

I FISH NY Newsletter

June, 2011

Fishing Through the Weeds

By Dave Lengyel

It's summer, the days are longer, the water is warmer and most fishermen have cleared the lake because "it's too weedy to fish". I love this time of year because there will be a lot less traffic on the water and there will still be plenty of fish to catch using the right techniques. Just pick yourself up a 7 foot heavy action rod, a sturdy baitcasting reel, some heavy line and head down to your favorite weedy hole for some summertime action.

Let's talk about fishing over the top of the weeds. Lures like weedless frogs and large unweighted plastic worms will do nicely. Weedless frogs can be fished over the heaviest of cover, including thick algae. The trick with the frogs is to not set the hook prematurely. When fish strike at the bait, sometimes they will not succeed and instead

they get a mouthful of weeds. Be sure to wait a few seconds and only set the hook when you feel



weight. I have had bass hit a frog three or more times before they are successful, so be patient. Large weedless worms can be fished over the vegetation with ease and will sink slowly into the natural holes that form in a weedbed. Make sure the worm has a large tail to stir up the surface as it comes through. As it slowly falls into the

holes, be ready for a strike; keep your line tight so when you set the hook, the fish does not have much line to run with and get tangled up.

Fishing in the weeds is another great option. The type and density of cover will dictate the weight you need. The heavier the mat, the more weight needed to punch your way through. Pitching and flipping heavy jigs to holes or mats is a dynamite presentation when you want to cover water to find where the fish are holding. Make sure you check every section for fish. I have found that even being off by a foot can mean the difference between a fish and water. When fishing jigs in heavy weeds; keep in mind that sometimes there will be channels that form in the weeds. Most of the time they cannot be seen due to heavy surface growth, but upon fishing a spot you will notice the lure sinking unobstructed. These should be marked and checked throughout the day to see if fish are using them. When the weeds get too thick and become a solid mass, really heavy lures shine. Rigs such as a 1 oz. weedbomb can get through some of the thickest weeds. When using this technique be mindful of the falling rate; a lot of times the fish will pick it up on the drop, so if all of a sudden a 1 oz. weight seems to disappear,

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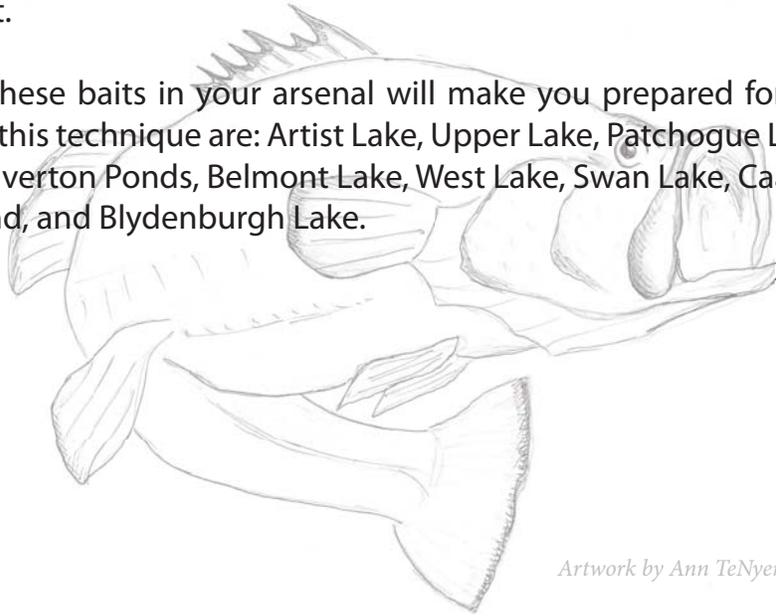
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I FISH NY is a statewide New York State Department of Environmental Conservation education program.



set the hook. Also, don't be too quick to pull it out, it can get pretty thick sometimes, and fish may need a minute or two to find their way over. Rattles can be added for sound, and sometimes will outperform a silent bait.

Having a selection of these baits in your arsenal will make you prepared for any weedy situation. Some great lakes to try this technique are: Artist Lake, Upper Lake, Patchogue Lake, Lower Lake, Swan Pond, Peconic River, Calverton Ponds, Belmont Lake, West Lake, Swan Lake, Caanan Lake, Hither Hills, Gibbs Pond, Millers Pond, and Blydenburgh Lake.



Artwork by Ann TeNyenhuis

ASK KATIE

Q: What lures do you suggest for striped bass fishing in the summer?

