

FISHING HOLE

CHRISTINE LAKE

BY JOE SHEAD

WHY GO: Christine Lake has a pretty well-rounded fishery. You've got your typical pike, walleyes, and perch, but this lake also has good numbers of bluegills and pumpkinseeds, which is kind of unusual for the area. The lake is small, secluded, and given its shallowness, should be pretty easy to figure out.

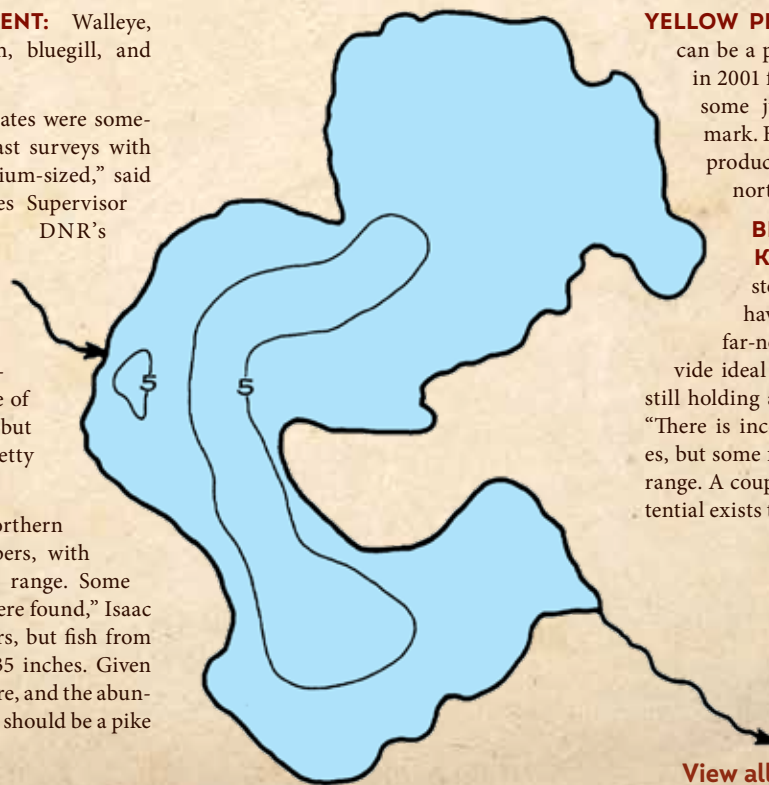
ACCESS: Christine Lake probably gets overlooked, with larger lakes in the area (nearby White Pine and Clara lakes have small campgrounds and, thus, attract more visitors). From Lutsen, head up Cook County Highway 4 (Caribou Trail) for 6.7 miles. Turn left onto Honeymoon Trail (Forest Road 164) and proceed 2 miles. Turn right onto the short road to the lake. The road is rough and best suited for small boats. There's parking for about six vehicles.

VITALS: Christine Lake spans 183 acres with a maximum depth of 7 feet. It's shallow and weedy. The last published DNR survey was from 2001, however, the DNR surveyed it again this summer and updated figures should be posted this winter.

GAME SPECIES PRESENT: Walleye, northern pike, yellow perch, bluegill, and pumpkinseed.

WALLEYE: "Walleye catch rates were somewhat lower but similar to past surveys with walleyes being small to medium-sized," said Grand Marais Area Fisheries Supervisor E.J. Isaac, regarding the DNR's recently concluded 2025 lake survey. "Only a few large walleye were found around 22 to 25 inches." Christine's walleye population is much lower than some of the other lakes in the area, but overall, the average size is pretty decent.

NORTHERN PIKE: "Northern pike are still in good numbers, with many in the 20- to 25-inch range. Some large fish close to 30 inches were found," Isaac said. It has been over 20 years, but fish from the previous survey topped 35 inches. Given the lake's shallow, weedy nature, and the abundance of perch to feed on, this should be a pike paradise.



YELLOW PERCH: Speaking of perch, this can be a pretty good lake. The last survey in 2001 found a good range of sizes, with some jumbos surpassing the 12-inch mark. Historically, Christine has always produced enough perch to satisfy both northern pike and human anglers.

BLUEGILLS AND PUMPKINSEEDS: Bluegills were first stocked in Christine in 1978 and have managed to hold on in this far-northern lake. The weeds provide ideal habit. "Bluegill populations are still holding at average numbers," Isaac said. "There is inconsistent or missing year classes, but some fish were in the 6- to 8-inch size range. A couple did reach 9 inches, so the potential exists to find a dandy one."

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