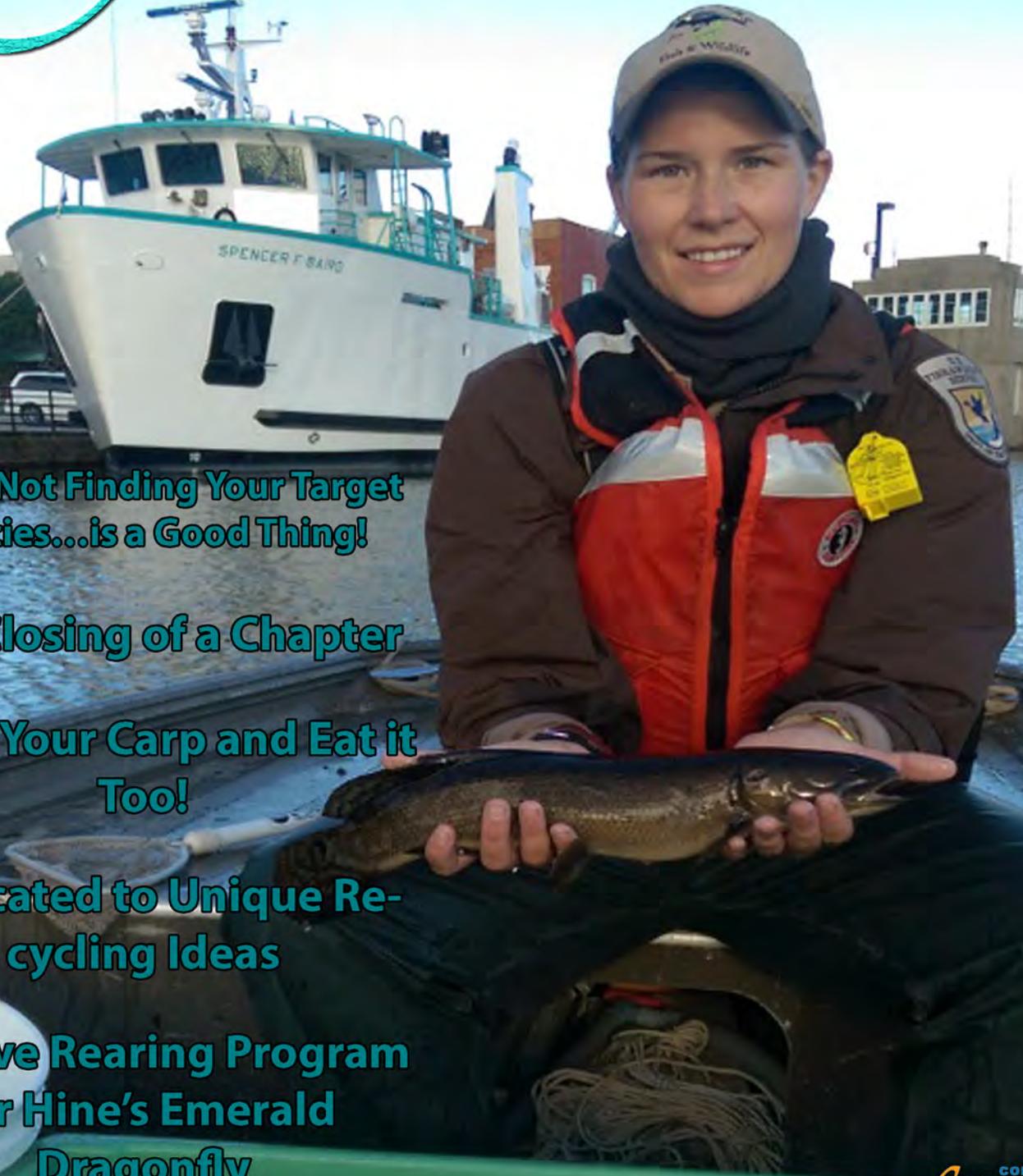




U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Midwest Region

Fisheries Program

Fish Lines



When Not Finding Your Target Species...is a Good Thing!

The Closing of a Chapter

Learn Your Carp and Eat it Too!

Dedicated to Unique Recycling Ideas

Captive Rearing Program for Hine's Emerald Dragonfly





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Oct 14, 2016
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In September of 2016 two Fish and Wildlife...[Read More](#)



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Captive Rearing Program for Hine's Emerald Dragonfly

Fish Tails

"**Fish Tails**" refers to articles that are submitted by field staff that do not appear as a feature in the current edition of Fish Lines. These articles provide examples of the diverse work that the Service's Midwest Fisheries Program and partners perform on behalf of our aquatic resources and for the benefit of the American public.

