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Fall is upon us once again and boy, where did the summer go? As someone is sure to have said, "time flies when you're catching walleyes". And by all measures so far this past summer has been a much more successful one than a year ago. Fishing in Erie's western basin was great in July and August when the weather cooperated. Reports from the central basin also indicated that fishing was somewhat improved over last year, even though walleye anglers at times had to travel 'miles out' to get to the fish. Fishing in Erie's eastern basin was tougher this summer, particularly in early summer. This was the opposite of last year when eastern basin fishermen were having particular success while western and central anglers struggled.

This summer was also a good one for Lake Erie steelhead, in fact one of the best ever. There's nothing like the added bonus of latching on to a steelie or two or three..., particularly if your cooler is already full of walleyes. This acrobatic fish is one of the best fighters, pound for pound you'll find anywhere. The Ohio Division of Wildlife stocked over 238,000 age-1 steelhead trout into selected Lake Erie tributaries in 1999. The division continues to improve the Castalia State Fish Hatchery and plans are to hopefully stock 400,000 or more steelhead next year.

As we bid summer farewell and welcome the fall fishing season we are hopeful for another season of great perch fishing. All indications are that this should be the case. Some of my fondest memories are of perch fishing with family and friends. A lazy after-

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On the Cover

Young Eric Neison on a recent fishing trip with author Michael Veine (see page 12) proudly displays his trophy walleye taken with a Shad Rap.

Lake Erie Walleye

Rick Kubb, Editor/Publisher

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Walleye News and Fact File

Bag Limit Reduction Proposed for Walleye

The Division of Wildlife at the annual Governor's Fish Ohio Day July 19th announced its proposal to reduce the daily legal bag limit for walleyes. If approved by the Ohio Wildlife Council, more conservative creel limitations would include a daily bag limit of four walleyes from March 1 through April 31, and six walleyes the remainder of the year. The new regulations would also include Lake Erie tributaries up to the first dam or riffle.

The current bag limit is 10 walleyes per angler per day.

The Ohio Wildlife Council is expected to vote on the proposed changes at its September 13 council meeting. If approved, the new regulations would take effect March 1, 2001.

The new limits are part of a cooperative strategy by the Lake Erie Committee of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to strengthen the lake's walleye population. The catchable walleye population is currently estimated at about 49 million fish, down from an estimated 60 million several years ago.

The annual lakewide total allowable catch will be significantly reduced from this year's 7.7 million walleyes for three years beginning in 2001.

The Lake Erie Committee of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission is made up of fisheries managers representing Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York and Ontario. Each of the other states and Ontario also agreed to institute reductions in sport or commercial harvest.

New Ohio State Record Lake Trout Certified

A new state record lake trout was caught last April 20 by a Lake Erie angler, surpassing the previous state record by more than 3.5 pounds. Tom Harbison of Natrona Heights, PA was perch fishing on Lake Erie near Conneaut Harbor when he caught the 20.49 pound lake trout. Harbison was about one mile off shore in 48 foot of water and using 12-pound test monofilament line on a casting reel.

"At first I thought I had a burbot or a drum", said Harbison, a licensed charter captain. "But then after fighting it for awhile I thought it was a walleye. And after another four or five minutes, I just knew it was something big. I knew it wasn't a steelhead because it would have broken water right away. Then when I saw it, I was really shocked to see it was a lake trout."

The record fish measured 34 inches long and had a girth of 23 inches. Biologists at the Division of Wildlife's Fairport Harbor Fisheries Research Unit estimated the fish to be about 24 years of age.

"There were virtually no lake trout in Lake Erie from the 1960s through the early 1970s, said Carey Knight, fisheries biologist with the Fairport Unit. "Sea lampreys and loss of habitat reduced populations to near extinction. Lake Erie fisheries agencies began stocking lake trout in the 1970s and its possible that this fish was one of the early fish that were stocked."

The previous Ohio record lake trout of 16 pounds, 11 ounces was caught by Daniel Wilson June 6, 1993 from Lake Erie.

Gill Netter Charged with Fishing in Ohio Waters

Three people involved in a Canadian gill net operation were charged for using gill nets in the Ohio waters of Lake Erie this past May. Enforcement officers recovered seven illegally set gill nets in Ohio waters during a water/air surveillance project May 11th. The nets were in an area west of Middle Sister Island about 300 yards into Ohio waters.

Gill nets, widely used in the Canadian commercial fishing industry, have been prohibited in the Ohio waters of Lake Erie since 1983.

Charges were filed in Oregon, Ohio Municipal court against Paolo Adragna of Leamington, Ontario, captain of the Canadian vessel Coranet, and Gaspare Adragna and Pierina Adragna, owners of the vessel, also of Leamington.

“The apprehension of the illegal commercial netter was the result of a joint surveillance operation, dubbed “Operation Kingfisher,” undertaken by numerous agencies surrounding the lake,” said Mike Budzik, chief of the Ohio Division of Wildlife. “Our agencies have stepped up efforts and will continue to work in unison to maximize efforts to stop future illegal commercial fishing activity in U.S. waters.”

