

Catch a Big Smallie now, from Northern Wisconsin Waters



This 23-inch smallmouth was caught on a jig and minnow, and released, by George Smyth.



Ken Wiseman caught this jumbo smallmouth from an inland lake in northern Wisconsin using a 2-inch pre-rigged number 2 hook mini plastic worm.



Paul Dexter caught and released this large smallmouth while fishing with his father and John Andrew using the methods described herein.

by John Andrew

In recent years, areas of northern Wisconsin have not only been producing smallmouths, but also some very large specimens. Smallmouths near the state-record size have been measured, weighed, photographed and released.

Some of these bruiser-sized bass are coming from the many flowages across the northern part of the state. These brackish-colored waters are full of stump fields, river channels, laydowns, rock bars and creek channels and even old flooded lakes, which are inside the flowages, providing spawning and ambush-feeding locations and deep-water winter sanctuaries.

There are many other clear- and dark-water lakes with smallmouths. Many of these produce numbers of fish with the occasional mule-sized smallmouth bass. This is no

different than all the good muskie lakes throughout the area. These waters have a two-week variation on spawning. This may not sound like a big difference, but this is a location- and weather-related issue that takes place every spring. Some natural tea-colored lakes with a lot of islands also have large numbers of 1 1/2- to 2 1/2-pound bass but, only the occasional "big" one.

When we are fishing the dark-water flowages or natural lakes, sight fishing for the bass on the shoreline is simply out of the question. The water is normally so dark that we cannot see them swimming close to shore as we can on clear-water lakes. This can create a serious problem for some. What usually happens is many will cast along the endless shorelines until they catch a couple of fish. Using this method is good, only if you have a lot of time on your hands.

Locating certain high-percentage spawning areas has been made easier today

with mapping technology. In slow-moving flowages, we may not want to go the farthest backwater we can find hoping to locate where the bass are staying out of the current to spawn. And going far back and away from the creek channels in shallow water is not always a good idea, as the oxygen levels are low.

Looking for a flat area that is next to a creek channel is a good option—the down side of the current where there is a sand bar sticking off the creek channel, or where there is a flat coming off the shoreline reaching the creek channel. The channel will support most of the life during winter until the fish start moving out or in the deep-water areas for the spring spawn. The list of locations is long, and locating them on our maps or electronics can give us the best, educated guess to get started. Most of the islands in locations as well can produce well, especially if there is a sand or rock bar connected to that island.

On the clear-water lakes, we immediately look for the flats connected to the shoreline

that protrude out into the lake. Long, tapering points that extend out into the lake are also a good bet. And a shallow bay that extends out into deep water works well too.

Rock piles way out in these deep lakes do not produce as well in early or late spring. The water surrounding the rock piles can be too cold and the bass are searching out the warmer waters. Small inlets are a good, and if some are on the west side of the lake, all the better. If certain lakes have cisco or white fish, hold on tight, because can be some jumbo-sized, record-breaking smallmouths waiting for you.

Smaller bait in the spring or late in this season work best. Finding the fish and casting to them works well when on a clear-water lake. Casting a long distance on shallow bars or flats is also effective in early June.

We no longer have to go only in summer to the Great Lakes for big bass. There are dozens of lakes and flowages full of the mule-sized smallmouths right here in Wisconsin. **MWO**

John Andrew is the owner/operator of The Anglers Choice Guide Service located in northern Wisconsin and he can be reached at 715-892-3020, 715-686-2012 or johnandrew@centurytel.net or theanglerschoiceguideservice.com.

Wisconsin Meetings

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

Illinois Meetings

Last Wednesday of each month at Gurnee American Legion, 749 Milwaukee Ave. Gurnee, IL 60031 847-244-9282

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

Visit our web site at: walleyesunlimitedusa.org

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

2016 Club Officers

- President - John Ansell
- Vice President - Steve Everetts
- Treasurer - John Zegar
- Secretary - Bob Clark

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Wisconsin Meeting | Wednesday, June 8th 7:00 PM

Speaker: Larry Smith from Larry Smith Outdoors | Topic: Lake Winnebago Walleyes

Guide & outdoor enthusiast Larry Smith will be our Wisconsin speaker this month. Larry has sharpened his skills as a fisherman to a razor-sharp edge. He has seen almost every imaginable situation; from navigating through the highest of waves, to breaking 2-inch-thick ice for miles on a river just to get to the prime spots.



Larry has embarked in a new venture at Larry Smith Outdoors: Television. Over the years, we have seen him with almost every television professional in the outdoor industry. Smith will be talking about fishing Lake Winnebago. From someone that has fished and guided on Winnebago for a lifetime this should be an excellent view into what is happening and the future of fishing on this great body of water.

Larry in the past you know he does not hold back and have the complete playbook opened for all of us to see. To learn more information about Larry Smith go to this website: Larry Smith Outdoors

Illinois Meeting | Wednesday, June 29th 7:00 PM

Speaker: John Trossen from The Pier | Topic: Multi – Species Fishing on Geneva Lake

John Trossen of The Pier Guide Service will be our featured speaker at this meeting. Learn from one of the most successful guides to fish Geneva. John has fished the Geneva since the 80's and professionally since the 90's as a guide. He is the owner and operator of "The Pier" bait, tackle, and general store since the fall of 2000. It is located just up the road from the Linn Pier access ramp. Trossen was one of the founding members of the Walworth County Chapter of Walleyes of Tomorrow and an advocate of Geneva muskie stocking.

While John is probably best known for his trophy walleye catches and ability to hunt down the lake's crappie but he is well versed on all species the lake has to offer. Trossen will include a few of his successful bass, both largemouth and smallmouth, techniques at this meeting. For more information go to fishinglakegeneva.com.

It will be a real treat to have John as he does not commit to many public speaking engagements, so mark the date as you do not want to miss this meeting.

