

Fishing at Canadian Lakes

This fishing report applies to all of the lakes and streams within Canadian Lakes. We practice live release on all largemouth bass, northern pike 24" and over, all tiger muskies and no spearing, to preserve future good fishing for our kids and grandkids. The CL Fishing Club meets monthly from April to October, and normally sponsors 15 or more fishing events each year: Bass Tournament, Pike Tournament, Bullhead Tournament, Kid's Ice Fishing Derby, Kid's Young Angler's Contest, Monthly Fishing Fun Nights, etc., and also awards for the largest fish per year in each species, plus an award for every kid who enters any fish. We also assist at the Little Pine Island Salvation Army Youth Camp, and donate rods and reels to needy families

Largemouth bass are the main sporting species in our lakes and we have possibly one of the best largemouth fisheries to be found in Michigan. 3# to 4# is considered very good in our lakes, 5# is exceptional and 6# or over, might happen only a couple times a year. The winner in our 2018 Bass Tournament weighed in 22.87# for 5 fish and the largest was 6.58#. Our largest on record was 8.13# in 1994

Northern Pike fishing is great for quantity but few are 24" and over. Annual tournament winners prior to 2017 normally caught 15-20 pike in 6 hours. Longest on record was a 44" in 2006, and also 2017. We planted 50 tiger muskies in 2004 and 200 in 2011, and 500 in 2018. The largest that has been reported caught was a 44" in January 2018. A 42" muskie was reported in 2022.

At the Bass Tournament we bring them in live to weigh and release live, and at the Bullhead Tournament we bring them in to clean and eat, but at all other bass and pike events we measure and release immediately all bass, pike 24" and over, and all muskie..

We have an over abundance of bluegill, pumpkinseed and sunfish in our lakes and catching a limit of 25 is easy, but only a low percentage are eating size. An 11" bluegill was reported in 2009, 2015, 2016 and 2019. 11" hybrid sunfish in 2011. 10 1/4" pumpkinseed in 1997.

Crappie are abundant but very hard to find, except during spawning season or through the ice. 10" would be considered large in our lakes. The record was 14" in 2020.

Rock bass are frequently caught while fishing for largemouth or bluegill. Our record was 12" in 2009. Perch are abundant, but we seldom catch any large enough to eat. Our record was 11 1/2" in 2012 through the ice.

The easiest species to catch of eating size in our lakes is bullhead. At our annual 6 hour, evening Bullhead Tournament, with well over a hundred brought in, 9" and longer. They are the easiest fish of all to clean and excellent tasting. Our largest quantity caught was 26 in 2017, and the longest on record was a 15 1/8" in 2008. (Also longest in state that year)

Smallmouth bass are almost non-existent in our lakes.

Rainbow and brown trout are prolific in the Little Muskegon River which runs through Canadian Lakes, and the State plants rainbows annually. A 25 1/4" brown trout was caught in 1998.

Canadian Lakes is only about 75 miles from the nearest launch site at either Lake Michigan, for salmon, steelhead and lake trout, or Saginaw Bay for walleye and perch. Many of our residents trailer a boat to those sites.

Two launch sites on the Muskegon River are only 10 miles away with a great fishery for bass, walleye, pike, bluegill, perch and crappie.

Numerous well known Michigan trout streams are accessible to our southwest and northwest within an hour or two drive.

We have not seen carp or suckers in our lakes recently, but mud puppies are caught on occasion, along with golden shiners.

Painted turtles, snappers and soft shell turtles are prolific in our lakes, along with muskrats and an occasional beaver and otter.

We have a professional Lakes Management firm which provides overall management of our water quality and weed treatment, plus a Lakes and Environmental Committee which provides oversight of all lake and environmental concerns.

Any record fish mentioned above are only those that have been reported. There have likely been others unreported.

Depth contour maps for the 6 principal lakes are available at www.canadianlakesmgmt.org