A: Rubber shads are a great choice when fishing for stripers throughout the year. A rubber shad is a soft plastic lure meant to look like a small bait fish. This is a great lure to use for fish with little to no teeth (saltwater: fluke, striped bass, or freshwater: largemouth bass). Shads come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors. Pick the color that resembles the bait fish that are around at the time of year when you are fishing. After you cast out, allow the lure to sink a bit then retrieve slowly when you think it has reached a good depth. The flexible tail on the lure will wiggle as you retrieve it through the water. This lure creates most of the action for you, so a slow steady retrieve will do. Some shads are equipped with a rattle, which is great as a teaser. Bass assassins are also a good choice and can be purchased by size (5 inch). These work great around sandbars and bridges. If you reel in and half your lure is missing you have probably gotten into a school of blues. Your best bet is to switch to a sturdier lure like a tin (spoon) that will get you past the blues and sink deeper to where the bass are hiding out.



Another option is poppers. Poppers are a type of topwater plug with 2-3 treble hooks on the bottom of the lure and sometimes include a rattle. Poppers are meant to look like an injured fish at the surface of the water. The general rule of thumb is that poppers are a daylight, or at least low-light (dawn and dusk), lure. So, as soon as it's light enough to see a little bit, start trying them out. During these low-light conditions, use a dark colored popper, such as black or purple. After the twilight hours, follow the general rule of matching the color of the popper to the skies. For a bright sunny day, try yellow. For a partly cloudy blue sky try blue. For an overcast, cloudy day, try white. Don't hesitate to change them up, or try new colors. If you keep missing bass on the poppers try switching to a tin (spoon).

Article by Chris Spies

Invasive Species Plant ID

Common Name/ Species	Found in:	Description	Threat	Photo
Ludwigia or Water Primrose <i>Ludwigia peploides</i>	Forge Pond/ Peconic River Suffolk	Floating aquatic plant which sometimes forms mats. Stems purple in color, rooted but most float on surface. Leaves are alternate, net-veined, elongated with smooth outer margins. Yellow flowers bloom in late July or August	Creates unsuitable fish habitat. Out-competes native plants. Blocks out sunlight from submerged plants. Severely impedes boating and fishing. Spreads by fragmentation of stems (attaches to boats and trailers).	 Photo provided by Peconic Estuary Program: Marilyn Jordan
Eurasian Milfoil <i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	Upper & Lower Twin Pond, Nassau County	Submerged aquatic plant. Green or reddish-brown stems. Green leaves in whorls of three to six. Reddish near surface. Can grow up to 20 feet from bottom.	May become dense shielding light from native low lying plants. Interferes with fishing and navigation. Can be easily transported by boat or trailer. Clipping grows into new plant.	
Hydrilla <i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>	Lake Ronkonkoma Suffolk County, Blydenburgh Lake Suffolk County	Submerged plant with long branching stems, creates large floating mats. Green leaves in whorls of 3-5, sharply toothed with red veins, harsh in texture with spines on underside.	Highly tolerant Interferes with boating and water flow. Spread by fragments left on boats and trailers.	
Water Chestnut <i>Trapa natans</i>	Oyster Bay Mill Pond Nassau County, Wantagh Mill Pond Nassau County	Emergent (floating) annual Grows up to 16 feet long Lower leaves are feather like and floating leaves are triangular and toothed. Flowers of four white petals bloom in July. Produces thorny nutlets.	Out-competes other submerged vegetation that waterfowl prefer. Creates large mats in summer & fall, hindering boating, preventing fishing and shielding light from native plants.	

Other invasive species you may encounter on Long Island or in NYC:

Giant Hogweed: DO NOT TOUCH THIS PLANT! For more information visit, <<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html>>.

European Frogbit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*)

To help stop the spread of invasive species, follow these simple steps (IDD):

1. INSPECT your fishing and boating equipment. Remove all mud, plants and other organisms.
2. DRY your fishing and boating equipment before using it in another water body. Basic rule of thumb is to allow at least 48 hours for non-porous gear.
3. DISINFECT your fishing and boating equipment if it does not have enough time to dry.

In addition, anglers and boaters can take a few other precautions, all of which can be applied to both fresh and salt waters:

- Refrain from using felt-soled waders or wading boots; rubber or studded soles are less likely to transport invaders and are easier to disinfect
- Do not release unwanted plants or animals into the wild unless they came from that body of water
- Do not release unused bait
- Learn to identify common exotic species; for information and photos log onto <<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/50272.html>>.

