

COMMERCIAL FISH PRODUCTION IN THE GREAT LAKES 1867-2006

NOTES ON STATISTICS

The following sources were consulted for production statistics appearing in the Supplemental Report of the International Board of Inquiry:

1. Administrative and certain special reports of the U.S. Fish Commission, the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries and the Fish and Wildlife Service.
2. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1889 and 1908.
3. U.S. Tariff Commission (original records).
4. Michigan Department of Conservation, now the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (original and published records).
5. State of Ohio (original and published records).
6. State of Wisconsin (original records, typewritten summaries, and published records).

Statistics on Canadian production were obtained directly from the records of the Ontario Department of Game and Fisheries (now the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources) for 1940 and from a compilation for preceding years by Ford (1943) ¹ based on the following sources:

1. Annual reports of the Canadian Department of Marine and Fisheries (now the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans)
2. Annual reports of the Ontario Department of Game and Fisheries (now the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources).

Sources of production data for the period 1941-1977 were:

1. Fishery Statistics of the United States. Published annually by the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries prior to 1968. Thereafter, the National Marine Fishery Service, Department of Commerce, assumed responsibility for publishing Great Lakes harvest data tabulated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
2. Tabulations of the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries Biological Laboratory (then the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Great Lakes Fishery Laboratory), Ann Arbor, Michigan.
3. Annual Reports of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and detailed tabulations of its Fish and Wildlife Division.
4. The Canadian Commercial Fisheries of the Great Lakes--Basebook on Fishery Statistics No. 2, Markets and Economics Service, Department of Fisheries of Canada. 1955.
5. New York State Annual Reports.
6. Previously unpublished data, which separates historical Lake Superior chub catches from those of lake herring. (Compiled by Ralph Hile and Stanford H. Smith, both formerly of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.)

Sources of production data for the period 1978-1999 were:

1. U.S. Geological Survey, Great Lakes Science Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan
2. Annual Reports of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
3. Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission
4. State of Minnesota
5. Fisheries Department, Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewas
6. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Where production figures differed, preference was given to the statistics collected by the same agency over the greatest number of consecutive years. By consulting more than one source, it was also possible to correct or reduce the extent of certain obvious errors in both published and unpublished statistics to obtain the most reliable record from the available data. For example, Chaumont Bay catches found to be missing from previously reported Lake Ontario catches (1913, 1918, 1951) have been included in this report, after comparison with New York Annual Reports.

As in the original Technical Report No. 3, production tables for rock bass in Lake Ontario and lake trout in Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie have been omitted because the small catches shown for these species in early years have long since ceased to be significant. Tables have been added to show the increasing production of Pacific salmon and white perch since 1960, as well as that of rainbow smelt and alewife which were first described in the 1962 edition.

In the original Technical Report No. 3, it became possible to identify production from certain areas of Lakes Huron (Saginaw Bay, Georgian Bay and the North Channel) and Michigan (Green Bay). However, Green Bay production is not distinguishable from Lake Michigan totals prior to 1953.

Production amounts were rounded to the nearest thousand pounds after sums were calculated. (The sum of rounded amounts will not necessarily correspond to the rounded total.) A blank indicates no catch report. A lake total for the species in question is computed when the lack of a catch report is assumed attributable to zero catch.

Tribal data for western Lake Superior was added to the state-licensed totals provided by the Great Lakes Science Center for 1978 - 1996.

Missing data:

1. First Nations' harvest from Lake St. Clair.
2. Tribal data for the Ontario waters of the Great Lakes for all years.

Confusion as to fish names and the combining of catches of species that are in the same market category or that resemble each other introduced considerable uncertainty into the statistics for many of the early years.² For example, round whitefish and species of large chubs were included with lake whitefish, and small chubs were included with lake herring. Northern pike, sauger, blue pike, and walleye have been variously combined and catches of channel catfish and various

bullheads were combined rather consistently for many years. These instances, where known, are noted in the tables. Distinction between species which resemble each other closely, e.g. yellow and brown bullheads or the various species of chubs and suckers, is still not practical. Species and species groups for which catch statistics are given follow. They are arranged in phylogenetic order here, but in the catch tables they are listed alphabetically by common name.

Lake sturgeon	<i>Acipenser fulvescens</i>
Bowfin	<i>Amia calva</i>
Alewife	<i>Alosa pseudoharengus</i>
Gizzard Shad	<i>Dorosoma cepedianum</i>
Chubs or deepwater ciscoes	<i>Coregonus</i> spp.
Lake herring or cisco	<i>Coregonus artedii</i>
Lake whitefish	<i>Coregonus clupeaformis</i>
Round whitefish or Menominee whitefish	<i>Prosopium cylindraceum</i>
Lake trout	<i>Salvelinus namaycush</i>
Pacific salmon	<i>Onchorhynchus</i> spp.
Coho salmon	<i>Onchorhynchus kisutch</i>
Rainbow Smelt	<i>Osmerus mordax</i>
Northern pike	<i>Esox lucius</i>
Goldfish	<i>Carassius auratus</i>
Carp	<i>Cypripinus carpio</i>
Minnnows	Cyprinidae
Suckers	<i>Catostomus</i> and <i>Moxostoma</i> spp.
Buffalo	<i>Ictiobus</i> spp.
Quillback	<i>Carpiodes cyprinus</i>
Bullheads	<i>Ictalurus</i> spp.
Channel catfish	<i>Ictalurus punctatus</i>
American eel	<i>Anguilla rostrata</i>
Burbot	<i>Lota lota</i>
White perch	<i>Morone americana</i>
White bass	<i>Morone chrysops</i>
Rock bass	<i>Ambloplites rupestris</i>
Sunfish	<i>Lepomis</i> spp.
Smallmouth bass	<i>Micropterus dolomieu</i>
Yellow perch	<i>Perca flavescens</i>
Sauger	<i>Sander canadensis</i>
Walleye	<i>Sander vitreus</i>
Blue pike	<i>Sander vitreus glaucum</i>
Sheepshead or freshwater drum	<i>Aplodinotus grunniens</i>

¹Marjory A. Ford. Annual landing of fish on the Canadian side of the Great Lakes from 1867-1939. King's Printer, Ottawa.

²For a detailed account see Appendix D to Report and Supplement, International Board of Inquiry for the Great Lakes Fisheries.