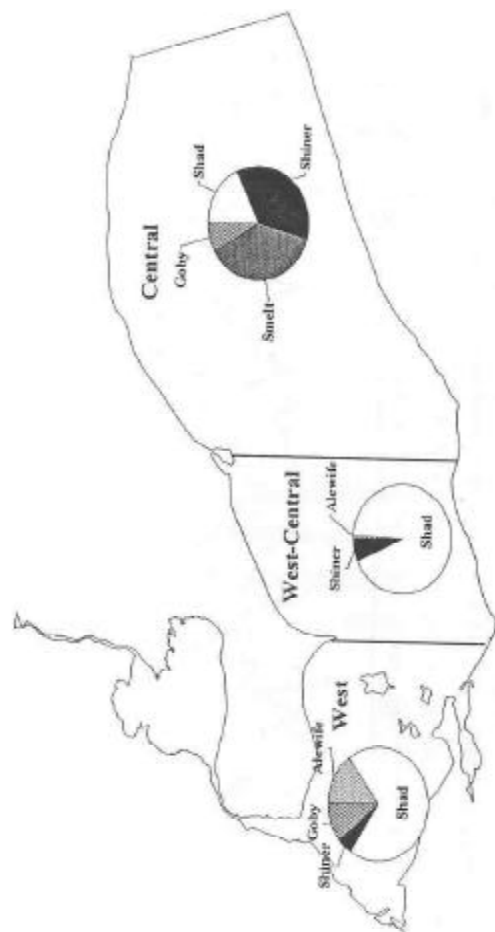
Agencies involved in the surveillance operation included the Division of Wildlife, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, United States Coast Guard, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

The net locations were plotted using GPS systems. Twenty-three nets were seized, but only seven of the nets were found to be in Ohio waters. The required identification of the flag staff used to mark the nets indicated the nets were licensed to the Canadian vessel Coranet, that was located nearby in Canadian waters.

What Are Walleye Eating In Ohio Waters?

In a 1999 survey of walleye diets, biologists found that the diet varied widely between the western and central basins of Lake Erie. In the western basins walleye fed mostly on shad and alewives (90%) with shiners and round gobies as secondary prey (see figure below). In the west-central basin, walleyes were even more dependent on shad.

In the central basin the walleye diet shifted to a combination of shiners (37%) and smelt (37%) and shad (20%) was a secondary prey item. Round gobies (9%) were also present in the diets of walleye from the central basin.



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noon on an autumnal day, quiet lake with plenty of perch action is tough to beat.

Kudos to Ohio fish and wildlife managers for acting to reduce the walleye daily bag limit (beginning March 2001) to 4 fish during the March and April spawning period and to 6 fish for the remainder of the year. Their effort to do this is in the best interests of walleye fishermen. One has to think that perhaps biologists acted too quickly a few years ago when the limit was raised from 6 fish to 10 fish/day.

In this issue we provide a comprehensive look at the perch fishery using data from Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York fisheries surveys. Mark Hicks, noted outdoor writer gives us tips on catching smallies in Lake Erie. Ted Takasaki discusses night fishing for walleyes. Michael Veine compares different strategies and techniques of using crankbaits to catch walleyes. Mark Martin recalls lessons learned from fishing a Lake Erie Walleye Tournament. Joe Fischer presents his view of eastern Lake Erie fishing, both the ups and downs. Finally in this issue we share the results of some of the walleye tournaments held around the lake this year, along with some of the trophy fish taken in these tournaments.

In August this year our web site (www.walleye.com) surpassed One Half Million visitors! Thanks to all that continue to visit the site. In celebration of this milestone, we are providing to all subscribers of the print version of Lake Erie Walleye Magazine, a FREE account and password to the Online Edition of the magazine.

This past June we launched a new web site, www.LakeErieBoating.com, the sister web site to walleye.com. This comprehensive web site for Lake Erie Boaters includes information on Ports O' Call, Marinas, Boat Dealerships, Weather and a forum for Lake Erie Boaters to discuss anything and everything having to do with Lake Erie Boating. We hope that you'll visit this site as well.

Till next time, continued good fishing.

Try This Walleye Recipe**Caribbean Walleye**

3 lb walleye fillet 3/4-in
 4 Shallots, peeled and chopped
 4 Cloves garlic, peeled and minced
 1 c Orange juice
 1 c White wine
 1/4 c Dark rum
 Juice of 2 limes
 1/4 c Soy sauce
 1/4 c Chopped parsley
 1/4 ts White pepper
 1/4 ts Salt
 2 tb Fresh chopped rosemary

Instructions:

Remove the skin from the fillet, if necessary, and go over the fillet carefully with your fingers to remove any small bones. Wash and pat dry with paper towels. Grill the fish for 3 to 4 minutes on a side, depending on thickness, turning gently. The fish should still be slightly translucent in the center since it will continue to cook after being taken off the grill. While the fish is grilling, boil down the marinade until it is reduced by half. Spoon a few tablespoons over each portion of fish. Serve immediately. Note: The fish may also be served at room temperature or chilled.

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