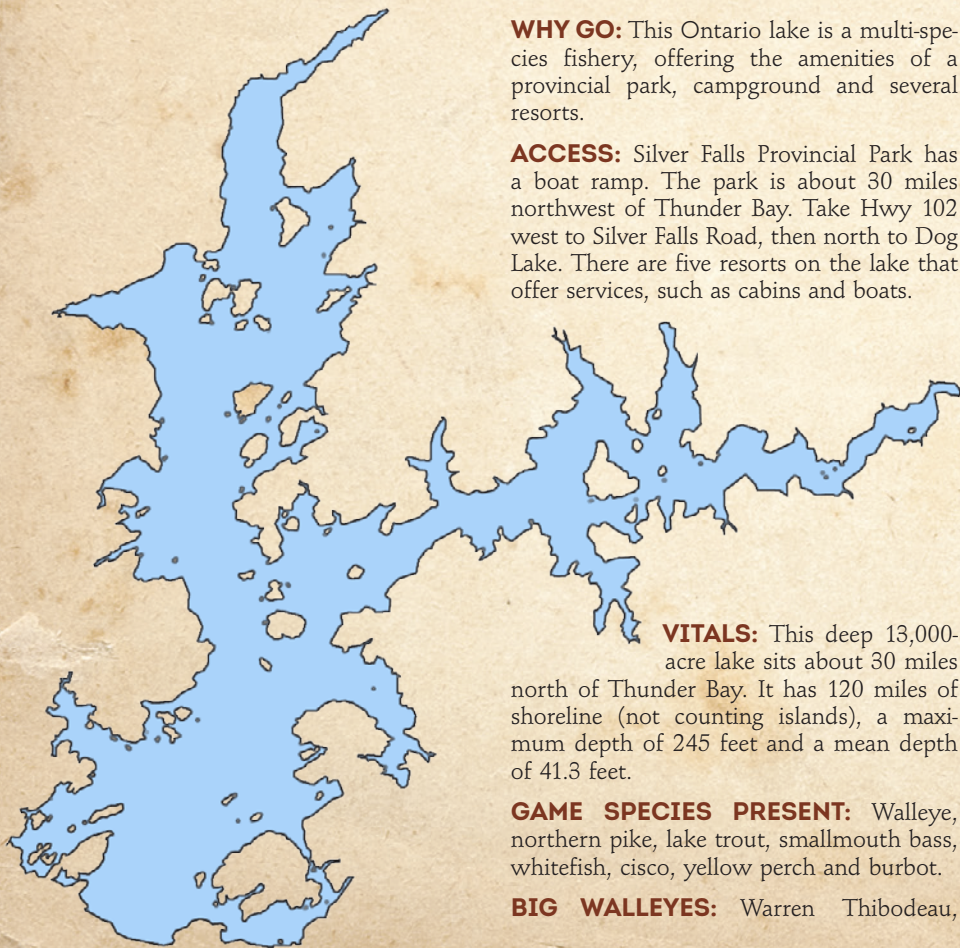


FISHING HOLE DOG LAKE



WHY GO: This Ontario lake is a multi-species fishery, offering the amenities of a provincial park, campground and several resorts.

ACCESS: Silver Falls Provincial Park has a boat ramp. The park is about 30 miles northwest of Thunder Bay. Take Hwy 102 west to Silver Falls Road, then north to Dog Lake. There are five resorts on the lake that offer services, such as cabins and boats.

VITALS: This deep 13,000-acre lake sits about 30 miles north of Thunder Bay. It has 120 miles of shoreline (not counting islands), a maximum depth of 245 feet and a mean depth of 41.3 feet.

GAME SPECIES PRESENT: Walleye, northern pike, lake trout, smallmouth bass, whitefish, cisco, yellow perch and burbot.

BIG WALLEYES: Warren Thibodeau,

owner of Northern Walleye Lodge (formerly Camp Missanabie) notes that Dog Lake has some huge walleye swimming around. "We always catch 30-, to 32-inch walleyes throughout the year, and quite a few in the 26- to 28-inch range." That being said, the lake has a lot of 14- and 15-inch walleye, and it's not hard to find those 18- and 19-inchers, either. "Yeah, we have groups that catch 100 in a day," he said, noting that despite the lake's cavernous depths, it has a lot of shallow bays that congregate walleye.

Thibodeau said walleye angling doesn't get real tough during the winter (and there's typically three or four shelters on the lake during the winter months), though his lodge is shut down at the end of September, when the walleyes tend to be a little bit deeper.

DEEP WATER LAKERS: The aforementioned deep water hosts a sizeable population of lake trout, with Thibodeau stating that the largest he'd ever heard of being 36 pounds. "Our average laker is about nine or 10 pounds," he said. "They are not huge, but they are good-sized."

Anglers tend to go deep with downriggers or steel line or others will use an open spool with sucker minnows.

A FEW BIG PIKE: Dog Lake has a healthy population of northern pike, Thibodeau

said. "There's some big fish," he said. "We aren't one of those places where you are going to catch hammer handles all of the time." He's seen pike up to 48 inches pulled from Dog. "That isn't huge, but it's still pretty big," But he said. "There's some good quality."

THE REST: Dog Lake has a number of other species worth targeting, including yellow perch, burbot and smallmouth bass.

The best perch fishing starts up in late July and August, when the fish are fairly shallow, off the weeds. Thibodeau said there's some good-sized perch, and the largest he's seen from Dog was longer than 15 inches.

Around the same time, smallmouth bass fishing also picks up. The lake has lots of rock structure that smallies like, and the lake is a good place to pitch topwaters.

THE PARK: Silver Falls is noted for its glacial features that occurred in the past 10,000 years, including the Dog Lake moraine, kettle terraces, spillways and outwash deposits. The park has a parking lot, boat ramp, and toilets, and offers swimming, hiking trails, nature viewing and a 54-site campground.—*Javier Serna*