fishery. The series of four graphs below shows the sizes of the walleye in the population over the last four years. It looks like 1999 is the first year in the last four we have seen a relatively weak year class of the prior year's reproduction (represented by walleye in the 10-11 inch range). The fishery should remain good as long as we don't have several years in a row of poor recruitment.



The upcoming creel survey (see related story) will set the bar for how good walleye fishing can be at Glendo. If there was ever a year to get out and do some walleye fishing at Glendo, 2000 is it. Good luck!

PATHFINDER RESERVOIR

There is still no better place in this region to catch a stringer of big trout than Pathfinder Reservoir. The percentage of trout over 20 inches seems to have decreased over the last few years, but there are still lots of 20+s out there.

We netted the reservoir in the spring (Table 3) and fall (Table 4). The catch rates have gone up for trout over the last few years. We attribute the increase to changes in the stocking program based on the results of the coded-wire tag study we completed in 1996. We have eliminated stocking strains that performed poorly and increased the strains that performed well.

Cutthroats are numerous in Pathfinder in the spring but are much less numerous by the fall. We think the cuts are either going to the rivers and creeks as the water warms or are in a habitat that our nets do not sample well (deep water for example).

Table 3. Pathfinder gill net summary, June 1999.

Species	Number Caught	Catch/ Hour	Avg. L (in.)	Largest (in.)	Avg. Wt (lbs.)	Largest (lbs.)	Avg. C
Rainbow Trout	145	0.70	15.3	21.6	1.49	3.30	40.6
Cutthroat Trout	106	0.51	16.3	20.7	1.76	3.02	40.1
Brown Trout	13	0.13	16.0	21.8	1.93	3.65	40.4
Walleye	68	0.70	14.8	27.8	1.61	11.00	35.6

Table 4. Pathfinder gill net summary, September 1999.

Species	Number Caught	Catch/ Hour	Avg. L (in.)	Largest (in.)	Avg. Wt (lbs.)	Largest (lbs.)	Avg. C
Rainbow Trout	152	0.63	16.7	21.8	1.86	2.98	39.7
Cutthroat Trout	13	0.05	16.5	18.5	1.79	2.10	39.9
Brown Trout	14	0.12	16.4	22.7	1.82	4.49	41.3
Walleye	67	0.57	14.4	25.0	1.35	6.24	33.6

Walleye condition factors (Avg. C; robustness or weight in relation to length) were low in 1998. We were concerned that the walleye were getting skinny indicating their food was in short supply. To help lessen the food shortage, we stocked 800 adult gizzard shad in early spring. These are amazing fish. One female can produce 500,000 eggs and they can spawn more than once a year in Glendo. This multiple spawning provides food throughout the year for most sizes of walleye. The walleye did get fatter in 1999 so maybe the gizzard shad helped out.

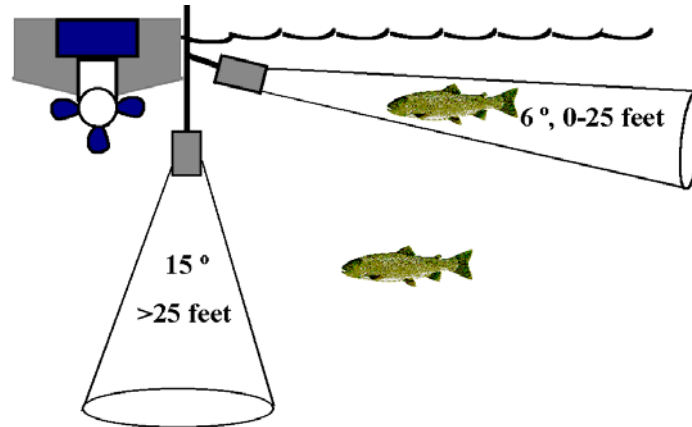
There's a new boat ramp at Bishop's Point. The ramp is on the south side of the road as you approach the camping area. This ramp will allow easier boat access to the Sweetwater Arm.

