

Sky Pond General Biological Survey (Survey #:521020)
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Sky Pond (SC-P150) is a 5-acre lake in the Saint Regis Canoe Area of Franklin County. It has been stocked annually with brook trout since 1953 and was last surveyed by the Adirondack Lakes Survey Corporation (ALSC) 37 years ago, in 1984. The current annual stocking policy is for 250 Temiscamie x Domestic hybrid brook trout. The maximum depth is 9 feet, the mean depth is 4.3 feet, and dissolved oxygen sufficient for trout is present throughout the water column. The air equilibrated pH and ANC have improved noticeably since the 1984 ALSC survey. The air equilibrated pH has improved 0.9 points and the ANC rose from 21.6 to 43.0 µeq/L. The conductivity has decreased from 22 to 11 µmhos/cm, but this was not unexpected, as it can occur when some Adirondack waters are recovering from acidity issues. The silica level is fairly high in this spring sample.

Table 1. Sky Pond water chemistry variables, 2021.

Year	Depth (feet)	Air Equilibrated pH (pH units)	Acid Neutralizing Capacity (µeq/L)	Conductivity (µmhos/cm)	Silica mg L ⁻¹
2021	5	6.82	43.0	11.5	3.04

In May of 2021, a single Swedish experimental gill net, a 30-foot minnow net, and a minnow trap were set overnight. A total of 11 brook trout were collected during the survey, but parts of an additional 6 to 8 trout (likely due to turtle predation) were also present in the nets. The average length of a Sky Pond brook trout was 9.0 inches and the largest trout collected was 9.5 inches. A subset of brook trout was aged using scale analysis and growth was reasonable for yearling trout, but older fish were sampled. The 2021 survey showed an increase in the number of brook trout collected, but a decrease in the overall size of the brook trout when compared to the 1984 ALSC survey. The only other fish species collected was northern redbelly dace, a species that is not a serious competitor with brook trout. Functionally, Sky pond remains a brook trout monoculture despite the presence of other fishes downstream in Fish Pond.

Table 1. Number and length ranges of fish collected at Sky Pond, 2021.

Species	Number collected	Minimum length (in)	Maximum length (in)
Brook trout	11	8.8	9.5
Northern redbelly dace	29	1.9	2.5

Due to the apparent increase in brook trout numbers and the decrease in size the stocking here should be reduced to promote growth. A total of 200 Temiscamie x Domestic hybrid brook trout fingerlings should be stocked each year.

