

Colchester Walleye Derby, 2012

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources attended the Colchester Walleye Derby on June 9, 2012. MNR staff conducted 51 boat interviews in order to estimate walleye harvest and catch rates. MNR examined walleye for tags and recorded measurements to describe the size composition of the harvest.

In 2012, none of the 338 walleye that were measured contained PIT (Passive Integrated Transponder) tags (Table 1). These tags were applied to walleye by Ontario and U.S. Lake Erie fisheries management agencies from 2005 – 2007 and to a lesser extent in 2008 and 2010 to evaluate fishery exploitation and describe walleye population characteristics. From 2008 to 2012 derbies, only a single PIT tag was detected (in 2008). No acoustic transmitters were found in walleye examined in 2012. Information about this study is available online: <http://www.glfc.org/telemetry/overview.php>

Colchester walleye derby fishery statistics from 2008 to 2012 are presented in Table 2. Walleye catch per angler hour ranged from 0 to 1.5 in 2012 (Figure 1). The mean number of walleye caught per angler hour in 2012 (0.50) was higher than in 2010 and 2011. Catch rate trends expressed as walleye caught per rod hour were similar, but with lower values as anglers may fish with 2 rods (Table 2). Average catch per boat in 2012 was 10.86 walleye. Expanding the observed catch from 51 interviews (159 anglers) by the number of participants in the derby (432), the estimated total catch at the 2012 derby was 1,505 walleye. After deducting released fish, estimated harvest was 1,383 walleye or approximately 5,630 pounds using an assumed relationship between length and weight. Estimated derby walleye catch and harvest in 2012 was higher than in 2010 and 2011 but was lower compared to 2008 and 2009 (Table 3). The total length distributions of walleye measured in 2008-2012 derbies are presented in (Figure 2). The largest walleye caught in the 2012 Colchester Derby was 31.75" (80.6 cm).

TABLE 1. Number of walleye scanned, PIT tag and acoustic tag recaptures 2008 - 2012.

YEAR	SCANNED INDIVIDUALLY	IN GROUPS	SCANNED TOTAL	# PIT TAG RECAPS	ACOUSTIC TRANSMITTERS
2008	669	38	707	1	N/A
2009	486	0	486	0	N/A
2010	300	0	300	0	N/A
2011	326	0	326	0	1
2012	338	0	338	0	0

TABLE 2. Walleye harvest, catch and release (in numbers of walleye) based on interviews 2008 - 2012.

YEAR	# BOATS INTERVIEWED (SAMPLES)	ANGLERS	RODS	ANGLERS / BOAT	RODS / BOAT	RODS / ANGLER	ANGLER HOURS	ROD HOURS	WALLEYE HARVEST	RELEASED	TOTAL CATCH
2008	76	226	354	2.97	4.66	1.57	1,582	2,523	719	377	1096
2009	66	183	281	2.77	4.26	1.54	1,292	2,012	548	142	690
2010	59	176	295	2.98	5.00	1.68	1,144	1,924	399	47	446
2011	61	177	303	2.90	4.97	1.71	1,238	2,111	399	44	443
2012	51	159	275	3.12	5.39	1.73	1,098	1,921	509	45	554

YEAR	HARVEST / ANGLER	CATCH / ANGLER	HARVEST / ANGLER HOUR	CATCH / ANGLER HOUR	RELEASED / ANGLER HOUR	HARVEST / ROD HOUR	CATCH / ROD HOUR	RELEASED / ROD HOUR	HARVEST / BOAT	CATCH / BOAT	RELEASED / BOAT
2008	3.18	4.85	0.45	0.69	0.24	0.28	0.43	0.15	9.46	14.42	4.96
2009	2.99	3.77	0.42	0.53	0.11	0.27	0.34	0.07	8.30	10.45	2.15
2010	2.27	2.53	0.35	0.39	0.04	0.21	0.23	0.02	6.76	7.56	0.80
2011	2.25	2.50	0.32	0.36	0.04	0.19	0.21	0.02	6.54	7.26	0.72
2012	3.20	3.48	0.46	0.50	0.04	0.27	0.29	0.02	9.98	10.86	0.88

TABLE 3. Estimated total walleye harvest (numbers, pounds) and total catch (numbers), expanded based on tournament participation 2008 - 2012.

