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## **How, When and Where to Fish Lake St. Clair** By Keith Krych

So you just purchased a boat and want to know if there are any fish in the lake. Well the answer is a resounding YES!!! Lake St. Clair is a world class fishery for walleye, small mouth bass, muskie, and panfish. If your preference is for trout and salmon, the St Clair river and north channel are the places to be. Lets look at how, where, and when to go after these fish.

Starting just after ice-out walleyes move into the Detroit river and into the lower part of Lake St Clair. Jigging, handlining and trolling in the shipping channel using minnow imitating baits work very well. The fishing in these areas will remain great until June.

Around June the walleyes disperse into the lake. Trolling or drifting crawler harnesses just above the weed beds becomes the best bet at putting some of these tasty fish into your cooler. My best spots have been in Anchor Bay, the dumping grounds, and around the 400 Club Tower. You can also troll crankbaits like Hot-N-Tots, shad raps, reef runners and wally divers in the deeper open water for suspended fish.

In July the night fishing takes off. Casting Bomber 15A's at night over the weed beds in the north, middle, and south channels turns on. This night pattern will continue through the fall.

In August through the fall, drifting or trolling crawler harness in the channels puts a lot of fish in the livewell. The best color combos are red beads with a silver blade, chartreuse beads with silver or gold blades, and a perch combination of chartreuse, green and orange beads with a gold blade.

Lake St. Clair is also the home of a world class Muskie fishery. The Muskie season opens the first Saturday in June, so all the "ski" heads, head to the dumping grounds or Anchor Bay. Muskie trolling is different than any other type of fishing. First the baits are about the size of good size panfish, and you troll them at a very fast pace, four to five mph. The rods have to be stout to hold up to the weight and trolling speed of these large baits too. Later in the season the muskies head to the southern shoreline and the fishermen follow them there. Fishing off the Belle river hump, Stony Point, and over to the Thames River really takes off. The fall is trophy time on Lake St. Clair! The Thames River and the mouth of the south channel are the best spots September until the season closes.

Small mouth bass fishing is so good on Lake St. Clair that several major tournaments are scheduled each year. If you find a weed bed you found the smallmouth. spinnerbaits, tube jigs and small crankbaits are all effective on these members of the sunfish family. The weed beds off the mile roads, 9 Mile up to 15 Mile, are outstanding for numbers of two to three pound smallies. You can also try the weed beds the whole length of the shipping channel, old south channel, middle and north channels. Anchor Bay smallie fishing in the spring is very good too. Try by Clinton river entrance, by the A and B markers, and by grassy island.

Perch and the panfish are located in the weeds also. Try drifting a perch rig with a small piece of crawler or minnow for these tasty treats. Perch rigs are sold in almost all the local bait shops around the lake.

If you want to learn more about the local fishing opportunities, please contact the Lake St Clair Walleye Association at 586-778-0840. Their meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm, at the Eastpointe Eagles hall on Eight Mile Road and Gratiot. I hope to see you there. Good fishing and keep your lines in the water.