

September 20, 2018 - Walleye tagging

Written by Wayne Gustaveson
Thursday, 20 September 2018 16:01 -

Lake Powell Fish Report – September 20, 2018

Lake Elevation: 3594

Water temperature: 75 - 79 F

By: Wayne Gustaveson <http://www.wayneswords.com> or Wayneswords.net

This week we traveled to Good Hope Bay to begin a study of migrational movement of walleye in the northern lake. It is possible that walleye may migrate up the Colorado River and then move back and forth between the river and Lake Powell. Our goal was to tag as many walleye as possible with sonic tags, which includes an underwater transmitter that can be detected by a hydrophone which can be attached to the lake bottom in the main channel and then detect and record which fish swim by. The hydrophone records the data by tag number of each fish passes by. The data can then be checked and recorded by our scientists on a regular basis.

My job was easy. I was supposed to catch some walleye so the fish could be tagged and used in the experiment. The only hard part was that the recent warm weather has kept the water in the high 70s instead of the 60s when walleye are more aggressive. Twelve really good anglers headed out to collect 40 walleye. We fished all day and then returned to camp with only one walleye in the live well. Fishing was tough! We finally figured out that the walleye pattern was to troll across 10-15 feet deep humps and let bottom bouncers or deep diving lures drag across the bottom. Walleye would hit as the lure cleared the hump and began to swim in open water. We were proud to finally tag and release 20 walleye which are now part of the migration study. More will be added in the future. I suggest waiting until water temperatures cools before making a trip to catch walleye.

We did catch lots of smallmouth, largemouth, bluegill, green sunfish, and catfish while trying for walleye. We tipped our plastic grubs, jigs, spoons and other lures with a one-inch piece of night crawler and caught tons of the non-target species. We really liked parking the boat in the shade morning and evening and dangling our lures at 10-30 feet while catching a wide variety of fish.

Stripers were found in large schools swimming in open water looking for shad schools. It was not as easy as usual to find a striper school because they were not often boiling, but when we found some by trolling we could stop over them and spoon up lots of stripers.

Perhaps the most unique experience we had while fishing so hard for walleye in Good Hope Bay was the arrival of Jack "Hotwheels" Herrin. He is a long-time participant on Wayneswords.com and we have been friends for decades. He was in the area and wanted to

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stop in and say Hi! We talked for a while and when he was leaving I told him we needed some walleye and they were hard to catch. He said he would give it a try. Five minutes later he was back with a walleye caught trolling in the cove next to camp. He set out again and as I left to search for more walleye his boat came roaring back. Sure enough, he had another nice walleye! That was amazing. Two walleye in 20 minutes and I only caught 3 in 3 days.

Thanks Hotwheels!