YEAR	DERBY PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL HARVEST (WALLEYE)	TOTAL HARVEST POUNDS	TOTAL CATCH (WALLEYE)
2008	558	1,775	7,064	2,706
2009	540	1,617	6,755	2,036
2010	500	1,134	5,193	1,267
2011	450	1,014	4,811	1,126
2012	432	1,383	5,630	1,505

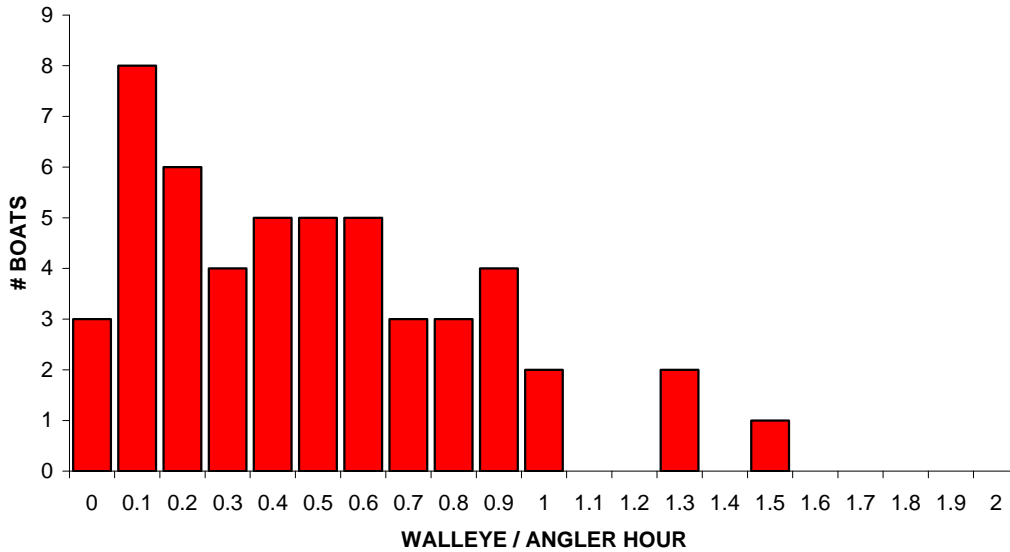


FIGURE 1. Histogram of walleye catch per angler hour. Mean = 0.5 walleye / angler hour. June 9, 2012. Estimated total catch = 1505 walleye with 1383 walleye harvested (approximately 5630 pounds).

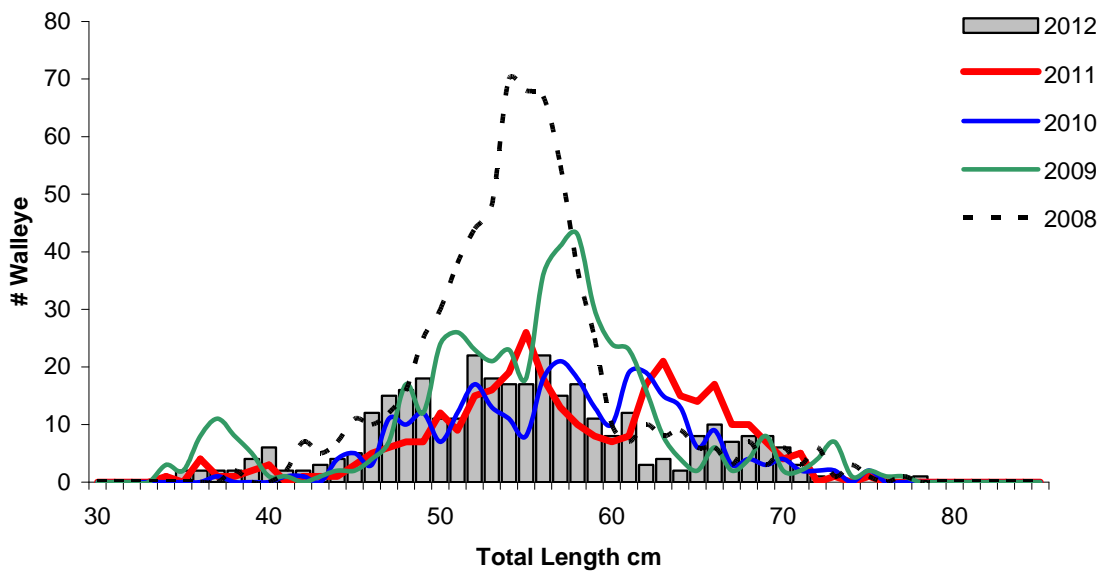


FIGURE 2. Total length frequency distributions of walleye caught in the Colchester Derby 2008 - 2012.