

# Prime Fall Time Fishing

By Kevin Dahlke



Many anglers enjoy fishing throughout the summer months and one can't blame them as the weather is so much more tolerable as opposed to either the spring or fall. But to those that put their boats and equipment away after the Labor Day weekend holiday; these anglers are the ones that are missing the best part of the year for catching quality fish.

As the temperatures are getting cooler with everyday that passes, this will take the temperature of the lake down with it as well. Taking the waters from around 80 degrees down into the low 60's, this is like a trigger that is being pulled as the fish know that it is time to put the feed bag on and start putting some weight on them before the long winter ahead.

Many fish go into somewhat of a dormant stage in the northern part of the country throughout the winter months. So for them to be able to handle those long northern winters they need to put on more weight so that they will be able to draw from that as each day of the cold season passes. So to put on this extra weight that they will need, these fish are eating and chasing everything in sight.

For the angler that knows about this little tidbit, days on the water can be very fruitful as well and rewarding by putting up with a little cool temp. For the most part if you were to venture out onto the lake, you probably will be the only angler out there. When do you get the chance to fish and not have to worry if someone is on your spot or the water skiers are flying around the lake or the jet skiers are being a nuisance?

For the months of September, October, November and possibly part of December, I am able to fish open water and catch some very nice fish. Of course there are going to be days that I am out there and not get a bite no matter what I try, but that is part of fall fishing. But then there are other days that I am out there and the fish are on fire and big fish are biting very well and a possible trophy will hit your bait and that will make your day.

One thing that is nice about the fall fishing is that you don't need to get up in the wee hours of the morning to get on the lake at sunrise. At least I find the fishing is better in the afternoon as the water warms a little from the sun if the sun is out. On those cloudy days that we see so frequently in the fall then it pretty much doesn't matter what time of the day you are fishing.



The key for fall fishing to be successful is to find areas in the lake that offer green weeds that haven't died off from the cooler water temps. Finding these areas is fairly critical and once these areas are found, there is a tendency that the fish are going to frequent these areas much more and also they are in schools more in the fall and this offers you more fish to catch.

Good ways to find these green weeds is to fish with either a crankbait or a spinnerbait and as long as you are hitting the weeds with these baits, the fish are going to grab them. Pay attention to the weeds that are stuck to these baits as this will give you an idea as to what fish are relating to so that when you are exploring other areas of the lake, you will know what the productive vegetation is.

The crankbait and spinnerbait are two of the top choices for fall fishing as these can be moved quickly through the water and also cover a lot of water as well. The name of the game in the fall is to cover as much water as possible and once you hit a school of fish, then slow down a little with these baits and cover that area very well as chances are you are going to catch a number of fish from that spot.



Fish in the fall are looking for big meals and by offering them big baits this is more than enticing for them to chase and eat. Fish these baits throughout all of the green weeds that you can find and keep on moving to be able to cover a lot of water as the fish are more concentrated in the fall. Make sure that you hit the weeds or actually crank these baits right through the weeds as these fish maybe stacked in there very thick.

Weedlines are some of the most productive areas to search and by watching your electronics, and using your trolling motor, just

follow that weedline like you do a road that you are driving. Any time that you find an irregular feature in a weedline, make sure to concentrate on that area as these little differences makes a load of difference in catching fish or not catching fish.

There are weedlines that I fish that I know when I get to a certain spot there is a hook in the line or a turn and every time that I fish an area like this, you always catch a couple from there. When you understand what your electronics are telling you this makes you such a better angler and allows you to dissect the homes of these fish that are missed by many anglers that will go right on past these prime areas.

Another technique that I find fairly productive in the fall is fishing jigs in and around docks. Docks absorb heat from the sun on these cooling fall days and that gets transferred into the waters below. These waters that are a little warmer than surrounding waters attracts baitfish which in turn attracts predator fish as well. Jigs or weightless plastics are good choices for fishing around the remaining docks as the days go by more docks are taken out of the water for the winter months.

Make sure to fish a dock very thoroughly from as many different angles as you can possibly cast at that dock. Also work the dock all the way from the shore out to the end of the dock as the fish can be anywhere's along that structure. Get a lot of practice at skipping the bait under the dock as there are also fish buried deep under the heaviest parts of a dock that should not be overlooked.

When moving from one dock to another dock there is that area in between docks that many anglers usually don't fish. Most anglers turn the trolling motor on high and get over to the next dock before making the next cast. Be a little different and make some casts out into deeper water as fish in the fall can be spread out anywhere and you can't catch a fish if the bait is not in the water.



The name of the game for fall fishing is finding green weeds and also fishing some of the remaining structure that is still in the lake. Keep those baits in the water at all times because you don't know when that next bite is going to happen. Also, keep yourself on the move at all times until you find an area that you feel has a school of fish there.

Covering water is key to successful fall fishing and by using baits that cover a lot of water this will keep you in more action more days than not. Fall can and will be a tough time to fish certain days, but those days that you hit that jackpot, you will definitely be thankful that you are out there. Spring is the only other time of year to get these big fish on your hook and more times than not when you catch a fish, take a look at their belly as they probably have an engorged stomach from all of the baitfish they have already caught.

I enjoy fishing in the fall with no one else out there and I feel that the lake is mine. Many of my biggest fish have been caught in the fall and I definitely look forward to fall fishing. Sure you have to bundle up on those days when it is around the freezing temperatures, but when you feel that tug on the line, it feels like summer out there once again. If you haven't experienced fall fishing, definitely make it a point this fall to get out there and catch some fish.

We still have quite sometime before the ice forms on our favorite lake, so why not wet a line, catch a trophy, and brag it up to your buddies that are at home watching the football game while you are rippin' some lips.

Enjoy what Mother Nature has offered you and live life to the fullest. Enjoy the outdoors and make some memories as you never know what is in store for your life.