

FISHING REPORT, TOM DUBENSKY

Spring/Summer 2024 Report:

Lake Somerset fish came through the 2023/24 winter in great shape with a mild winter and short ice season. As we moved into spring, we had a rapid warm up that made it difficult to time the spawning of different species, as the temps moved up quick. The consistent rain in May – August kept the water flowing through the outfalls for most of the summer, which appears to have prevented a thermocline from setting up in the lake (which is normal). Due to this I was catching good sunfish in the 20–25-foot depths while the surface temps were hovering around 80. Many of the fisherman I spoke to are encountering walleye while bass fishing and a few are targeting walleye directly with some success. I was catching walleye off of drop offs late in the evening well into late summer which was unusual. Bass fishing remains strong my personal best was 20 inches this summer. Pike appears to be successfully spawning as I caught a number of 15 20-inch fish that were likely spawned in 2022

The zebra mussels keep making the water clearer and high light penetration, this has resulted in some unusual movements in our fish, I marked spawning beds for sunfish as deep as 13 feet this year. This is at least 8 feet deeper than I would typically look for them. I have found aquatic plants rooted in 14 feet of water, which is the deepest I have seen on Somerset.

Fall 2024/Winter 2025 Fishing Forecast:

- Walleye – a popular fish that we frequently stock. These fish represent a true put and take fishery as they are unlikely to successfully spawn in Lake Somerset. In October, 2024 we will be stocking fingerlings, 2000+ 6–8-inch fish **PLEASE thank our board for their support of our stocking program!!!!** The Walleyes in our lake already, will be more accessible and eager to bite as we move into fall and winter.
- Northern Pike. I have seen some large pike caught this year and evidence of natural reproduction, but as always this is a marginal fishery in lake Somerset.
- Largemouth Bass – the most common predator fish in our lake system. The bass population is strong and has some real nice trophy fish available. Keep in mind that releasing most of the bass back into the lake helps keep our fishery strong. Much of the fishing effort during the summer targets bass and our population seems strong.
- Sunfish including Bluegill, Red Ear and Pumpkinseed – these fish are doing well on the lake, reproduce very well and in some cases may spawn multiple times in the summer. They are great eating and are good average size. They should be our focus for harvest when we want that fresh fish meal. Due to the persistence of zebra mussels, I am considering using some of the stocking funds in 2025 (April) to add more Red Ears (as they eat the mussels)
- Black Crappie – are doing well and the average size seems to have improved in the last two years. There is a strong year class of 9-10-inch fish that should be good sized this winter.

Fishing tip: if you want to try and catch some of the nice Redears the lake has to offer try using a dropshot rig with a piece of night crawler just outside of the weed line in 10-14 foot of water. Except when spawning these fish will be a little deeper than the bluegills and focus on bottom food sources (snails, mussels and other invertebrates)

I can be contacted at tomdubensky@yahoo.com .

Past eight Years of Stocking at Lake Somerset

2017	Walleye	3800
2018	Walleye	3600
2019	Walleye	3100
2020	Walleye	3000
2021	Redears	4000
2021	Walleye	2300
2022	Walleye	2800
2023	Walleye	2600
2024	Walleye	2000+