

Walleye for the Ages

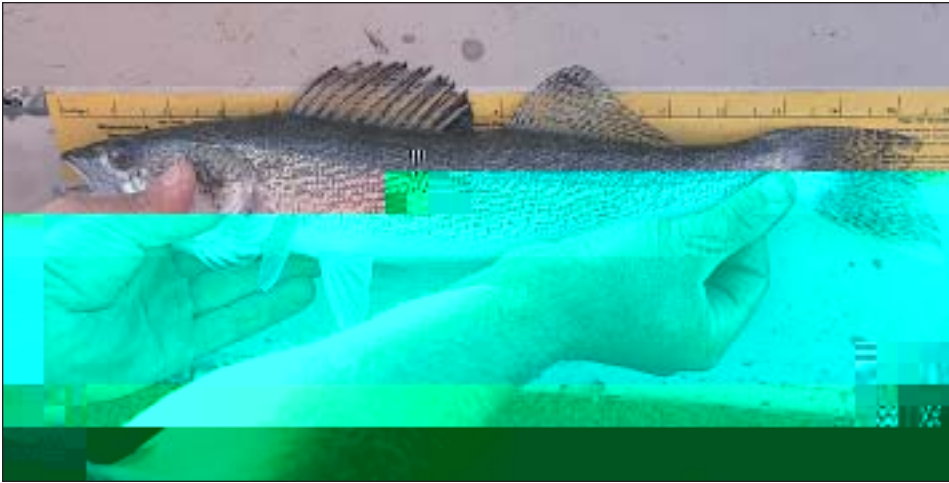
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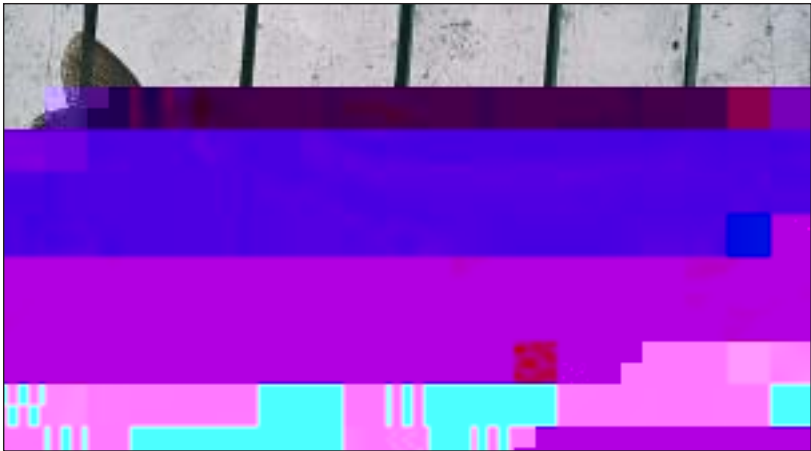
When an angler hooks a walleye, the first thought naturally is: how big is it?

We all want to catch big fish, a walleye for the ages. But for State Game and Fish Department fisheries managers trying to provide a sustainable supply of these fish, it is also important to know their ages. Knowing the age of fish is key to understanding how well fish are growing, how many were produced in a given year, and how well they are surviving from year to year in North Dakota's always unpredictable climate and waters.

Lake Sakakawea and Devils Lake are prime examples of lakes having wide fluctuations in water levels. Not surprisingly, the growth and survival of walleye often varies with these fluctuations. In a few southern North Dakota lakes, where the growing season is longer, walleye can reach 5 pounds in



Walleye length at the end of year four varies from 15-18 inches.



2004 – Both male and female walleye collected for spawning from Lake Sakakawea averaged 7.4 years

2004 – There were more males 13 years and older in Sakakawea than females and the oldest male was 16 years and 22 inches; the oldest female was 15 years and 27 inches



