

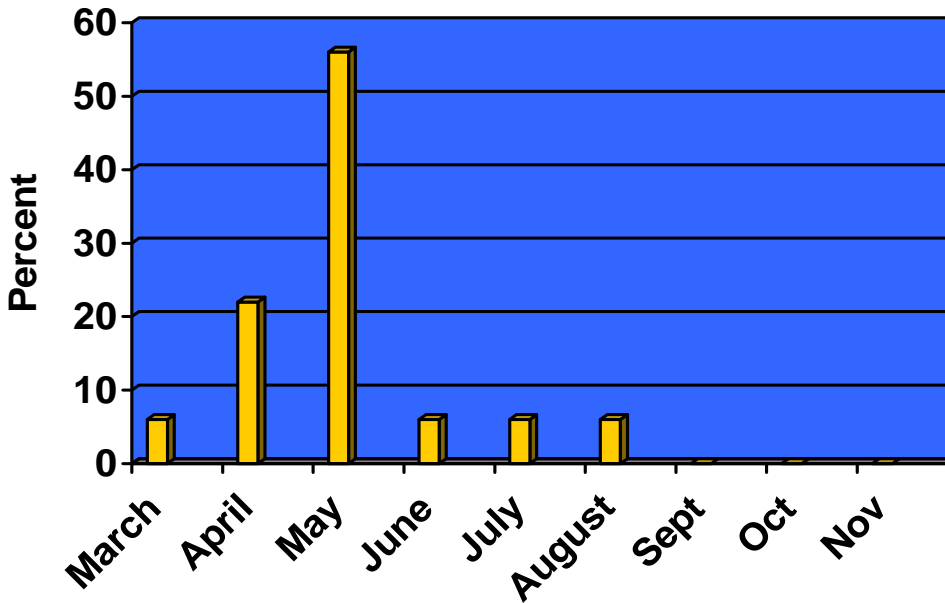


Hungry Mother Lake Walleye Tagging Study 2010 Summary

Fisheries biologists tagged 100 walleyes at Hungry Mother Lake between March 19 and May 7, 2010. The walleyes were collected using electrofishing gear. The tagged walleyes ranged from 14 to 25 inches in length, with an average size of about 20 inches. Anglers were offered a \$20 reward for returning the tag and catch information.

Successful anglers returned tags from 18 of these tagged walleyes in 2010. These tag returns represent 18 percent of the walleyes tagged in 2010. Biologists also determined that half of the anglers who caught a tagged walleye did not return the tag and catch information. Adjusting for this low response rate increases the estimated annual exploitation rate to 36 percent. That means that more than three out of ten walleyes in the lake's population were caught by anglers last year. Anglers also caught three walleyes that were tagged in 2009 and six that were tagged in 2008. That's a lot of walleye catching. Well done!

Tag returns by month



Catch information supplied by the anglers indicated that the fish were caught between March 27 and August 11, 2010. Most of the tagged walleye were caught in May (see figure). About 84 percent of the tag returns were from fish caught in April, May and June. The average length of tagged walleyes caught in 2010 was 20 inches. Most (61 percent) of the tagged walleyes caught by anglers were harvested. Almost all (94 percent) of the tagged walleyes were caught by anglers fishing specifically for walleyes. Only 28 percent of the anglers who caught a tagged fish caught other walleyes on the same trip.

The tagging study will continue in 2011. Biologists plan to tag 100 more walleyes during March and April. The tags will be located near the fish's dorsal fin. Anglers can remove the tag by cutting through the plastic attachment with scissors or a knife. The fish can then be released or harvested (remember the 18-inch minimum length limit). Anglers are encouraged to return the tag and catch information to the address printed on the tag. Postage paid envelopes for tag returns are available at Department offices and the State Park office. Every data point is important to the research project, so if you catch a tagged walleye in 2011, please take the time to return the tag and catch information and collect your reward. For more information contact Tom Hampton by telephone (276-783-4860), or email tom.hampton@dgif.virginia.gov