Fishing for trout and walleye should be good in 2000. Good luck!

G&F EXPLORES NEW SONAR TO ASSESS TROUT NUMBERS by Dan Yule

The Reservoir Research Crew consists of two biologists stationed in Casper that work statewide. Our job includes collecting information to improve sport fisheries on Wyoming's many lakes and reservoirs. We also work with the regional fish biologists on many research projects on lakes and reservoirs, like the recently completed coded-wire tag project on the North Platte system.

Reservoir Research also is always searching for new ways to effectively and efficiently sample fish populations. In 1996, the Mills Office of the Bureau of Reclamation purchased a scientific-grade echosounder (sonar) and put it on permanent loan to the G&F (see picture).



This sonar is not your over-the-counter fish finder. It uses a technique called fast-multiplexing that allows the sonar to look down and to the side as the boat travels over the water. Like your fish finder, this sonar unit cannot tell species apart but it is very accurate at determining how large a fish is. It does this by measuring the sonar signal return off the fish's swim bladder. To help determine species, we use a purse seine and gill nets to partition the sonar signals to species. We've found through sampling many Wyoming waters that the vast majority of the fish we "see" with the sonar are trout or salmon.

By storing the collected data on computers, we are able to estimate the numbers of fish in a particular reservoir. Take Alcova in this region. This is a steep-sided reservoir that allows for very good sonar estimates. In August 1999, we estimated 63,300 trout in the open-water areas of Alcova.

These types of population estimates can be done on most of Wyoming's larger lakes and reservoirs. The sonar equipment is helping Reservoir Research make better recommendations on the numbers and sizes of trout to stock, by which we hope to improve angler success.

ALCOVA RESERVOIR

The trout population in Alcovia is in great shape (Tables 5&6). Catch rates in our nets has gone up and average size has gone down a little. The fact that average size has gone down indicates that stocked trout are surviving well. The changes to the stocking program from coded-wire tag results in addition to a depressed walleye population have likely increased trout survival.

Alcovia is managed as a “fast family fishery”. Our goal is not to provide big fish, but fast fishing action. Since the rainbows only last a year or two before they are caught, we stock a few brown trout so anglers have some opportunity to catch larger (>20 inches) trout. In 1999, an angler reportedly caught a 17 pound brown trout.

Although walleye are becoming more rare, anglers have a chance of catching a real trophy walleye in Alcovia.

Table 5. Alcovia gill net summary, May 1999.

Species	Number Caught	Catch/ Hour	Avg. L (in.)	Largest (in.)	Avg. Wt (lbs.)	Largest (lbs.)	Avg. C
Rainbow Trout	213	0.85	12.3	16.8	0.84	1.93	43.4
Brown Trout	20	0.17	15.1	19.0	1.38	2.74	38.0
Walleye	29	0.24	15.2	25.8	1.51	6.45	35.6

Table 6. Alcovia gill net summary, September 1999.

Species	Number Caught	Catch/ Hour	Avg. L (in.)	Largest (in.)	Avg. Wt (lbs.)	Largest (lbs.)	Avg. C
Rainbow Trout	319	1.27	13.8	19.5	1.05	2.98	42.2
Brown Trout	9	0.08	16.8	20.8	2.03	2.95	41.9
Walleye	19	0.16	16.9	30.8	2.55	11.80	36.5

1999 STOCKING IN THE CASPER REGION

G&F stocked a total of 533,300 rainbow trout, 28,850 cutthroat trout, 500 brook trout, 23,500 channel catfish, 10,600 bluegills and 800 gizzard shad in the Casper area in 1999 (Table 7). The majority of the trout were stocked in the three big reservoirs; Alcovia, Pathfinder and Seminoe.

There is a general movement nationwide not to stock trout in streams that can support natural reproduction. Only three streams in the Casper Region are stocked and all three are stocked near high fishing pressure access areas. The North Platte River is stocked in areas with high pressure and limited natural reproduction.

