

# Minnesota Fishing Report

Fall fishing patterns are now the norm, with walleye responding best to deeper reef fishing techniques. A jig and minnow combination will produce the most fish.

## Northeast Minnesota

### **International Falls - Rainy Lake and the Rainy River**

Weather conditions have not been great, but the walleye have been cooperating. Anglers venturing out are finding walleye around the American Narrows and the reefs on the sides of the Brule Narrows. East of the Brule, check Big Island and into Kempton Channel. Crappies are hitting in Black Bay, mostly on the west side and up into the Rat Root. Fall colors are rapidly developing, with the maples and aspen adding splashes of red and gold to the forest canopy, and the sumac turning the understory a deep maroon.

### **Cook County**

In Lake Superior, good-sized lake trout weighing 5-10 pounds are being pulled from 70-100 feet of water. Surface water temperatures are now in the low to mid-50s. Near Lutsen and Tofte, pink salmon are being caught in the rocky, warm shallows at the mouths of the Poplar and Temperance rivers; they are just starting to bite at the mouth of Cascade River. Near Hovland, a 20-pound king salmon was reeled in at the mouth of the Brule!

Inland anglers are taking good numbers of northern pike on rapalas worked on Tom, Devil Track, Two Island, and East and West Twin lakes. Walleye are hit-

ting nightcrawlers, with one lucky angler reeling in a 9-pound fish on Caribou Lake located just north of Lutsen. And at the end of the Gunflint Trail, on Seagull and Gunflint lakes, the bass action has been exceptional for anglers using crankbaits.

### **Kabetogama**

Anglers have had to regroup and dress for the elements, and those venturing out have had some success. Fall fishing patterns are the norm, with walleye responding best to deeper reef fishing techniques. A jig and minnow combination will produce the most fish. Angling is expected to improve with more stable and moderate weather.

### **Ely**

Crappie fishing is gaining momentum, with increasingly better catches being reported on several Ely area lakes. Northern pike are attacking large spinnerbaits and spoons trolled or casted near the weed edges and rocky points. Walleye fishing has slowed a bit, and some anglers have chosen to put down their fishing rods and pick up their bows or shotguns temporarily.

## Northwest Minnesota

### **Baudette - Lake of the Woods and the Rainy River**

Angling has been tough recently due to inclement weather. Try trolling crankbaits outside of the Lighthouse Gap, and at Graceton Beach and Long Point in 25-28 feet of water for the most fish. The fish are starting to transition, and bait fishing is now the recommended technique. Fishing on the Rainy River is expected to heat up very soon!

### **Detroit Lakes**

Fishing for walleye has been inconsistent, with no patterns developing. The shallows, 17-22 foot break edges, and waters as deep as 35 feet are all producing fish. Minnows seem to be the preferred bait of choice. Musky anglers are reporting the most success, with a variety of techniques turning fish, including casting, trolling, and fishing with large sucker minnows. Detroit, Sallie, Pelican and Battle lakes are getting the most attention. Panfish action remains best in the weeds when using light jigs.

### **Bemidji**

Fishing for walleye, muskie, and crappie has been better after dark than during the day. Anglers fishing during the day have had some success during morning and evening hours, but the mid-day bite was tough. Walleye anglers fishing the shallow lakes such as Winnibigoshish and

Upper Red will find walleye moving into the shoreline to feed on small perch, crayfish, and other baitfish. On the deep lakes, such as Bemidji, Cass and Pike's Bay, walleye are moving off the sides of the structure into deeper waters. Just remember that the areas with the most baitfish will attract the most walleye.

Muskie fishing should improve as the water cools and these fish feel the need to put on some weight before winter. Once this happens, anglers often switch over to larger jerkbaits. Perch fishing has been good along the edges of flats and points in Bemidji, Cass, Leech, and Winnibigoshish lakes. Perch anglers should expect a mixed bag of fish when perch fishing with jig and minnow combinations.

Crappie action is improving at the deep rock humps, sunken wood piles, and deep edges of hard bottom areas, depending on the lake. Locate crappies using electronics, then hover over the fish and drop a jig tipped with a minnow or plastic. Bass anglers are looking forward to some exciting fishing once fish move to the outside edges of the weeds and gather into larger schools.

## Central Region

### **Isle/Onamia - Lake Mille Lacs**

Walleye continued to be caught by anglers using live-bait rigs and crankbaits during the day at the deep mud and gravel on the east end of Lake Mille Lacs. The crankbait bite at night has improved daily

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on the 8-12 foot rocks. Perch fishing has improved on the mid-depth rocks and in the bays at 12-16 feet. Smallmouth bass were active on the rocks. Muskie anglers were taking fish from the north-end sand and cabbage patches.

