

**Deer Pond General Biological Survey #521059**  
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Deer Pond (UH-P242) is a remote, shallow 3-acre lake in Hamilton County in the West Canada Lakes Wilderness. Brook trout stocking here began in 1942 but was discontinued in 1974. A 1987 Adirondack Lakes Survey Corporation (ALSC) survey found water chemistry values that could support trout, but no fish were caught during that survey. The maximum depth of Deer Pond is only 3 feet, and the average depth is 2.6 feet, but the water level likely fluctuates along with beaver activity in a greater wetland complex that the pond is associated with.

Cold Stream (H-369-20-23-P234-10) flows both into and out of this water. Access is difficult as there are no trails that come near this pond. An experimental brook trout stocking policy, for 300 Temiscamie x Domestic brook trout fingerlings annually, was begun in 1995 and the 2021 survey is the first evaluation of this policy's success. During Mid-August 2021 survey temperatures here were above 70 degrees F throughout the entire water column. In 2021 this water had a circumneutral pH, there appear to be no issues with acid/base chemistry here.

Table 1. Deer Pond water chemistry variables.

| Year | Depth<br>(feet) | Air<br>Equilibrated<br>pH<br>(pH units) | Acid<br>Neutralizing<br>Capacity<br>(µeq/L) | Conductivity<br>(µmhos/cm) | Silica<br>mg L <sup>-1</sup> |
|------|-----------------|---|---|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2021 | 0               | 7.19                                    | 98.5  | 16.4                       | 3.19                         |

The fisheries survey consisted of a single 150-foot Swedish experimental gill net, a 30-foot minnow net, and a minnow trap were set overnight. A total of five brook trout were collected during the survey, but this water remains a monoculture. Brook trout lengths ranged from 8.8 to 10.9 inches. Brook trout growth, as evidenced by length at age determinations was quite poor when compared to other Adirondack Ponds.

Several factors appear to be responsible for the poor brook trout catch here, including the extremely shallow nature of this pond and the correspondingly high summer temperatures throughout the water column. Deer Pond is part of the Cold Stream system and brook trout were reported in Cold Stream as part of the original biological survey in the 1930s. Additionally, a 1983 DEC survey (#583024274) found the pH values of Cold Stream to be reasonable for brook trout survival, and anglers continue to report catching brook trout in Cold Stream. The poor brook trout catch, lack of angler use, and the possibility that the self-sustaining brook trout from Cold Stream may continue to populate Deer Pond, support the conclusion that brook trout stocking here should end. This water should be resurveyed in five years to determine if the brook trout population has persisted after trout stocking was terminated.