This summer, keep your eye out for these invasive species in your local water bodies. If you find one of these species in a water body not listed, please take a photo and email to the Region 1 Freshwater Fisheries Office in Stony Brook, NY at fwfish1@gw.dec.state.ny.us. Please include the location and date you took the photo.

Thanks for doing your part to keep invasive species out of NY waters!

Long Island Sound: Ours to protect, restore, and enjoy

By Larissa Graham

Long Island Sound is an estuary where freshwater from our rivers, land, and groundwater mixes with the saltwater from the Atlantic Ocean. The Sound's coast is lined with many types of habitats—from tidal wetlands to rivers and from rocky shorelines to sandy beaches—all of which provide important feeding, breeding, and nursery grounds to more than 120 different species of fish as well as many other animals.

Like many creatures, we also call Long Island Sound our home. More than 8.8 million residents live within the Sound's watershed (or the area of land that drains to the Sound) and more than 20 million people live within 50 miles of this "urban estuary". From 1980 to 2006, the amount of people living around the Sound increased by over a million people.

As expected, the dense population of people living around the Sound can also cause many problems. Research has shown that the quality of water decreases as impervious (or hard) surfaces around a waterbody increase. Pollutants such as bacteria from animal waste, fertilizers and pesticides, and trash accumulate on hard surfaces and, during heavy storms, the rainwater washes these pollutants into storm drains that flow directly to the Sound. Septic tanks and cesspools also contribute to water pollution. These systems do not filter chemicals that are poured down our toilets, sinks, and shower drains and these chemicals can soak into our surface groundwater that feeds into Long Island Sound.



Pollutants from stormwater runoff and surface groundwater can have many negative effects on our fish and wildlife populations as well as humans. Pathogens, or disease-causing bacteria that make our beaches

unsafe for swimming and shellfish unsafe for consumption, come from animal waste that has been washed off paved and natural surfaces and human waste leaking from improperly maintained septic systems or sewage treatment plants.

Lawn fertilizers, sewage treatment plants, septic tanks, and cesspools contribute nitrogen to our Sound. Excess nitrogen from these sources causes microscopic algae to grow in our waters. As these algae die and decompose, they rob the water column of oxygen which, like us, most animals need in order to live. This condition of low oxygen is called hypoxia. Hypoxia has been studied extensively in Long Island Sound and now researchers know that hypoxic conditions are due to stratification of the water column and even wind direction, in addition to nitrogen loading.



Toxic chemicals are also a concern in the Sound. Chemicals can bioaccumulate in the food chain, having a negative effect on marine animals and humans. Due to strict regulation and product bans, toxic chemical discharges into the Sound and its tributaries have decreased significantly over the past twenty years. However, researchers are still concerned about how household cleaning products, automobile exhausts, pesticides, and other chemicals such as pharmaceuticals and personal care products will affect aquatic life.

The problems impacting the Sound may seem overwhelming but, do not despair, the Long Island Sound Study is here! The Long Island Sound Study partnership was formed in 1985 to protect and restore the Sound. With funding from USEPA's National Estuary Program, federal and state agencies, user groups, organizations, and individuals work together to keep our Sound healthy. The Long Island Sound Study has done great work for the Sound by improving water quality, restoring habitats, protecting open spaces, and much more.

Although so much has been done to protect and restore the Sound, there is much left to do. Each of us affects the Sound in some way so it is up to all of us to work to keep it healthy and safe for our use. Here are some ways you can help:

- Pick up after your pets (scoop it, bag it, and toss it!) to reduce excess nutrients and pathogens from washing into our Sound.
- Have your septic tank/cesspool inspected and maintained to ensure that it is working properly and not polluting our Sound.
- Don't overfertilize—it's a waste of money and adds excess nutrients to the Sound which contributes to hypoxic events.
- Dispose properly of chemicals and household products. Find a recycling or disposal location near you by visiting: www.Earth911.com
- Learn more about what you can do to protect the Sound and other waterways by visiting: <http://longislandsoundstudy.net/get-involved/what-you-can-do/>
- Go above and beyond and volunteer your time. So many organizations that are doing great work could use your help: www.lisvolunteer.net

Larissa is the Long Island Sound Study Outreach Coordinator for New York Sea Grant.

FISHING HOTSPOTS

Long Island: Artist Lake, Middle Island

Type: Freshwater, Kettlehole Pond with three lobes, max depth 9 feet.