Field Notes

"**Field Notes**" is an online searchable database that showcases hundreds of employee-written summaries of field activities and accomplishments of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from across the nation.

Last updated: October 14, 2016



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Fisheries, Midwest Region

Conserving America's Fisheries

When Not Finding Your Target Species...is a Good Thing!

BY LINDSEY ADAMS, ALPENA FWCO

In September of 2016 two Fish and Wildlife employees took to the Thunder Bay River in Alpena, Michigan to perform surveillance on Eurasian Ruffe (Ruffe), an invasive species.

Ruffe are a small fish in the perch family that have high reproductive capacity, live in many different environments and have a healthy appetite for small invertebrates and other benthic prey items. While they prefer food like zooplankton (as juveniles) and midge larvae (as adults), they are opportunistic feeders and will eat almost anything including eggs and other small fish.

A total of four mini fyke nets were deployed throughout the river, downstream of a dam, for 24 hour sets. Each morning the nets were retrieved, the fish identified and enumerated, and the nets were reset for the next day. A total of 514 individuals from 14 different species were captured during the survey.

Of the individuals captured fifty-four percent were



Lindsey Adams, Alpena FWCO, holds a bowfin in front of the M/V Spence F. Baird docked in the Thunder Bay River, MI. Credit: Kaley Genther, USFWS

Brown or Black Bullheads (32% and 21% respectively), 12% Rock Bass and Pumpkinseed, and the remaining 22% was comprised of species such as Large and Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Perch, Bowfin, White and Black Crappie, and one 26.5 inch Channel Catfish. It is still a mystery how that catfish managed to squeeze itself into one of our small nets.

No Ruffe were found in any of our nets this season. This year's surveillance efforts for Ruffe are almost complete.

Now in most cases when we are performing assessments, it is disappointing when we don't encounter our "target" species, but in this case...We hope the lack of Ruffe and other invasive aquatic species in our nets remains the norm.



Lindsey Adams with another non-target species (channel catfish) in front of the Alpena FWCO office on the Thunder Bay River, MI. Credit: Kaley Genther, USFWS



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Fisheries, Midwest Region

Conserving America's Fisheries

The Closing of a Chapter

BY LISA LABUDDE, GREEN BAY FWCO



Lisa LaBudde preparing to take biological data from a lake sturgeon in Burns Harbor, Indiana. Credit: USFWS.

macroinvertebrates using new techniques to our program by utilizing rock bags, modified minnow traps, petite ponar grabs, and vertical plankton net tows. The use of various passive and active gears allows the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to successfully target the full spectrum of invasive species from larval fish to adults and many species of macroinvertebrates. A successful end to a successful sampling season, but now it's time to assess our results in the office and laboratory.

The cold weather has officially reached the Green Bay Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office. As an aquatic invasive species (AIS) technician I'm saddened to put away our boats and trucks until next spring but excited with all the fantastic work we accomplished this sampling season. From May through September, the AIS program has monitored and assessed Lake Michigan from Wisconsin to Illinois, Indiana, and all the way to Michigan.

Not only did we conduct early detection for both Bighead and Silver Carps through environmental DNA sampling by collecting and processing water samples, but we also continued traditional gear sampling methods such as electrofishing, gill netting, and fyke netting to monitor for juvenile and adult invasive fish. Another objective of these sampling methods was assessing the overall fish communities in major "hotspot" areas known for invasions by non-native species especially in Green Bay, Milwaukee, Chicago, Calumet and Burns Harbors.

A major accomplishment of our program was delving deeper into monitoring for invasive aquatic



An aquatic invasive species crew from the Green Bay FWCO preparing to deploy a modified minnow trap near old pier pilings in Chicago Harbor's river mouth to target aquatic invasive macroinvertebrates. Credit: USFWS.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Fisheries, Midwest Region

Conserving America's Fisheries

Learn Your Carp and Eat it Too!

BY LUCAS SHEA, CARTERVILLE FWCO

During the annual Southern Illinois Hunting and Fishing Days held on the 24th of September at John A. Logan College in Carterville, Illinois, fisheries personnel from the Carterville Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) took the opportunity to reintroduce the public to the tasty flesh of exotic invasive Asian carp.

