

BASS FISHING AT SHABBONA LAKE

"FROM A TO Z"

By Denny Sands

Shabbona Lake, located about 80 miles West of Downtown Chicago, is well known for its 4 State Of Illinois Record Muskies. But, it is also Northern Illinois Top Bass Lake. Annually it produces several Largemouth Bass over 20 inches, which is huge in any northern lake. During the last three years, the State Of Illinois Department Of Natural Resources, along with the Shabbona Lake Sportsman Club, has put 13,820, 4 - 6 inch, Smallmouth Bass into Shabbona Lake. These are raised in on-site rearing ponds. This will only enhance Illinois top "Fishin' Hole".

The intent of this article is to pinpoint Bass hot spot locations at Shabbona Lake. The accompanying map has 26 spots lettered A to Z. I will briefly describe each spot and include a tip or two on how to fish that area. So here we go, "Bass Fishin' At Shabbona Lake From A To Z"!

Area A is the Indian Creek Feeder Stream. Look for the newly implanted Smallmouth Bass to use this area. Fish the creek turns and the beaver dams. Use crawfish imitators. Area B is standing trees along the creek line in the No Motor Zone Area. Use golden roach minnows or 4" inch sucker minnows suspended on a bobber amongst the tree limbs. Area C is a well defined weed point. Use surface lures in the mornings and evenings on the schooling Bass. Area D is a timber shoreline along Somonauk Point. Use Shad Raps or plastic worms in this area.

Area E is a stump field sitting in about 2 - 6 feet of water. Use nightcrawlers or large minnows directly next to the stumps. Area F is the artesian well, which sits on a creek turn with a major brush pile and drop-off. Work all edges of the brush pile with live bait or jig & pig. Area G is a feeding flat in front of Pier 1. Look for schooling Bass busting the surface. Use top water lures such as a J-11 Rapala or Bass Oreneo for surface action. Use live bait under the schools, bouncing it along the bottom.

Area H is the campground shoreline. There are 9 fish cribs placed along this shoreline. Work the weed edge as well as the base of the cribs. Area I is the entrance to the North Cove. On a day the wind is blowing out of the South, Bass will stack up on this shoreline. Bounce a nightcrawler or a leech directly into their mouth. Area J is the Indian Creek Road Bed. This is where a gravel roadbed enters the lake. Its a good area for surface baits such as a Devil's Horse, early or late in the day.

Area K refers to pier #2, but you can fish each of the 5 piers roughly the same way. Fish completely around the rocky shorelines, as well as the points of the piers. There is usually a well defined weed edge around these piers. Area L is a submerged bridge in about 27 feet of water. The bridge sits about 10 feet above the bottom and it attracts a lot of suspended Bass. Use a jig and a leech or Lindy Rigs in this area. Area M is the main weed bed that forms in Shabbona Lake It is a spot to use a plastic frog or a plastic worm in the weeds and surface baits around the edges.

Area N is the Northeast Bay. Use a Tiny Torpedo or a floating Rapala along the weed line. Area O is the East Shoreline. It has an erratic weed line with many weed points and weed pockets. It is a good area for a Hula Popper, Jitterbug or a Devil's Horse. Area P is the East Bay Feeding Flat. Use a nightcrawler and a slip sinker bounced on the bottom. Also, be on the lookout for schooling Bass. Area Q is the major drop-off at Area 23. Fish the base of the standing timber with a plastic worm.

Area R is standing trees in about 4 - 6 feet of water. It is another good area for surface lures early or late. Area S is the Spillway Bay. Use a pre-rigged plastic worm, commonly called a "Chuck's Worm". Crank it slowly over the weed tops and hang on. Area T is the Dam face. Troll the ½ mile length of the dam with Shad Raps. Work the rocky shoreline with surface baits. Area U is the Southeast Bay of the Dam. When the wind is out of the West, Bass really stack up in this corner. Fish the weed edge.

Area V is the Southwest Bay. The weedy bay provides many opportunities for weed line fishing with surface baits or plastic worms. It is another area to use a plastic mouse at. Area W is the shoreline behind Pokanoka's Restaurant. This is another well defined weed edge that holds many cruising Bass that can be caught on live bait rigs. Area X is standing timber in about 35 feet of water. Most Bass will suspend about 10 - 12 feet down. On a dead calm evening, they will be very active near the surface.

Area Y is another major drop-off just East of the Handicap Pier. Fish the crown of the drop-off with live bait rigs tipped with nightcrawlers or leeches. Area Z is a small bay behind the Handicap Pier that is known for the big Bass that come in to feed on the Bluegill and Crappies that inhabit that bay. Suspend a minnow on a bobber. Baby 1 Minus lures worked extremely well in this bay last summer.

I know that I mentioned a lot of spots and a lot of lures that you may or may not be familiar with. Please stop by Lakeside Bait, Tackle & Boat Rental, located on the shores of Shabbona Lake and we will be happy to show you any of the spots or further explain any of the techniques mentioned in this article.

Good Fishing ! See You Soon !!!