

slot limit was implemented on this body of water to help protect the walleye resource. All walleye between 45 and 70 centimetres (18 to 28 inches) must be released. Walleye smaller than 45 centimetres can be kept and anglers may keep one walleye larger than 70 centimetres. As a result of this slot limit, anglers fishing Lake of the Prairies can expect to catch walleye all day long, whether they are fishing from shore or from a boat. As well, anglers have the potential to catch a five-kilogram-plus fish at any given time. The walleye action is good at countless locations on the lake. For first time anglers, prime-starting points would be near the Assissippi Provincial Park and the Shellmouth dam, near the Roblin bridge (west of Roblin) and near the Togo bridge (south of Togo). During the early season, the northern and central

regions of the lake tend to have the best walleye fishing. As the spring and summer progresses, the fishing really turns on in the southern end of the lake. For best success, anglers should fish in or on the edges of the old river channel. These areas provide tons of structure and attract walleye of all sizes. Other prime areas include shallow sand flats, sunken islands, the areas around bridges crossing the lake and the face of the dam. Boat anglers can have great success when trolling bottom bouncers with spinners blades, live bait rigs or jigs. Leeches, nightcrawlers and minnows are the best bait choices. This

lake is also well suited to shore anglers. In many locations, the old river channel comes very close to shore and anglers can easily cast into the deep-water areas. In addition, shore anglers can catch fish near the bridges and dam and on shallow water sand flats. "Pikerel rigs and minnows" are the favourite tackle with local shore anglers. I have also had great catches using live bait rigs, floating jigs and crank baits. Another prime fishing location for shore anglers is the Assiniboine River on the downstream side of the Shellmouth Dam. The water current attracts all species of fish and the action, especially early in the year or after a heavy rainfall can be incredible. This location is great for walleye; it is also a prime location to catch monster size carp. There are even rumours of channel cats in the river system.

— Michael Hungle

Lockport — Red River

Lockport is situated about 35 km north of Winnipeg. The Red River runs through the area and dumps into Lake Winnipeg. The down river region from the Lockport Dam is one of North

America's premier channel cat fisheries. An average day consists of 20-plus fish, with the majority tipping the scales over 10 kilograms and some pushing 15 kilograms. The river also contains good populations of walleye, goldeye, carp, pike and perch.

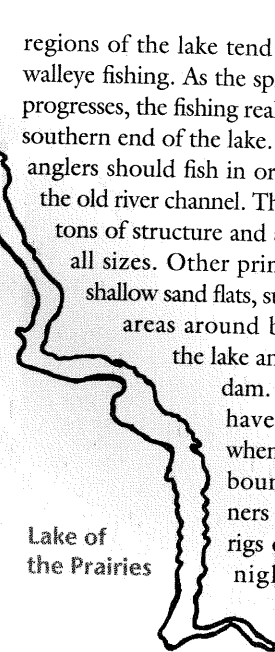
There are several methods to catch these lunker catfish. The most common method is to drift along the river while dragging a heavy slip sinker weight with a single bait-tipped hook. For best results, use a two- to three-ounce weight along with a 2/0 to 4/0 single hook. Channel cats can also be caught by suspending a chunk of bait under a slip bobber or on a wet fly cast in shallow water areas.

In terms of bait selection, fresh-cut bait is the way to go from the season opener through the end of July. After that, live bait out-produces cut bait. Suckers work best in the early portions of the season through the beginning of June. From early June through the middle of July, the hot bait will be goldeye. If goldeye or sucker isn't available, you can tip your lures with chunks of fresh shrimp. From the end of July through August, frogs will produce the highest catch rates.

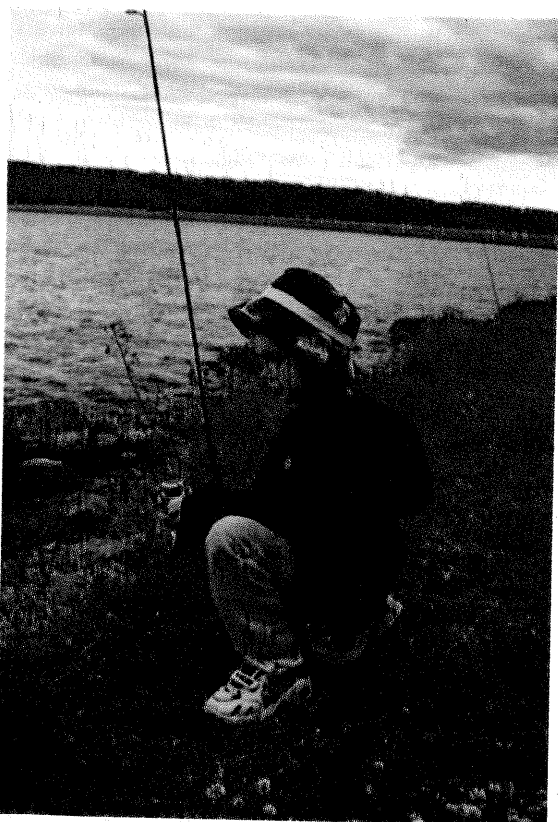
Channel cats are big fighters and will use the current to their advantage. For best results, use heavy monofilament line in the 20- to 30-pound-test range. In addition, a heavy fishing rod with a strong backbone is a must to battle and successfully land one of these creatures.