Southern Illinois Hunting and Fishing Days is a huge event every fall attracting tens of thousands of outdoors folks from around the region. It is billed as the largest celebration of hunting and fishing in the country and judging by the amount of camouflage clothing present they may be right. The event includes numerous activities and demonstrations ranging from an archery contest to a youth goose calling contest (which seems to last the entire two days).

At the 2016 Hunting and Fishing Days Carterville FWCO staff fried an ample supply of Bighead and Silver Carp "wings". Carp "wings" are simply taking the fillets and ribbing them so you are left with a tasty piece of carp meat that is easy to cook and remove the bones. Bighead and Silver Carp flesh is firm, white, flakey, and has a very mild flavor. Throughout the day on Saturday Carterville FWCO staff cooked and interacted with the public. Most people were eager to try the carp, a few took a little arm twisting but everyone who tried it loved it! Many people couldn't believe the fish was from a carp and compared it with Crappie and Walleye. Several visitors stated "I don't even like fish and this is delicious".

In the end, despite temperatures climbing to the mid 90's, the attendance was excellent and the public's response to eating Asian carp was overwhelmingly positive. We were happy with the results and hope that they will translate into more folks consuming Asian carp on a regular basis.



Carterville FWCO biologist Donovan Henry hands out some tasty Asian carp wings at the Southern Illinois Hunting and Fishing Days event. Credit: Gregory Kupiec



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Fisheries, Midwest Region

Conserving America's Fisheries

Midwest Region Dedicated to Unique Recycling Ideas

BY ANTHONY RIETH, GREEN BAY FWCO



Green Bay FWCO Biological Science Technician Anthony Rieth stands with two pallets of nitrile gloves ready to ship for recycling. Credit: Marian Shaffer

Aluminum cans go here, glass bottles go over there, and paper goes in the bin. Phrases like this are common, and recycling is considered an everyday practice thanks to recycling programs in grade school, statewide bottle and can deposits, and other educational programs. But what about items other than glass, aluminum, paper, and standard plastics? Environmental DNA monitoring for invasive Asian Carp species requires the use of large volumes of nitrile gloves for quality control purposes. Faced with the disposal of multiple bags of trash each day, several individuals from the Aquatic Invasive Species program worked together to find an alternative solution to throwing the gloves in standard trash collection. In partnership with Kimberly Clark, collection boxes are placed in convenient locations to collect used gloves. When a pallet of boxes is full, it is shipped to Kimberly Clark. Once received, the nitrile gloves are broken down and recycled into secondary plastic products such as lawn furniture, flower pots, speed bumps, and mud flaps.

participation from multiple programs across several U.S. Fish and Wildlife offices in Region 3. We are proud to say that, through this program, the Service has successfully recycled several thousand pounds of gloves. We look forward to continuing this program into the future.

Building on the initial success, glove collection and recycling has spread from one program to



Nitrile gloves are used in every day tasks around U.S. Fish and Wildlife field offices. Pictured here is an employee using nitrile gloves to perform stomach content analysis for predator fishes. Credit: Anthony Rieth, USFWS



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Fisheries, Midwest Region

Conserving America's Fisheries

Captive Rearing Program for Endangered Hine's Emerald Dragonfly

BY TIM SMIGIELSKI AND KATIE STEIGER-MEISTER, REGIONAL OFFICE

With glowing green eyes and a metallic green body, the rare [Hine's emerald dragonfly](#) (*Somatochlora hineana*) is found only in a few pockets of the Midwest. First discovered in Ohio, the dragonfly was thought to be extinct by the mid-1900s due to the negative impacts of urban sprawl in its home range. The dragonfly's status changed when an adult Hine's emerald dragonfly was identified in the Des Plaines River Valley, southwest of Chicago, Illinois in 1988. By 1995 the dragonfly was [placed on the federal list](#) of endangered species. The Hine's is the only dragonfly in the country listed as federally endangered. Its story illuminates the unique role that a national fish hatchery can play in the captive rearing and recovery of an endangered species.

Within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hine's emerald dragonfly restoration and recovery efforts are led by the [Chicago Ecological Services Field Office](#) in close partnership with the University of South Dakota. Together, they developed a captive rearing protocol and monitored the species across its current range in Illinois, Missouri, Michigan and Wisconsin.