**Otter Tail Lakes Area**

Otter Tail Lake is known for its fall fishing. Walleye can be found in 20-30 feet of water during the day, with crankbaits in 5-10 feet of water producing fish at night. For the most fish, use a crawler and spinner, or a redtail on a jig or lindy rig. Crappies and sunnies have been active in 5-10 feet of water in most of the surrounding lakes. Perch have been active in depths of 10-16 feet, with many 10-12 inch fish being taken.

**Whitefish Chain of Lakes Area**

Walleye anglers report a greater number of fish coming from the Whitefish Chain of Lakes. The best approach has been redtail or rainbow minnow on lindy rigs during low-light hours in 17-25 feet of water. Nightcrawlers are also working well. Night anglers are pulling diving rapalas. Stay aware of changing weather conditions, especially cold fronts and high winds, to determine how the fish will be biting.

Northern pike are hitting medium to large minnows on lindy rigs or jigs worked in 20 feet of water outside the weeds. Rattlin' rapalas, rat-l-traps, and diving crankbaits are also working well. The bass are extremely active, with large numbers of fish taken on live bait and plastics. Casting from the docks and trolling along the outside weedlines have been productive.



And for panfish, use a worm, waxworm, or small leech under a bobber at the weedbeds in 12-18 feet of water.

**Willmar Area**

Big Kandiyohi, Green, Florida, Andrew, and Nest lakes are producing nice walleye in 30-40 feet of water. Willmar and Foot lakes are reportedly giving up walleye and large sunfish. Most anglers are having success using leeches and crawlers, but some have been doing well with minnows as well.

**Twin Cities Area**

**White Bear Lake Area Lakes**

Anglers report very active fish on both White Bear and Bald Eagle lakes. Lots of walleye have been taken by anglers using leeches and fathead minnows. Northern pike and muskie anglers are doing very well using fast-moving lures and spoon-style plugs. The panfish bite has slowed a bit this past week, but anglers are still taking some fish from the weedlines on wax-

worms, nightcrawlers, and crappie minnows. Bass remain active, with good numbers taken on plastic worms and jigs. For the most fish, hit the weedlines, the backside of the weed edges near shore, and around the sand or gravel on the backside of the weeds.

**Chisago Lakes Area**

This is generally the best time of the season to catch bass. Anglers report excellent numbers coming from the rocks on Chisago Lake in 8-12 feet of water. Walleye fishing is picking up in the channel between Big and Little Green lakes, with anglers taking fish when using fatheads or shiners. And northern pike and crappie action has been best when using sucker minnows on Sunrise Lake.

**Southern Minnesota**

**Lanesboro - Southeast Bluff Country Trout Streams**

Several species of caddis have been seen coming off of local streams. While

the species is unknown, a #16 light tan wing and body is recommended. Also try a #12 large, rusty caddis. Hoppers can be found after the sun warms up the stream bank, usually by 11 a.m. or so.

All streams were reported to be in very good fishing condition. Camp, Duschee and Winnebago creeks and Trout Run were all reported to have clear and normal conditions. And Forestville Creek, Bee Creek, the South Fork Root River at the Million \$\$ Bridge, Lanesboro, and Forestville State Park were reported to be clear and low.

**Rochester - Southeast Minnesota Lakes and Rivers**

Fall river fishing in this region of the state can be spectacular. On calm, warm days with plenty of sunshine, the smallmouth bass are almost guaranteed to bite. For the most fish, hit the rocky shorelines using slow drifting plastic baits, especially between the hours of 11 a.m. until roughly 4 p.m. Fishing will remain excellent from the power dam to Millville until water temperatures drop below 50 degrees.

**Ortonville - Big Stone Lake**

Anglers continue to see an abundance of nice-size perch and bluegill, as well as a few crappies. Anglers are having to sort through the perch, generally keeping fish that are at least 9 1/2 inches long. All the typical perch hot spots are kicking out fish. The GrapeVine, BayView, Bucks Point, Windmill Reef, Rocky Ledge, and The SoDak are producing fish, especially during late morning hours after the water surface has warmed a bit.

*Report provided courtesy of Explore Minnesota Tourism (abridged). For full report, visit them at [www.exploreminnesota.com](http://www.exploreminnesota.com)*



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