

Mud Lake General Biological Survey (Survey #: 517085)

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Mud Lake (M-P685) is a 17.5-acre water in Fulton County. This water has never been surveyed to document its fish community. Its shoreline is adjacent to both Peck Hill State Forest and private land. Public access to Mud Lake is from a trail through Peck Hill State Forest.

An adjoining private landowner had applied for a fish stocking permit for largemouth bass, and this request and our lack of fisheries information on the pond prompted this survey. To be able to appropriately consider the stocking permit application, the fish community needed to be documented.

A dissolved oxygen profile conducted on September 15, 2017 found adequate dissolved oxygen levels for fish down to a depth of 10 ft. The pond's maximum depth was determined to be 21 ft. The pond was characterized as a bog lake with a ring of peat accumulating bog surrounding an open water area. Two Swedish experiment gill nets and two metal minnow traps were set overnight to sample the fish community. A total of 17 fish were captured, with two additional fish species observed by staff (Table 1).

Table 1. Total number captured or observed of each species, with their associated maximum and minimum lengths at Mud Lake, 2017.

Species	Number captured or observed	Minimum length (in)	Maximum length (in)
Yellow perch	8	5.9	12.4
Pumpkinseed	4	4.8	8.6
Bluegill	5	2.1	2.7
Common shiner	30	-	-
Chain pickerel	1	-	-

Sampling revealed a warm-water fish community. Given the species present and the pond's location within its watershed, it was determined that it would not be detrimental to stock largemouth bass and thus the stocking permit was issued.