

STATE OF WISCONSIN
CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT



*Sturgeon
News Release*

Box 358
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

Dear Editor:

Attached is a news release covering the most important portions of the 1957 sturgeon season.

Printing at your convenience prior to the opening will be much appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Richard Harris

Richard F. Harris, Supervisor
Fish Management Division

V. A. Skilling

V. A. Skilling, Supervisor
Law Enforcement Division

Attach.

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STURGEON SEASON NEWS RELEASE

February 1, 1957

Wisconsin's largest trophy fish will be fair game again Monday, February 11.

Sturgeon fishing begins on Lake Winnebago Monday, February 11 and extends through March 1. The spearing season on Lakes Poygan, Winneconne and Butte des Morts start on the same day but is open only five (5) days through Friday, February 15.

Last year 1,248 legal sturgeon weighing 47,217 pounds were speared on the four lakes.

Ice varies at the present time from 18 to 28 inches with snow presenting no serious travel problem at the time of this writing. Water clarity varies throughout all lakes but generally visibility can be considered improved over last year.

The bag limit for sturgeon has been changed this year to a limit of one per season on Lakes Poygan, Winneconne and Butte des Morts with the Lake Winnebago spearers being allowed to take two. Bag limits on sturgeon are based on a fishing license year, May 1 to April 30. The minimum size remains at 40 inches.

No special license is needed, other than the regular fishing license, but a tag costing \$1 must be locked to the tail of sturgeon immediately after it is speared.

Other general regulations have been briefed up and emphasized by conservation wardens to help keep sturgeon fishermen out of trouble.

During the coming season, sturgeon may be taken only by hand-operated spears between sunrise and sunset. No spears are allowed in fishing shanties before the sturgeon spearing season opens or after the season closes, nor between sunset and sunrise while the shanties are occupied.

All sturgeon tags must be in possession of the owner of the tags, and they may be left in shanties only if the shanty is occupied in person by the owner of the tags.

All fishing shanties must have the name and address of their owner painted on the outside, and the door of each shanty or enclosure must be equipped with a latch which permits the door to be opened from the outside while it is occupied.

Fishermen may fish other species with hook-and-line during the open season while spearing sturgeon, but no fish other than sturgeon, catfish or rough fish may be speared.

In the waters mentioned above, it is unlawful for any person to cut, use, or maintain a hole larger than 12 inches in diameter or square through the ice and within the enclosure of any building, tent, shanty, or similar enclosure, for the purpose of fishing, except that when there is an open season for spearing sturgeon it shall be legal to cut, use, and maintain holes of unrestricted sizes from 24 hours before and continuing through such season. Regulations prohibit holes larger than 12 inches in diameter or square after the spearing season closes. This should not hamper fishermen who desire to leave their fishing shanties after sturgeon season as it would be legal for them to leave the larger holes freeze over and maintain the 12 inch hole for hook and line fishing. Persons moving their shanties during the season and after, are reminded that Wisconsin law provides a maximum penalty of \$100 for neglect to place a guard around the openings in the ice.

The refuge which was established last season on Lake Poygan has been rescinded and the entire lake will be open to spearing.

Sturgeon research studies in 1956 indicated a definite need for further limitations on the spearing season for the smaller lakes which accounts for the shorter season and bag limit of one fish per person. They point out that the problem is not one of depletion but rather a

sincere attempt to pro-rate a limited crop of slow growing primitive fish over a longer period of time. They again emphasize that sturgeon spearing should be a trophy sport and not a cropping of 8 to 10 pound youngsters which would live to be a real trophy to their children 30 years hence.

Within 24 hours after a sturgeon is speared, it must be registered, in the county where taken, at a registration station. At the station, a registration tag will be attached to the fish and both that tag and the fisherman's own \$1 sturgeon tag must remain on the fish until it is prepared for eating. Below is a list of registration stations:

(These will be operated from February 11 through February 15 from 10:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.).

Richter's Landing, northeast ice road on Lake Poygan.

Winneconne, on the ice on the east shore of Lake Winneconne.

Niemuth's Road (north shore) directly south of the ice road from the mouth of Elder Creek.

Public road, south shore on ice off from public road, Herbst's and Brettschneider's.

(The following stations will operate from February 11 through March 1 from 10:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.).

Oshkosh area headquarters, 200 Lake Drive.

Neenah police station.

Waverly Beach, on ice along main ice road from beach.

Sherwood, Ray Hayes' filling station.

Calumet County Park, Park custodian Lothar Funke.

Stockbridge, the building next to road leading to the lake.

Brothertown, in old garage building on highway through the village.

Calumet Harbor, state fisheries station.

\$10 REWARD FOR TAGGED STURGEON

A new incentive for the return of information useful to fish biologists will be offered for the second time this year when the sturgeon spearing season gets underway Monday.

Between 900 and 1,000 sturgeon are now carrying numbered tags which, when turned in at a registration station, will entitle the spearer to a \$10 reward. The tags are mostly on the back fin, but some are on the tail or snout. If you are lucky enough to spear a tagged sturgeon, do this:

Lock your \$1 sturgeon tag into place and take the fish to the nearest registration station. The attendant will record and keep the numbered tag, remove the innards, cut off the two front fin bones, and return the registered fish to you. That qualifies you for a \$10 reward which is sent by check to your home within 30 days.

If the tagged sturgeon has eggs, you can keep those too, except for a small sample required by the fish biologists.

Conservation Department officials emphasize that every sturgeon tagged is not a legal 40 inch fish, so don't judge the size of the fish merely by recognizing a tagged one swimming past your hole.

The officials said biological studies of sturgeon are dependent on the cooperation of sportsmen. Biologists already know a lot about the species and are aiming at a perpetual harvest.