An adult male Hine's emerald dragonfly. Photo courtesy of Paul Burton

They recognized that [Genoa National Fish Hatchery](#) in Wisconsin had great potential to contribute to the endangered dragonfly's recovery efforts. Genoa National Fish Hatchery is uniquely situated on the Mississippi River and is home to natural wetlands that are close to ideal Hine's emerald dragonfly habitat. It's also very well known for its innovations in aquaculture and rearing techniques in support of conservation efforts for a variety of freshwater species, including fish and endangered mussels. So the partners contacted the hatchery in 2013 to see if it would be possible to transform a small scale laboratory-based propagation into a larger production-scale operation.



Hine's emerald dragonfly naiad. Credit: Ryan Hagerty, USFWS

As adults, [Hine's emerald dragonflies](#) lay their eggs in small streams, spring fed marshes and sedge meadows. After hatching, the aquatic larvae, called naiads or nymphs, spend up to five years in wetlands before completely maturing and emerging as adult dragonflies. Dragonflies are critically important in a healthy ecosystem because they prey on small insects, including mosquitoes, biting flies, and gnats. In their larval stage, dragonflies are valuable as food items for larger aquatic animals such as fish. They also serve as excellent indicators of changes in water quality.

In the fall of 2013, staff from Genoa began working with partners from the University of South Dakota and the Chicago field office on a proposal to the [Cooperative Recovery Initiative](#). The Initiative provides funding for projects working with threatened or endangered species on or near National Wildlife Refuge lands. In addition to Genoa having the natural environment preferred by the

Hine's dragonfly, the hatchery's location allowed the project to be eligible for this Initiative funding. The Hine's emerald dragonfly project was selected for funding in 2015 and work began to acquire a mobile rearing unit, start cage construction and hire additional hatchery staff to begin culturing the dragonfly. Funding also supported a coordinator position in the Chicago office and for the University of South Dakota to perform collection efforts and genetic sampling. Within a few months of receiving funding, Hine's emerald dragonfly larvae were collected in the wild by experts from the University of South Dakota and the Chicago office, where they were in turn delivered to Genoa. Hatchery staff spent that first season with Hine's on-station learning the complexities of the dragonfly's life cycle. In a just a short time, Genoa hatchery staff were able to answer many questions about necessary rearing conditions including water quality, food availability, site-specific growth and suitable rearing units for the

endangered species.

In the laboratory environment there was little to no risk of common dragonfly larvae entering rearing cages, growing faster and larger, and then preying upon the Hine's naiads. But at the hatchery, in an outdoor pond, protection from predation while ensuring access to adequate food and optimum oxygen levels was a real concern. Through intense observation during the 2015 pilot rearing cycle this challenge and many others were identified and resolved. Now in their second season at Genoa, Hine's eggs delivered in the spring have hatched and larvae have responded positively to the newest rearing practices, which include a mobile rearing trailer that circulates "predator free" filtered water from hatchery ponds for free roaming larvae reared in tanks. Also, improved rearing cages or "Hine's Hotels" provide protection from predation while allowing naiads more freedom to access food items once they are transferred to outdoor ponds. In the controlled environment at the hatchery, dramatically improved survival rates are now expected for the dragonfly in its early life stages.

Other successes in 2016 include the emergence of the first hatchery raised Hine's emerald dragonfly; a male, healthy and capable of foraging and reproduction in the wild. With the emergence of several other Genoa reared dragonflies off-site at the University of South Dakota's Lockport Prairie location, the hatchery team continues to work with their partners on scaling up the operation so more dragonflies can be produced annually, to be returned to their natural habitat where they will help to bolster wild populations. The Chicago office worked with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Nature Preserve Commission, and the Forest Preserve Districts in Cook, DuPage and Will counties in Illinois to manage, restore and create habitat for the endangered dragonflies being reared at Genoa National Fish Hatchery.



Biologists collect Hine's growth data while checking rearing cages at Genoa National Fish Hatchery. Credit: USFWS

Special thanks to Angela Baran, Assistant Project Leader with Genoa National Fish Hatchery and Endangered Species Biologist Kristopher Lah with Chicago Ecological Services Field Office for their information and insights into this exciting endangered species rearing and recovery program.