The stocking schedule for 2000 is similar to what was stocked in 1999. Exceptions include not stocking gizzard shad in Pathfinder, possibly stocking gizzard shad in Glendo (if shad winterkill) and with hope Burlington will make it through the winter and we can stock some more hybrid sunfish.

Table 7. Fish stocked in the Casper Region in 1999.

Water	Number Stocked	Species	Strain
Alcova Reservoir	91,000	Rainbow	Fall Rainbow (FRB)
Pathfinder Reservoir	138,000	Rainbow	Fall Rainbow (FRB)
Pathfinder Reservoir	800	Gizzard Shad	
Seminole Reservoir	99,000	Rainbow	Fall Rainbow (FRB)
Seminole Reservoir	19,350	Snake River Cutthroat	Bar BC
Goldeneye Reservoir	9,500	Yellowstone Cutthroat	
33 Mile Reservoirs	7,000	Rainbow	Fall Rainbow (FRB)
Midwest Reservoir	10,600	Bluegill	
Burlington Reservoir	1,000	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
Guernsey Slough	1,000	Channel Catfish	
Bryan Stock Trail	5,000	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
Bryan Stock Trail	1,500	Channel Catfish	
Otter Creek Pond	500	Brook Trout	
Yesness Pond	1,000	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
NPR ¹ - Torrington	12,500	Rainbow	FRB & ELR
NPR- Torrington	1,000	Channel Catfish	
NPR- Douglas	4,500	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
NPR- Douglas	14,000	Channel Catfish	
NPR- Lusby to Goose Egg	100,000	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
NPR- Below Alcova	200	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
NPR- Miracle Mile	50,000	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
NPR- Below Casper	21,000	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
NPR- Below Casper	6,000	Channel Catfish	
LaPrele Creek- Campbell CG	250	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
LaBonte Creek- Curtis Gulch	1,450	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)
Horseshoe Creek- canyon area	1,400	Rainbow	Eagle Lake (ELR)

¹ - NPR = North Platte River

FISHERIES FUTURE SURVEY

An angler attitude survey of randomly selected resident and nonresident anglers that purchased a fishing license in 1998 was conducted. The purpose of the survey was to determine the attitudes of resident and nonresident anglers about their fishing experiences and management of their fisheries.

Questionnaires were mailed to 1,498 resident and 3,000 nonresident anglers. The response rate was 60% for residents and 52% for nonresidents. Most of the respondents, 84% of residents and 92% of nonresidents, were satisfied with their overall angling experiences in Wyoming.

Other conclusions from the survey included:

1. Resident anglers generally use a combination of tackles (bait, flies, etc.), support statewide general regulations and not special regulations, and prefer fishing experiences that provide relaxing outings with family and friends.
2. Nonresidents are more likely to primarily fly fish, support special regulations and focus on trout angling in wilderness settings.
3. A substantial percentage of both residents and nonresidents are very interested in opportunities to fish for warm/cool water species in Wyoming.

These results help us manage the fisheries resources for the majority of anglers. This type of survey is done every 4 to 8 years.

STATE RECORDS

Another three state records fell in 1999. Sauger, splake and carp all have new benchmarks to shoot for in 2000 (Table 8). What state records are vulnerable in 2000? In the Casper area, the walleye record could fall at Seminoe or Pathfinder. The large catfish below Dave Johnson and above Glendo Reservoir have received a lot of airtime at the local sporting goods stores. If the largemouth continue their fabulous growth at Midwest Reservoir, we could see a challenger for the state record probably in 2001. We handle suckers from the Platte River each year that would shatter the state record. Good luck going after a memorable fish in 2000.

Table 8. Wyoming state record fish as of January 2000.

