

# Snap Jig Fishing for Early Eye's

By Jim Chamberlin, Editor of [LakeErieSportFishing.com](http://LakeErieSportFishing.com)

## Introduction

The early spring snap jig bite on Lake Erie has put it on the map as the "Walleye Capital of the World" and for good reason. About 80% of the lakes walleye population spawns on the south shore in Ohio waters from the Lake Erie reefs just off of the Camp Perry Firing range to Maumee Bay. These fish are schooled up and are easily caught using a snap jigging method with a number of different lures.

## Jigs

There are three jig presentations that are deadly for these spawning walleyes, a regular jig tipped with a minnow, a regular jig with a twister tail (can be tipped with a minnow) and a hair jig better known as a buck tail jig tipped with a minnow. Hair Jigs are the most commonly used lure for the early season walleye in Lake Erie. These lures deadly if tipped with a large shiner minnow. Most anglers prefer to attach a stinger hook to these three presentations because of their large size, but be ware of the no treble hook laws in Maumee Bay and Sandusky Bay. These jigs do work well without a stinger. These fish are aggressive; most of the strikes are so violent that the fish engulfs the entire jig. This is not a typical jig bite so; do not be afraid to work the bait fast, similar to what you would present a tube jig to a bass. The weight of the jig is personal preference, meaning what ever size you can keep bottom contact with. I recommend having a good selection between 3/8 oz and 1 oz. Color does matter, I recommend having three main colors, Blue, Pink and Chartreuse. Other colors will work so do not restrict yourself to these colors. Angler success can be directly correlated with confidence in a lure.

## Blade Baits

Blade Baits are my favorite way to catch spawning walleye, the hit is extremely violent and the fight is incredible. Presenting the blade bait is similar to working a jerk bait, but keeping bottom contact. Most of the strikes will occur on the drop or the pause so, when you lift up on the rod be prepared to have a walleye hooked up. The erratic action and vibration drives spawning walleye to destroy the bait. These baits come in a variety styles, colors and sizes. The sheer nature of this lure is to agitate walleye into striking. Because of the action of this bait, color seems to have little or no effect.

## Equipment Choice

As a ultra-light fanatic I like using perch equipment. 5' ultra light rod spooled with 10lb fire line. I attach a 2' 10lb Maxima Ultra Green mono leader with a small swivel and tie the jig directly to the leader (When using the blade baits I use a clip). This makes for a heck of fight. Other rods can be used for this type of fishing; again it is personal preference with most anglers using 6' medium action rods with the same fire line and mono leader.

## Special Rules and Regulations

The Ohio DNR has different regulations for March and April than the rest of the season. First the daily limit is 3 fish with a 15" minimum size. There are no treble hooks allowed in Maumee Bay, Maumee River, Sandusky Bay and the Sandusky River. Please follow these rules as they are designed to protect the walleye population.