

FISHING HOLE

NORTHERN LIGHT LAKE

WHY GO: If you're looking for a fun little adventure without the exertion of long paddles and portages in the Boundary Waters, Northern Light Lake just might be the ticket. It requires a fairly short paddle down the Brule River to reach the lake, where you'll discover an undeveloped, unspoiled lake with good fishing just off the Gunflint Trail.

ACCESS: The lake lies 14 miles up the Gunflint Trail (Cook County Hwy. 12) from Grand Marais. Just turn right into the gravel parking lot when you see the sign for the lake. There's a shallow gravel boat launch suitable for small boats on the Brule River. From there, you'll need to travel down the Brule River about 1.4 miles to reach the lake. Although a motor boat can reach the lake, a canoe is probably your best bet because the river is rocky and shallow, particularly in the summer.

VITALS: Northern Light Lake has an interesting layout. There's a marshy delta where the Brule River flows into the lake. Weave your way through it and you'll discover a shallow, marshy lake spanning 378 acres, with a maximum depth of 7.5 feet. There's no development on the lake and no accommodations.

GAME SPECIES PRESENT: Northern pike, walleye, smallmouth bass, yellow perch, and pumpkinseed sunfish.

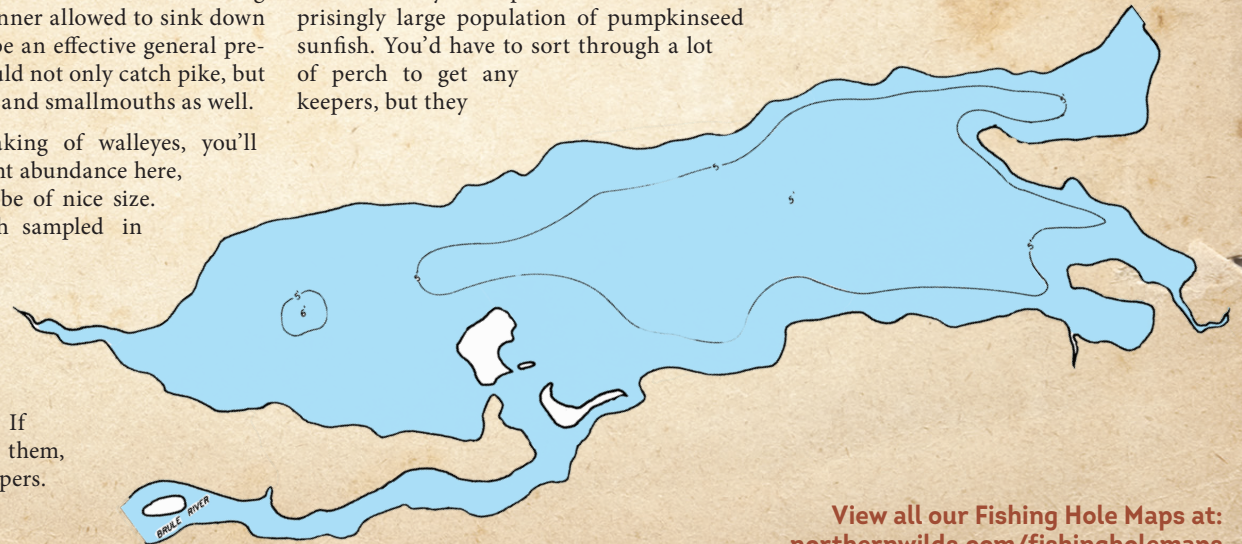
NORTHERN PIKE: Northern Light's shallow, weedy layout is perfectly suited to northern pike. The fish are abundant here and they grow large. The latest DNR survey turned up fish up to 38 inches, with five fish topping the 30-inch mark. Expect to catch a lot of pike in this lake. In fact, a shallow-running crankbait or a spinner allowed to sink down a few feet would be an effective general presentation that would not only catch pike, but probably walleyes and smallmouths as well.

WALLEYE: Speaking of walleyes, you'll find them in decent abundance here, and they tend to be of nice size. A majority of fish sampled in the last survey were 16 inches or larger, with the biggest taping out at over 24 inches. If you're able to find them, they're usually keepers.

SMALLMOUTH BASS: You might not expect to find smallies in a shallow, weedy lake, but they're here and they grow large. The largest sampled in the last DNR survey was just a whisker under 20 inches, and a lot of fish topping 15 inches turned up. Pitch a topwater on a quiet summer evening and let the bass and pike fight for it!

PANFISH: Northern Light is home to good numbers of yellow perch and has a surprisingly large population of pumpkinseed sunfish. You'd have to sort through a lot of perch to get any keepers, but they

certainly do their part in keeping the lake's pike and walleyes fat and sassy. The average size for sunnies isn't too bad, and you might find a few keepers if you soak a worm under a bobber.



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