



Autumn is the very best time of year for fishing in the Grand Traverse Region, as these two anglers will undoubtedly agree. They have just landed a silvery salmon from Lake Michigan. Inland lakes are equally productive right now.

Fishing is great in GT area in fall

By GORDON CHARLES
Record Eagle outdoor editor

It's a big temptation for the sportsman to pack away his fishing tackle at this time of year and take up with a gun or bow, instead. This, however, can be a tremendous mistake!

This is especially true if he has a chance to go fishing at this time of year in the Grand Traverse region. It so happens that right now is some of the very best fishing of the year, even though many anglers fail to realize it.

Everybody knows about coho and chinook salmon, of course, since these silvery battlers get more than their fair share of publicity. They are now homing in on their spawning streams and nearly every trickle of water flowing into Lake Michigan will have a salmon lurking nearby. It is when they are still trying to make up their minds to migrate up the rivers and creeks that salmon provide some of the finest big water fishing of the year.

As the salmon move in close they will, more often than not, be followed closely by brown and rainbow (steelhead) trout, plus even a few trophy-sized brook trout, which are legal to catch year-round in the Great Lakes. Given enough time, both trout and salmon will enter the streams, thus providing even more exciting fishing.

Many lower segments of the major rivers are open year-round for everything but

brook and lake trout in this area. Some are open only until Jan. 1 but it is still a long season, or more than most anglers need.

While streams come in for the most attention, most fishermen seem to have abandoned the inland lakes entirely. This is fine with the few anglers who know what is waiting for them in those landlocked waters.

Fall finds inland lakes cooling down from summer heat which often puts gamefish deep and out of reach of most fishermen. Now, largemouth and small mouth bass, northern pike, walleyes and muskellunge come alive.

Trophy fish are beginning to feed without caution in many cases, thus allowing excellent catches by anglers who know enough to go fishing right now. Fish tend to be in much shallower water where live baits and the right artificials can be presented easily to them. And, there will be plenty of willing takers!

Bluegills, sunfish, crappies, rock bass and yellow perch now snap out of their summer doldrums, too. Heavy stringers are the rule rather than the exception these days.

The waters of Grand Traverse Bay will also begin to cool down and produce good fishing for Menominees and their larger cousins, the whitefish. Fishermen find them in the depths by chugging lures near bottom or enticing them to take wigglers.

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