Last updated: October 14, 2016



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Fisheries, Midwest Region

Conserving America's Fisheries

Ludington Biological Station: Sea Lamprey Wranglers

BY STEPHANIE SHAW AND LAUREN FREITAS, LUDINGTON BIOLOGICAL STATION



Christina Carter, Lauren Freitas and Stephanie Shaw with Ludington Biological Station, Sea Lamprey Control Program. Credit: USFWS

In case anyone needs a reminder, Michigan is a peninsula! Not only is it surrounded by the Great Lakes, but there are many tributaries. The Great Lakes, including its tributaries, offer Michigan residents, as well as out-of-state residents, many activities including fishing, boating, swimming, and the lure of beautiful beaches. The Capital City of Lansing has a river flowing right through the heart of its downtown. The Grand River is hard to miss and is easily accessible. It provides a great opportunity to introduce children and curious adults to invasive aquatic species, conservation, and recreational activities. The Grand American Fish Rodeo is a yearly event held right on the river at Adado Riverfront Park. The Michigan Institute for Contemporary Art presents the festival every June with the intent of bringing the community together to foster "gratitude for rivers, lakes, aquatic life, and tradition of creativity in Michigan."

Each year citizens turn out to participate in boat rides, fishing contests, and to learn about local aquatic ecosystems in the Education Tent. The Sea Lamprey Control Program has been a main showcase since the Festival's inauguration in 2014. Ludington Biological Station (LBS) and The Great Lakes Fishery Commission work together to set up a large exhibit which provides the historical background, graphs, photos, and facts about Sea Lamprey in The Great Lakes. The biggest draw is the live adult Sea Lampreys on display in the center of the exhibit which are kept in an interactive tank. Mixed cries of fascination and horror are audible as visitors get up close to the sucker mouth and rows of teeth that are capable of doing real damage to the Great Lakes Fishery. Further exposure to Sea Lampreys takes place after local radio and TV news crews spread the word immediately following interviews from LBS staff.

Many participants, including agencies and universities take part in the Education Tent, showing off live Lake Sturgeon, aquatic invasive plants, and demonstrating to the public how to properly disinfect their boat before transport to another waterway. These participants include Michigan State University, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and other Midwest Region offices from East Lansing and Alpena. Thanks to everyone who has a part in educating the public about the waterways we all work on! The passion and dedication in preserving the Midwest Region fisheries is contagious when we are able to reach out to the public at events like the Grand American Fish Rodeo Festival.



Christina Carter wrangling a sea lamprey for the crowd. Credit: USFWS



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Conserving America's Fisheries



Fish Tails

Articles submitted by field staff that do not appear as a feature within Fish Lines. These articles provide examples of the diverse work that is performed on behalf of aquatic resources.

Testing the Waters at Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery

BY STEVEN GAMBICKI, ALPENA FWCO

Pendills Lake, located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, provides a backup water supply for the Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery. The hatchery raises over 1 million lake trout each year for stocking in the Great Lakes. Water that is free of bacterial and viral pathogens is crucial for the health of fish at the hatchery. Every other year staff from the La Crosse Fish Health Center in Wisconsin lead efforts to assess the bacterial and viral status of wild fish captured from Pendills Lake.

In May of 2016, Steven Gambicki and Kaley Genter from the Alpena Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office in Michigan provided assistance to Corey Puzach and Sara Erickson from the La Crosse Fish Health Center with fish sampling efforts on Pendills Lake. Pumpkinseed sunfish, yellow perch, brown bullhead and rock bass were targeted as representative species of the fish community. Trap nets were used to capture the fish, and after the fish were collected they were assessed for bacterial and viral pathogens.

Bacterial pathogens were assessed by collecting a swab from the kidney of each fish and applying it to a media to look for bacterial growth. If bacteria were found, they were isolated into a single colony and run through a series of biochemical tests to see if any certifiable bacterial pathogens were detected. Polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, would then be used to verify the results. Viral pathogens were assessed by placing a sample from the kidney and spleen of each fish into a saline solution, which was further analyzed at the La Crosse Fish Health Center. The samples were diluted and placed on appropriate fish cells to see if any viruses could be detected. Results from bacterial and viral pathogen testing generally takes between 28 and 42 days, and can depend on how toxic the samples are, or if there are any pathogens present. No pathogens of concern were detected.

Alpena FWCO Joins Colleagues at Workshop Identifying Nongame Fishes in the Great Lakes

BY PAIGE WIGREN AND JANINE LAJAVIC, ALPENA FWCO - WATERFORD MI SUBSTATION

This summer staff from the Alpena Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) attended a two day workshop on nongame fish identification in Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. The class was offered by the Michigan Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, organized by Dan Traynor (Michigan Department of Natural Resources), and instructed by Dr. Kevin Kapuscinski (Lake Superior State University). In addition to Alpena FWCO staff, 15 professionals and students attended the workshop representing the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Limnotech, Central Michigan University, Environmental Consulting & Technology Inc., Huff and Huff Inc., Great Lake Environmental Center, and Gun Lake Tribe of Pottawatomi Indians.