SPECIES	WEIGHT	LENGTH	LOCATION	COUNTY	DATE	CAUGHT BY
Bass, largemouth	7.88	21.50	stock pond	Sheridan	1992	Dustin Shorma
Bass, smallmouth	5.08	19.00	Tongue River	Sheridan	1993	Lonnie Zimmer
Bass, rock	1.29	11.00	farm pond	Sheridan	1996	Shelby Holder
Bluegill	1.47	10.30	Lake View Pond	Platte	1988	Brad Artery
Bullhead, black	2.90	15.25	Ten Sleep Pond	Washakie	1987	Brian Rygwalski
Carp	30.23	35.00	Flaming Gorge Res.	Sweetwater	1999	Mike Bozner
Catfish, flathead	3.74	20.60	N. Platte River	Natrona	1995	Ronald Keck
Catfish, channel	24.19	34.75	farm pond	Platte	1993	James Hayes
Chub, Utah	1.18	12.75	Flaming Gorge Res.	Sweetwater	1998	Mike Bozner
Crappie, black	2.34	15.00	Boysen Res.	Fremont	1997	Edward Hausauer
Crappie, white	2.19	16.00	Kleenburn Ponds	Sheridan	1991	Russel W. Korp
Drum, freshwater	11.88	26.00	Glendo Res.	Platte	1993	Rich Detry
Goldeye	1.32	16.75	Powder River	Campbell	1996	Jim Williams
Grayling	2.36	19.63	Meadow Lake	Sublette	1983	Robert Doak
Green Sunfish	0.54	8.30	farm pond	Sheridan	1997	Keith Reau, Jr.
Ling	19.25	44.00	Pilot Butte Res.	Fremont	1965	K.E. Mooreland
Muskie, tiger	29.37	49.00	Grayrocks Res.	Platte	1992	Frank Rubrecht
Perch, yellow	2.20	16.00	Mayland Pond	Big Horn	1991	Mike Miller
Pike, northern	26.44	43.00	Keyhole Res.	Crook	1998	Micheal McCrary
River carpsucker	6.15	22.00	Boysen Res.	Fremont	1997	Danny Kurttila
Salmon, kokanee	5.73	26.25	Flaming Gorge Res.	Sweetwater	1996	Mary Robinson
Sauger	7.40	26.20	Boysen Reservoir	Fremont	1999	Brad Berg
Splake	11.52	30.00	Hog Park Reservoir	Carbon	1999	Zach Conner
Sturgeon, shovelnose	7.60	36.00	Powder River	Sheridan	1993	Allen Gorzalka
Sucker, longnose	2.19	18.10	Little Goose Creek	Sheridan	1998	Darrell Meineke
Sucker, white	3.69	19.80	Alsop Lake	Albany	1992	Peter Kuhn
Sucker, Utah	5.80	24.00	Bear River	Uinta	1998	Al Richardson
Trout, brook	9.69	24.50	Green River	Sublette	1976	Max Long
Trout, brown	25.81	34.25	Flaming Gorge Res.	Sweetwater	1982	George Rose
Trout, cutthroat	15.00	32.00	Native Lake	Sublette	1959	Alan Dow
Trout, golden	11.25	28.00	Cook Lake	Sublette	1948	C.S. Reed
Trout, lake	50.00	46.00	Jackson Lake	Teton	1983	Doris Budge
	50.00	48.00	Flaming Gorge Res.	Sweetwater	1995	Randy Calkins
Trout, Ohrid	14.25	30.00	N. Platte River	Natrona	1986	Kim Durfee
Trout, rainbow	23.00	35.50	Burnt Lake	Sublette	1969	Frank Favazzo
Walleye	17.42	34.00	Boysen Res.	Fremont	1991	Stan Seivewright
Whitefish	4.25	21.00	Snake River	Teton	1977	Dennis Jennings

LOCATING AND CATCHING WALLEYES by Howard Ewart
(Howard Ewart is a Casper resident and avid walleye and trout angler)

Walleye fishing in 2000 should be good to excellent in our Wyoming reservoirs. I hope the information presented in this article will help anglers catch more walleyes.

