

Where to Hunt Walleye Today

BY JOHN ANDREW

Fall walleye are caught in several locations, depending on the water environment you are fishing. Weeds hold fish on certain waters. River fish come from the pools during the daytime but, in the dark, we can catch them casting in shallow current areas with floating stick baits. The deeper flats also hold fish on certain lakes, as do points on some dark, coffee-colored lakes and deep holes on some lakes. Certain lakes have several deep holes with dark water and so do some clear water lakes.

This article will cover manmade lakes and/or reservoirs, natural lakes and small rivers—not the Great Lakes.

So, where do we start in late fall for northern Illinois, northern Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana and Iowa? Well, for my clients, we start in the deeper sections of the lake or river we are fishing. We will only focus on three locations and we are going to dissect these three locations in this article to help you, the reader, become a better late fall walleye hunter.

#1 - A long extended tapering underwater point from the shoreline that will reach out several hundred feet (or less) into the lake or river, where it drops off into the deepest water is a good location for you to use your sonar to locate walleye as you scan up or down the structure. Once we believe we are marking walleye, we like to use a simple presentation: a jig and 'crawler or a jig and minnow. Also, try using a visual reference, such as a marker buoy. Place this buoy a few feet away (but not too far away) from where you are marking your fish. This will allow you to vertically jig right on top of them or drift over the top of them. This is a critical concept for you to follow and, of course, GPS your position. Some water environments will bite better on cloudy days and some will be better on sunny days. This may sound hard to understand, but ask any pro walleye tournament fisherman and they, too, will tell you that this is very true.

#2 - The sinking thermocline in the fall. If the water area that you are fishing

has deep enough water, it will develop a thermocline during late spring and early summer. As the thermocline begins to sink towards the bottom during late summer and early fall, some of the walleye will also follow the thermocline and they will stay at but slightly above or to right in the thermocline. How do I know this, you ask? Well, after years and years of studying and following these fish, you too could learn their behavior and migration patterns.

As the thermocline rapidly sinks to the bottom of the ledges and drop-offs, we follow the walleye down as the weeks move forward.

Fish mostly right at the thermocline this time of year, if there is a thermocline where you are fishing, and your sonar unit should display this by showing a two-foot thick band across your sonar screen.

We also understand that boat control is extremely important. Whether it is windy or calm, boat control is the second most critical concept to your success. First and foremost is LOCATION. Nobody, and I do mean nobody, can catch them if you can't find them. Once again, a jig is our first option. Present your offering down and directly in front of their noses. They will bite, but present the bait slowly! This is very, very important.

A lot of people ask me, "John, why don't you guide walleye all year long?" Well, I do, but as our water temperatures get very warm, the walleye bite slows and I recommend what is biting the best at each individual particular time of the year. All my clients enjoy catching fish and it is my honor to work as hard as I can to help them achieve their goals for fishing. This is why when we could catch a few walleye in mid-July or mid-August, I recommend what is biting the best at that time of year and they always enjoy catching a five-gallon bucket (a figure of speech) of crappie, perch, bass or pike instead of five or six walleye. And, as always, we only keep what a client wants for dinner.

I work with dozens of families, couples, grandparents and children each season, and as my website shows, they are forever thankful and show that by sending me letters of thanks and posting their grateful

testimonials on my website.

#3 - After turnover, we fish strictly on the deepest ledges and points. There will be people who catch walleye in other locations during this time of year, but we choose to fish the deeper areas, just like late fall muskie hunters who catch some muskie in very deep water. A lot of muskie do come from very deep water every year, as any muskie pro will tell you. We all must be careful to release these fish unharmed.

Working in deep water is best done

with a jig and live bait, and you will catch walleye if you can find them. These walleye bite best at midday after turnover; no more sunrise or sunset fishing is needed. Simply locate your fish and use the catch-and-release policy and keep only what you will eat that day. These fish are willing to feed, as previously mentioned, only keep what you will eat that day.

Sunny days actually are better than windy, dark days, as the sunlight penetration is a good thing down into the depths.

Please practice selective harvest and C.P.R.

Now, let's go get 'em.
God bless!

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Meeting Information

Wisconsin

2nd Wednesday of each month
Greendale American Legion
6351 W. Grange Avenue.
Greendale, WI 53129
414-421-3371

The post is located close to downtown Greendale and the Southridge Shopping Mall.

Illinois

Last Wednesday of each month

Gurnee American Legion
749 Milwaukee Ave.
Gurnee, IL 60031
847-244-9282

*2 miles east of Gurnee Mills on Grand Ave. (Rt. 132)
Near the intersection of Milwaukee Ave. (Rt. 21)*

Guests are always welcomed at our meetings
Guest Fee is only \$5.00
Meetings begin at 7:00 PM sharp

Visit our web site at:
walleyesunlimitedusa.org

Contact us if you have questions at:
info@walleyesunlimitedusa.org

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November 26th - Gurnee, IL

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