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NORTHERN PIKE

The northern pike (Esox lucius) is a vicious predator and thus makes an enjoyable fishing experience for any angler. The pike's diet, for its first six months, consists mostly of insects and algae. After six months, the pike's diet changes to small fish and most other aquatic animals. This change in diet causes the pike's growth to slow very much. As the pike grows towards its maximum size (approximately 102 cm), the pike will include anything that is capable of being caught, in its diet; A large pike sometimes eats a duckling, other pike, large frogs, and basically anything that fits into its oversized head. The pike's mouth is heavily armed with numerous teeth, which allows the pike to capture and kill its prey.

The northern pike tends to be a second degree carnivore, in that it generally feeds on small fish. The pike is difficult to locate in a food web, since its diet consists of everything, especially other pike.

The following table shows the statistics for six northern pike that were collected in Morris Lake.

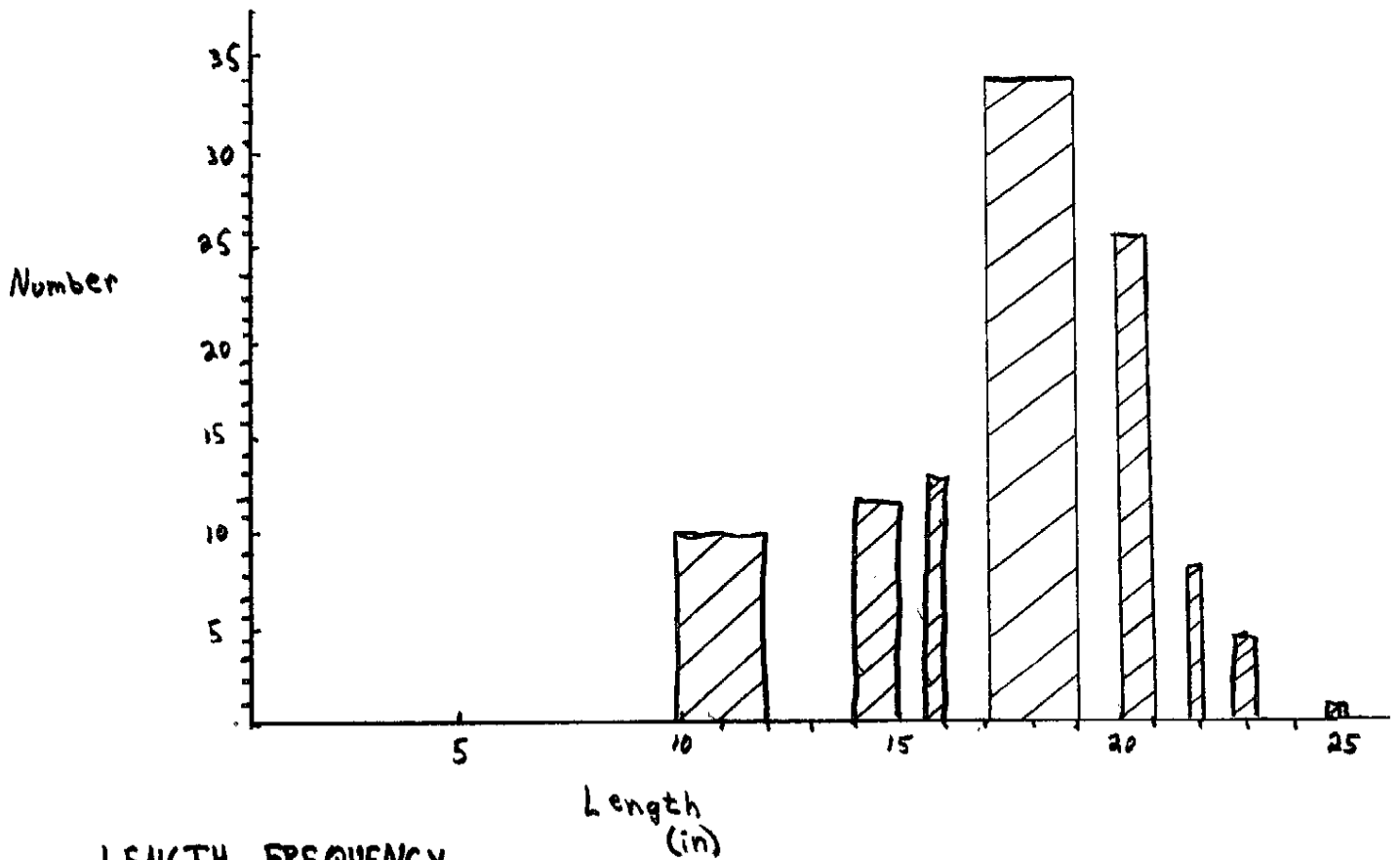
LENGTH, WEIGHT, AGE, CONDITION FACTORS AND GUT CONTENTS
OF ESOX lucius THAT WERE CAUGHT IN MORRIS LAKE.

LENGTH (mm) total/forked/standard	Weight (grams)	AGE (years)	CONDITION FACTOR	GUT CONTENTS
550/523/490	960	5+	0.58	flukes, tape- worm, well digested food
525/495/460	800	5+	0.55	-----
480/450/415	580	4+	0.52	insect larvae
450/420/390	530	5+	0.58	small fish, leech
405/380/350	375	4+	0.57	-----
305/285/265	185	1+	0.65	several small fish

The gut contents are a good example of the pike's ability to eat anything. The condition factors may seem small, but pike are built thin and long (the pike's build protects them in their macrophyte filled habitat from other predators), ^{which} explains the results. A scale study was conducted on each of the pike and certain ages were cited. The length and weight were then researched in Carlander, 1969, and the ages obtained from Carlander generally concurred with the scale results.

A length frequency graph for pike taken from Morris Lake during June shows the approximate size, from which the pike's ages can be deduced. The fish size and age will enable the productivity of a lake to be understood.

LENGTH FREQUENCY GRAPH FOR PIKE FROM
MORRIS LAKE (6/2-20/79)



LENGTH FREQUENCY
DISTRIBUTION:

length (in.)	number
10-12	10
14-15	12
16	13
17-19	34
20-21	27
22	8
23	4

Morris used to be overstocked with pike, but since past UNDERC classes have fished Morris heavily, the lake is becoming balanced. At this stage, continued fishing, in moderation, will bring Morris back to a balanced state. Introducing new species of fish is not a good idea since new species either tend to do poorly, which would not effect Morris, or they tend to take over and further disrupt the lake even further than the lake's previous state.