Walleyes can be caught during any month in all the reservoirs that have a walleye fishery. The major walleye reservoirs are: Glendo, Seminoe, Pathfinder, Alcova, Boysen, Grayrocks, Big Horn, Keyhole and Ocean Lake. All of the reservoirs have peak periods for the best walleye fishing. These periods last for about two to three months and are different for each reservoir. The key factors that determine the peak periods are water temperature and available food (forage). A surface water temperature of 55°F starts the walleyes actively feeding. At this time, between May and June in Wyoming reservoirs, the forage supply is nearing its lowest level. Walleyes have to search for food which can result in good fishing throughout the day. Since the water warms first in the shallows, forage fish tend to use shallow areas and the walleye follow. Many walleye are caught in two to twelve feet of water as these fish are usually actively feeding.


Anglers should use reservoir maps to locate points and flats (gently sloping areas) that have deep water close by. Deep water is the key as it provides a sanctuary for the walleye when they are not feeding or have been disturbed by angler activity. Casting jigs with a twister tail and tipped with half a night crawler or leech is a very effective way to catch the shallow walleyes. Anglers should position their boat in about 12 feet of water and cast 1/8 ounce jigs with 6 pound test line into shallow water. Boat positioning can be accomplished by using an electric trolling motor or anchor.


Using the lift and fall technique is a good way to catch shallow walleye. The method is to cast the jig, take up the slack, lift the rod and then let the jig fall and continue to repeat the procedure back to the boat. The jig should be moved with the rod and the reel used only to pick up the slack. The walleye bite is subtle and is noticed by the angler as the jig is lifted for the next movement. The angler may feel a small tick or the jig may seem a bit heavier. The hook should be set as soon as anything different is felt. If no walleyes are caught in 20 minutes or so, move to another spot and try again.


Another good method is to troll a bottom bouncer and crawler harness. A good starting depth is 12 feet along rocky shorelines or flats. If no walleyes are caught at that depth, move to deeper or shallower water. If no walleyes are caught after 20 to 30 minutes, move to another area of the reservoir.


To learn more about when, where and how to catch Wyoming walleyes, anglers could consider joining the North Platte Walleyes Unlimited. Information can be obtained by writing to: NPWU, P.O. Box 1363, Casper, WY 82602 or by calling Howard Ewart at (307) 237-1823.


ODDS AND ENDS


 You may have noticed that Yesness Pond has been undergoing a renovation this winter. The City of Casper obtained a Fish Wyoming grant from the G&F to deepen the pond and fix the outlet structure. The deeper pond will help the fishery in the future by allowing enough depth for fish to overwinter and also increase the available habitat. The pond will be re-stocked with trout and possibly sunfish when it refills this spring.

 Vandalism at the Medicine Bow boat ramp at Seminole Reservoir included shooting the parking lot information sign, comfort station doors, both handicap signs and the walls of the comfort station. This senseless destruction cost you over \$1,800; money that could have been spent on new areas or access. If you have any information on this vandalism or others call your local sheriff or the Stop Poaching Hotline at 1-800-442-4331.

 How popular are catfish? Nearly 7.5 million anglers fished for cats nationwide in 1996. That's 29% of the 29 million anglers that fished in freshwater.

 Resident anglers averaged 22 single day and 6 overnight fishing trips in 1998. Nonresidents averaged 4.2 single day and 3 overnight trips.

 Even though the water may not be crystal clear, trout in Goldeneye Reservoir are still there. We sampled the reservoir in April and found browns, rainbows, Snake River cutthroats and Yellowstone cutthroats. The biggest fish was a 19.7 inch Snake River cutthroat. Carp are damaging the fishery and we exploring the feasibility of several options to deal with them. Until then, trout fishing should be fair.

 Midwest Reservoir is growing some fine bass. In 1998, we stocked 500 largemouth bass from Oklahoma in this warm water pond. The bass have grown really well with adults reaching 12-15 inches last October. If this growth continues, a really nice bass could be caught in the near future.

Thanks go out this year to Joe Deromedi and Dan Yule for writing sections of this newsletter. Local anglers Howard Ewart and Herb Waterman also shared their techniques. Their contributions made the newsletter far more interesting than I could have made it alone.

Remember that we manage your fisheries for you. We always want to hear from anglers, so let us know what you think.

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