



**OUR BEST
FISHING TRIPS
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FEBRUARY 1996 \$2.50

Michigan SPORTSMAN

OUR BEST FISHING TRIPS

Michigan's Best Bets For Fishing

There isn't a month when you can't find some excellent fishing somewhere in Michigan. Here's a calendar of topnotch locations for you to try during the year.

by Mike Gnatkowski

Au Gres Walleyes

Schools of Saginaw Bay's post-spawn walleyes converge on shoals off Au Gres in April to recuperate and gorge on smelt. Shore-bound anglers score by casting lures that imitate smelt off breakwalls and points at night. Another tactic is to jig with smelt from boats anchored or drifting in 4 to 15 feet of water.

Call Northport Marina (517) 876-8931 for information.

Benton Harbor Cohos

Action heats up in April off this southwest Michigan port when cohos begin feeding after a lethargic winter. Look for cohos to concentrate in warm nearshore waters, off the St. Joseph River and near the warmwater discharge at Bridgman. Hot-colored spoons are tops, as are body baits. Use planers, Dipsey Divers and shallow-set downriggers in the warmest water you can find.

Call the Benton Harbor Cornerstone Alliance at (616) 925-6100 for information on accommodations and sport shops in the area.

Contact the DNR Crystal Falls District office at (906) 875-6622 for more information.

Tittabawassee River Walleyes

Upward of 400,000 walleyes run up the Tittabawassee River from Saginaw Bay each spring. Anglers will find some uncrowded fishing and a lot of walleyes during May. Try slipping the current with 1/8- to 1/4-ounce jigs with crawlers. Some anglers cast crankbaits with good success. Most of the fish will be post-spawn males weighing between 1 and 5 pounds.

For more information, contact the Freeland Chamber of Commerce at (517) 695-6620.

JUNE

Au Sable/Manistee Trout

Grayling is the perfect base of operations to sample the prolific June hatches on these two rivers. Both the Brown Drakes and *Hexagenia Limbata* bring out the biggest trout in the river. Try the Manistee near Sharon, CCC Bridge and upstream of M-72. On the Au Sable Mainstream, try near

JULY

Lake St. Clair Muskies

Changes in Lake St. Clair's water clarity, increased size limits and catch-and-release practices have caused the lake's muskie population to explode. Muskies topping 50 inches and 30 pounds are common. The best action occurs in Anchor Bay in June. Big numbers of muskies are caught off the Belle River during July. Speed-trolling with Believers, Husky Rapalas and Wileys in perch and frog colors take most fish in 17 to 18 feet of water.

Contact Miller's Sport Fishing at (313) 429-9551 for more information.

Sylvania Smallmouths

If you're looking for solitude and smallmouths, try the Sylvania Wilderness. This designated wilderness encompasses more than 18,000 acres and some 36 lakes that offer excellent topwater bass action. Best lakes include Clark, Loon, Whitefish and Deer Island. There is a no-kill regulation for bass and

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