

# FISHING HOLE

## HAZELWOOD LAKE

BY JOE SHEAD

**WHY GO:** Hazelwood Lake is a great place to take the whole family. The entire surface of the lake is managed by the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority. In addition to fishing, the 618-hectare Hazelwood Lake Conservation Area offers a swimming beach, 7 km of hiking trails, picnicking and birding and wildlife-watching opportunities.

**ACCESS:** Hazelwood Lake Conservation Area is an easy 25-minute drive from Thunder Bay. Take Dawson Road (Highway 2) northwest out of Thunder Bay, then turn right onto Hazelwood Drive. HLCA is located at the end of Hazelwood Drive. A canoe launch with parking is located in the river on the east end of the lake. Shore fishing is available.

**VITALS:** If you're looking for a quiet getaway just a short drive from Thunder Bay, this is it. In addition to hundreds of acres of park and 7 km of trails to explore, you won't have to deal with the buzz of outboard motors in this semi-wilderness setting. No gas motors are allowed (electric motors are OK). Also, no snowmobiles or quads. This makes the lake popular with canoeists and kayakers. There is a \$5 daily access fee per vehicle.

**GAME SPECIES PRESENT:** Walleye, yellow perch, northern pike and lake whitefish.

**FISHING:** Hazelwood offers reasonably good fishing for all available species, but many anglers enjoy the quiet atmosphere and the fishing is secondary. Anglers do well fishing for walleyes from shore in the early summer using leeches or nightcrawlers on a jig or plain hook, fished below a slip float. The same technique works for canoe anglers. Trolling with a nightcrawler harness or leech on a bottom bouncer or Lindy rig is an effective way to cover water and find fish. Get your exercise with paddle power or attach a small electric trolling motor to your canoe to save your strength and cover more water. Perch can be caught incidentally, using the same methods. For pike, try casting spoons to the shallows or troll a spoon or crankbait behind your canoe or kayak. Winter is the best time to catch whitefish. Small spoons jigged enticingly can produce these tasty fish.

**TRAILS:** Visitors will find more than 7 km of hiking/snowshoeing trails at Hazelwood Lake. The Orange Trail is an easy 2.5 km loop with gorgeous lake views. The Forest Community Trail runs 2.5 km through riparian forest. The Dam Trail is a 1.5 km trail along the river, leading to the dam.

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