

Moreau Lake General Biological Survey (Survey #517005)

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Moreau Lake is a 122-acre water within Moreau Lake State Park, Saratoga County. Access is from the state campground and is limited to non-motorized watercraft only. Over the last few years Moreau Lake has been experiencing low water conditions due to an unknown impact on the local aquifer, because of this no nets were set in the north basin. The lake is also one of the few waters suited for trout management that is open for ice fishing in Saratoga County. In 2012 the DEC started a stocking policy of 3,000 rainbow trout annually after the county stocking program lost its funding.

Assessing the survival and growth of the stocked rainbow trout was the primary reason for conducting the survey. Two types of Swedish experimental gill nets were used to assess the fish community in Moreau Lake. Because there is no access spot where the DEC electrofishing boat could be launched, netting was the best available survey method.

A total of 113 fish were captured in 5 net nights in this mid-April survey. Only one rainbow trout was captured, along with numerous other warmwater species (Table 1). Nine chain pickerel, three largemouth bass and 10 yellow perch were collected for the Toxic Substance Monitoring Program.

Table 1. Total catch with average length and standard deviation for each species.

Species	Total Catch	Average length	Standard Deviation
Yellow Perch	41	10.3 in	2.5
Bluegill	30	6.6 in	1.7
Pumpkinseed	14	6.7 in	2.1
Chain pickerel	9	21.2 in	4.6
Largemouth bass	3	14.2 in	0.6
Rainbow trout	1	19.8 in	
White sucker	13	18.7	3.8
Brown bullhead	1	15 in	

A limitation of gill nets is that some species such as largemouth bass and rainbow trout can avoid capture in the nets. Although only one rainbow trout was captured in the survey, this individual shows that the stocked rainbow trout can survive and grow in Moreau Lake. At 19.8 inches this fish would be at least three to four years of age, no scales were collected due to the condition of the fish. The other species and sizes of fish collected in the survey show that Moreau Lake provides good fishing year-round. Anglers also report catches of rainbow trout and the desire to ice fish for them on the lake. Moreau Lake will continue to be stocked with rainbow trout and remain open to ice fishing.