The course started with a brief overview on how to use the dichotomous key, *Fishes of the Great Lakes Region* by Hubbs and Lagler, and continued on to cover proper anatomical terms and different methods to accurately identify fishes using distinguishing characteristics. Techniques taught included: external anatomy observations (shape of body, mouth, fins, gill structures and scales and orientation of mouth, fins, and lateral line), common measurements (total length and standard length), and common counts (fin rays, fin spines, and scale counts). The workshop focused on lab and field identification of catostomids (suckers), cyprinids (minnows), and percids (darters). Interactive games and exercises were incorporated to create a more engaging learning experience in the laboratory.

In addition to laboratory identification skills, this fish identification workshop included hands-on experience in the field using several gear types. Along the St. Marys River at Nine Mile Marsh and at the mouth of the Charlotte River, attendees used seine nets, backpack electrofishing, and mini fyke nets to collect a diverse array of fishes for in-field identification. With several sampling gears available for use, the participants worked in small groups and were able to be actively involved in the collection and identification of specimens. Both laboratory and field identification knowledge is important since preserved specimens often look much different than live fish in the field. Preserved fish tend to lose coloration, which makes understanding and familiarity of key characteristics of species essential.

Workshops like these are important for professionals new to the region or fisheries field along with veterans wishing to brush up on identification skills. The Alpena FWCO staff that attended the workshop are part of the office's early detection and monitoring program for non-native species. Having the ability to recognize and correctly identify organisms encountered during assessments is crucial to the success of this program and will aid in preventing and reducing the establishment and spread of aquatic invasive species.

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Midwest Region Fisheries Divisions

National Fish Hatcheries

The Region's National Fish Hatcheries (NFH) focus on native species recovery and restoration. Primary species include: lake trout, endangered pallid sturgeon, and endangered, threatened, and native mussels. Other major programs include coaster brook trout and lake sturgeon restoration, fulfilling tribal trust responsibilities for native aquatic species, and cost reimbursed rainbow trout production for recreational fishing. Hatcheries also provide technical assistance to other agencies, provide fish and eggs for research, and develop and maintain brood stocks of various species and strains.



Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices (FWCO) conduct assessments of fish populations to guide management decisions, play a key role in targeting and implementing native fish and habitat restoration programs; perform key monitoring and control activities related to aquatic invasive species; survey and evaluate aquatic habitats to identify restoration/rehabilitation opportunities; work with private land owners, states, local governments and watershed organizations to complete aquatic habitat restoration projects under the Service's National Fish Passage Program, National Fish Habitat Partnerships, Partners for Fish and Wildlife and the Great Lakes Coastal Programs; provide coordination and technical assistance toward the management of interjurisdictional fisheries; maintain and operate several key interagency fisheries databases; provide technical expertise to other Service programs addressing contaminants, endangered species, federal project review and hydro-power operation and relicensing; evaluate and manage fisheries on Service lands; and, provide technical support to 38 Native American tribal governments and treaty authorities.

Sea Lamprey Biological Stations

The Fish and Wildlife Service is the United States Agent for sea lamprey control, with two Biological Stations assessing and managing sea lamprey populations throughout the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes Fishery Commission administers the Sea Lamprey Management Program, with funding provided through the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of the Interior, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Fish Health Center

The Fish Health Center provides specialized fish health evaluation and diagnostic services to federal, state and tribal hatcheries in the region; conducts extensive monitoring and evaluation of wild fish health; examines and certifies the health of captive hatchery stocks; and, performs a wide range of special services helping to coordinate fishery program offices and partner organizations. The Whitney Genetics Lab serves as a leading edge genetics laboratory and conducts environmental DNA (eDNA) sample processing for early detection of invasive species.

Whitney Genetics Lab

The Whitney Genetics lab provides environmental DNA (eDNA) surveillance for the early detection of invasive Silver and Bighead carp as part of the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee's plans to detect, monitor, and respond to the threat of invasive carp in the Great Lakes. The lab also provides analysis for determining the ploidy of wild-caught Black and Grass carp, two more invasive carp species.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Fisheries, Midwest Region

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