Where: On south side of Middle Country Road (Rt. 25) in Middle Island, between County Rt. 21 (LIE Exit 67) and the William Floyd Parkway (LIE Exit 68)

Getting There: Suffolk County Bus S58 stops at Artist Lake. <<http://www.sct-bus.org/schedules/s58.pdf>>.

Access: Brookhaven Town Park. Open year round 24/7. Parking availability for 5-7 cars.

Boat Launch: Yes-hand launch

Fishing Pier: No

Shoreline: Yes. ~3,300 ft of shoreline. Open to public. For best results bring waders.

Bathrooms: No

Wheelchair accessible: No

Species:

Largemouth bass

Chain pickerel

Yellow perch

Black crappie

Bluegill sunfish

Pumpkinseed sunfish

Carp

Brown bullhead

Specific Rules for Site Name:

Largemouth bass, Catch and release only, open year round

Other:

For general rules about fishing: visit <www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html>.

Tips: Artist Lake is a weedy lake with lots of water shield floating on the surface and submersed plants underneath, especially in the two smaller lobes. Techniques like those described in this issue's feature article work well here.

Additional Information: The catch and release only regulation for largemouth bass, instituted in 2004, has resulted in a better size distribution of largemouth bass, though not more of them. Other species have also benefitted from the regulation. There are now more quality size chain pickerel, sunfish and yellow perch in Artist Lake than before the regulation was implemented. Artist Lake also has a good population of black crappie with individuals over 12" not uncommon.



FISHING HOTSPOTS

NYC: Oakland Lake, Alley Pond Park, Queens, NY

Type: Freshwater

Where: Northeast Queens between Bayside and Oakland Gardens

Public Transportation:

Subway and Bus: Long Island Railroad to Bayside, transfer to Q13 bus down Bay Blvd. Get off at 46th avenue, lake is 6 blocks east.

Car: Long Island Expressway to exit 29. Go left onto Springfield Blvd, lake is about .7 mile on right. Street parking is available.

Access:

Boat Launch: No

Fishing Pier: No

Shoreline: Yes; most of the shoreline is fishable.

Species:

Largemouth bass

Chain pickerel

Sunfish

Hours: The park is open from dawn until dusk

Other: Facilities are limited, there are no nearby permanent restrooms.

Tips: This out of the way kettle pond is spring fed and full of amazing fish. The largest largemouth bass ever caught in a NYC freshwater electrofishing survey was pulled out of Oakland lake- a 21.3 inch behemoth weighing in a 6 lbs, 7 oz.

If bass aren't your thing, twitch/hop a brightly colored artificial worm through the weed beds at the Springfield Blvd end of the lake, where large chain pickerel are ready to put up a fight. Plenty of good size bluegills and pumpkinseeds are present as well if you're looking to kick back with a worm and bobber in the lake's east side.

Additional Information: Alley Pond Park <<http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/alleypondpark/highlights/12634>>



Region 2 Fisheries Staff member Diallo House, holding a largemouth bass from Oakland Lake.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

I FISH NY provides all bait and tackle. Pre-registration required where noted *

Long Island:

July 13, 2011

*Lakeside Fishing Clinic**

Lake Ronkonkoma
Town of Brookhaven Beach
6pm-dark

August 6, 2011

*Summer Family Fishing Clinic**

Hempstead Lake State Park
MacDonald Pond
10am-2pm

August 18, 2011

*Crab Fishing Clinic**

Town of Brookhaven
Corey Beach, Blue Point
6pm-8pm

September 1, 2011

*North Shore Family Saltwater Fishing Clinic**

Town of Brookhaven
Cedar Beach, Mount Sinai
6pm-dark

New York City:

June 25, 2011

Raritan Bay Festival
Conference House Park,
Staten Island
12 pm- 5pm

July 16, 2011

City of water Day
Governor's Island, NY Harbor
10 am – 4 pm

September 17, 2011

Little Red Lighthouse Event
Fort Washington Park,
Manhattan
10 am - 4 pm

September 24, 2011

I Fish NY/New York City Parks Snapper Derby
68th Street pier, Hudson River
Manhattan
11am-3pm

Attention Anglers: This weekend (6/25-6/26) is free fishing weekend in NYS. During these two days anyone can fish New York waters, no license is required.



To get more information,
log on to <<http://www.ifishnewyork.org>>
To ask questions or register,
call 631.444.0283 (LI) or 718.482.4022
(NYC).

