

Springhill Pond General Biological Survey #521064
 James Pinheiro, Region 5 Fisheries

6/3/2022

Springhill Pond (H-P414) is an 28-acre water located on the border between Essex & Warren counties in the Pharoah Lake Wilderness. The maximum depth is 21-feet, the average depth is 11-feet, and there was adequate dissolved oxygen for trout to a depth of 14 feet in this early September survey. A previous fish survey was performed in 1988. Springhill Pond has had both rainbow and brown trout stocking policies in the past and has been stocked annually with both brook and rainbow trout for over 15 years.

This fish survey was primarily undertaken to evaluate the current stocking policies of brook trout and rainbow trout. In early September of 2021, two Swedish experimental gill nets, a 30-foot minnow net, and a minnow trap were set overnight. A total 31 brook trout were collected, and their lengths ranged from 8.9 to 13.6 inches. The average length of a brook trout from Springhill Pond was 10.5 inches (Figure 1). A subset of brook trout were aged using scale analysis, and their growth and condition appeared to be good. However, of the six fish in which scale samples were collected, all samples collected were age 2 fish.

The only additional fish species that was collected in this survey was northern redbelly dace. The 1988 pre-reclamation survey (#588011) found all three species of trout present (brook, brown and rainbow). Northern redbelly dace were collected here for the first time and large numbers of crayfish were present in the nets.

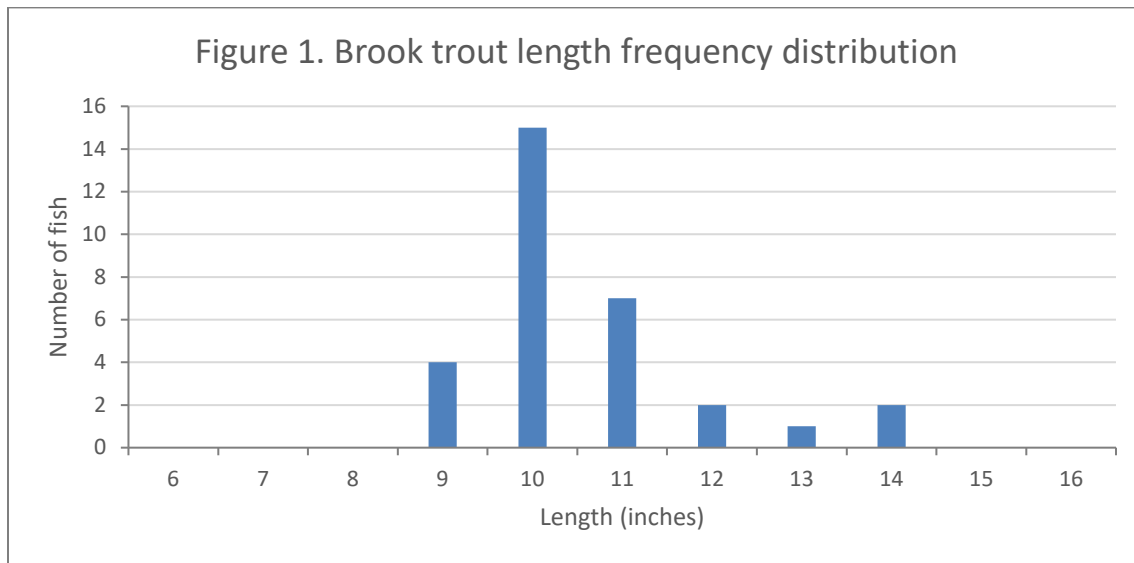


Table 1. Number and length ranges of fish collected at Springhill Pond, 2021.

Species	Number collected	Minimum length (in)	Maximum length (in)
Brook trout	31	8.9	13.6
Northern redbelly dace	2	2.2	2.3



Due to angling regulation changes which took effect in 2022, the split trout species stocking policies were altered. Since the pond is located within a wilderness area, the decision was made to stock the native brook trout. The stocking policy for 500 rainbow trout was removed and stocking of 1000 brook trout fall fingerling will continue. Previously stocking rates of both species combined were high at over 50 fish per acre, this reduction in total numbers and single species management objective may provide better growth rates in the future. To further evaluate the stocking policy changes Springhill Pond should be surveyed again in 5 years for comparison.

