

# Trophy Walleye Hunting

By Tom Ebi

This is an interesting topic. Quite a few folks think that an 8 lb walleye is a trophy. Some think a 10lb is a trophy. A lot depends on where you fish. For the Great Lakes, 11lbs is a master angler but NOT a trophy (at this time). The Bay of Quinte can get you a 14lber, while on the Columbia River, 22 lbs is not all that note worthy, nice but not news worthy... so lets keep this here on the Great Lakes with-in a short drive of Metro Detroit. For the most part, Lake Erie! Ohio and Canadian waters, although Brest Bay can and has produced many 10+ lb walleye, mainly in November. Crankbaits in early April and November. Switching to harnesses come mid-April/May or when water temps reach 53 degrees.

The walleye tend to roam the same areas as a yearly/seasonal pattern, which makes finding them a bit easier. What the big girls (only the females get really big that I know of) bite on is what makes us spend so much money!! This changes constantly!! Talking to folks who fish the early and late season should help you pinpoint area's that produce the larger fish. I'm sure they will also tell you "what" worked last year. You really **HAVE TO PAY ATTENTION TO DETAILS** if you want to catch large walleye regularly. I can't stress this enough! Area, lure, size, speed, line out, depth, how far out your boards are, are all critical parts of trophy hunting. Working with others that are as critical as you will help you dial in what is and needs to be done to catch big walleye. When fishing on the Detroit River, detail while jigging, as well as handlining, is JUST as critical. Detail, detail detail... the guys who have caught large walleye over the years don't think about it as much because it's become second nature. Details in winning a race or anything else still comes down to the details being the major factor in winning or catching the fish of a lifetime. GPS/sonar's and cell phones have impacted fishing greater than any lure that I know of. Use every technology you have access too to get you on the fish of your lifetime. NETWORKING..... And listening to what's being told to you...LISTEN!!! There are a lot of folks in the DWF that can and will put you on big fish if you only listen and apply what they are telling you. The fishing reports are a great way to tell when/where the fish are biting. Don't go out there and be "close" get "ON THE SPOT WITH SPEED/LURE/ETC" AND DIAL THOSE FISH IN!!! LEARN to read your electronics and use them. Boat control... work at it. It's worth it!!!! You can't believe how many folks drift, troll etc and miss the mark/spot by just feet and wonder why they don't get the big one's.... you've spent a lot on your boat and equipment... learn to use it like it's meant to be used!!! It's a tool!!!! Tune your lures!!!!!!!! A crankbait that isn't tuned is like a jig without any bait on it.... Again...DETAILS!!!!

Line out while trolling, direction of troll path. It all goes hand in hand with depth and speed. Over the past few years Lake Erie has changed. It's not like it used to be where you can troll for miles and miles and stay on a school of fish. When you find bigger walleye mark it on your GPS and troll back thru the exact same spot, the exact same direction. This all becomes even more critical when trophy hunting. Don't circle right around and try to be at the right speed, angle. Go wide as to not spook the fish and get back on your same line and have everything ready and BE ready. This attention to detail is what will get you catching bigger walleye. This year (2006) is the first year I didn't break the 12+lb at all in quite a few years. But I was also working to get my girlfriend into big fish country so I wasn't as focused on the fewer, what I consider really big fish. Cherry (my girl friend) who wanted to break 10lbs.has quite a few over 9 lbs, a few 10+ pounders and an 11.8 pounder. We'll be working hard to both get 13 + pounders for 2007. Here's Cherry and another good friend with 2 over 11lbs that we got at the end of April into May.