Care should be taken when handling a channel cat. They have sharp points on their dorsal and pectoral fins that can inflict deep cuts. These fish can be lipped in a similar fashion to a largemouth bass. However, anglers are advised to only grab a channel cat's bottom lip. It seems that the fish will tolerate being held by their bottom lip. However, if you grab them by the top lip, they will thrash wildly which may cause injury to both the fish and angler.

In mid-September the cat fishing action slows down. At the same time, the walleye fishing begins to turn on and the action lasts well into October. Dan Dzyiak, owner of Cat Eye Outfitters, advises that the September to October time frame is the best opportunity of the year to catch gigantic "greenback" walleye.

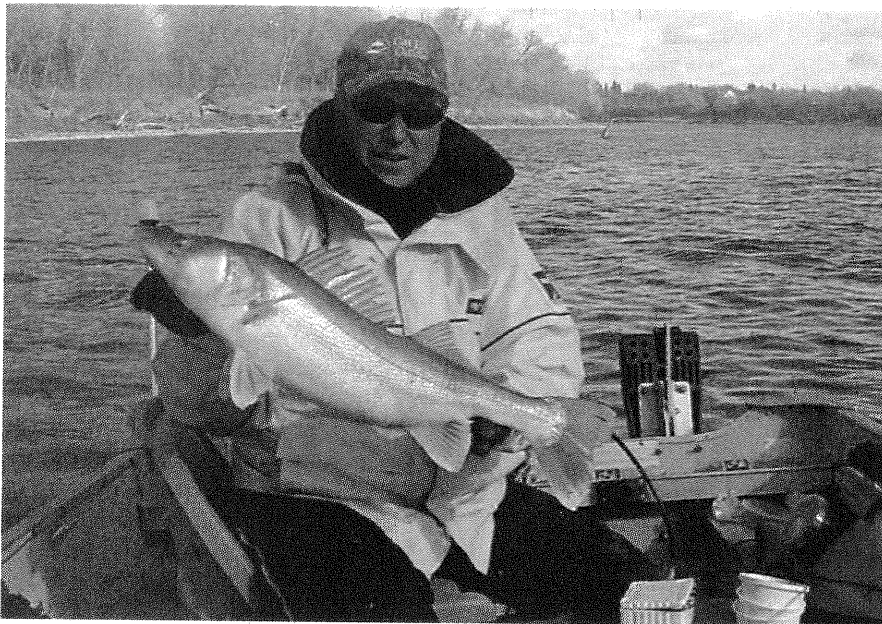


Lake of the Prairies



MICHAEL HUNGLE PHOTO

The easy shore fishing at Lake of the Prairies is good practice ground for future master anglers like Kyle Hungle.



CAT EYE OUTERITER PHOTO

The reason is that walleye migrate from lake Winnipeg into the Red River. These fish, many of which are bragging size, go into feeding mode and feed heavily on shiners. In September, the fishing action is best right at the mouth of the Red River and Lake Winnipeg. As the fall progresses, walleye can be caught up stream right up to the dam. Jigs tipped with shiners or crankbaits resembling shiners are the ticket to catching six-kilogram plus walleye.

— Michael Hungle

Lake Audy — Riding Mountain National Park

Lake Audy is located in Riding Mountain National Park. This National Park is located in south-central Manitoba, near the geographic centre of Canada. The park was developed in 1929 to protect a unique ecological region, including this prime northern pike fishery.

Lake Audy is teeming with northern pike of all sizes. These aggressive fish can be readily caught from both shore and from a boat. One of the best locations for shore anglers is near the Lake Audy Dam. Boat anglers generally have the best success when trolling at depths ranging from 2.5 to three metres.

The best time to fish Lake Audy is from early spring through mid summer. The fishing action is also very good in late summer and early fall when daytime temperatures

Although well known for its amazing catfish fishery, the Red River is also a hot spot for walleye.

start to drop. In terms of lures, jigs tipped with rubber tails, spoons and crank baits all work well on this lake. However, it seems that those in dark green, chartreuse, purple and yellow will outperform all other colours.

Jordan Martin, Bev Hungle and Danni Beaurivage enjoy the easy-access fishing for pike from this walkway at Lake Audy.



MICHAEL HUNGLE PHOTO

This is a perfect lake for taking young kids or first-time anglers, due to the abundance of aggressive fish. While the average fish is less than two kilograms, they make up for their lack of size by their strong fight and abundant numbers. Don't be fooled into a false sense of all tiny fish, as every so often a lunker will take your lure and if you're not prepared, the fish will steal your lure without you even seeing the fish.

There is a small boat launch available at Lake Audy. In addition, the area has a few campsites and a small cooking enclosure. There are also several locations where you can have a bonfire or a fish fry.

Lake Audy isn't the only lake you can fish in Riding Mountain National Park. Clear Lake, Moon Lake and Whirlpool Lake also offer great northern pike fishing. Walleye, whitefish and perch can also be caught in Clear Lake. In addition, Lake Katherine and Deep Lake have a limited number of rainbow and brook trout

When fishing at Lake Audy or any lakes in this National Park, you must have a National Parks Fishing Licence. In addition, anglers are advised that cannot use or possess chemically-enhanced baits or any lead tackle (sinker, jigs, lures or flies) under 50 grams.

For additional information on rules and regulations, anglers are advised to stop at the Visitor Centre in the Wasagaming town site.

— Michael Hungle