

# Worth the Drive!

*From kings to walleye to smallmouth bass, southeast Canada offers a deep-freeze full of fish.*

BY JOHN FIELD

I've heard old-timers say, "Any Canadian waters you can drive to aren't worth the trip anymore."

It isn't true. The best multi-species angling in North America is within a few hours drive of Toronto and Montreal.

The reason? It's the presence of the Great Lakes and tributaries, the fertile shallow prairie lakes, deep shield lakes and rivers.

down to about 900 feet. It's full of game fish like trout and salmon, with walleyes in the east. The reestablished Atlantic salmon is the bright new star on the horizon.

Shoreline hot spots are Port Credit, where browns and kings swarm in the fall, and the Niagara bar, one of the lake's biggest fish magnets. In spring, the bar is full of lakers, browns and occasional spawned-out

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They have excellent spawning and estuary habitat, augmented

by liberal stockings of certain species.

This part of Canada is responsible for nurturing the 1988 IGFA world-record muskie of 65 pounds from Blackstone Harbor. And last September, the Canadian brown trout record was elevated by the catch of a 34.38-pounder by a Lake Ontario shore caster! Here's the layout.

## Lake Ontario & Tributaries

Lake Ontario is a refrigerator with depths

steelhead. Next, when the bait rafts consolidate in summer in the temperature breaks, kings and steelies are on the attack.

Pickering Nuclear Power Station and the Lakeview Generating plant have warm water discharges, which attract various trout species, kings and walleye.

The Ganaraska River has a 20-kilometer fish run — a steelhead spawn. Wade from November to the end of December near Port Hope on less-crowded weekdays.

For more information, call the MNR (Ministry of Natural Resources) office in Lindsay, Ont., at 705/324-6121.

The eastern end of Lake Ontario from the Bay of Quinte to the St. Lawrence River provides Great Lakes walleye fishing at its finest.

The Bay of Quinte tributaries are the lake's major spawning areas. Once walleye arrive in the fall, they stay through ice-fishing season until spawning is completed in spring.

Then, many walleye return to the waters of Lake Ontario until the next fall. There they can be targeted on shores and weed beds.

For information, contact the Bay of Quinte Tourist Council at 613/962-4597.

Niagara is a great river with trophy smallmouth bass, a plentiful supply of muskies, and seasonal flows of steelhead and lakers.

For information on runs, call the local

MNR office in Fonthill (Niagara) at 905/892-2656.

## The St. Lawrence River

The St. Lawrence River is the largest clear deep river in North America. It is a reliable producer of muskie, walleye and smallmouth. There are isolated areas of good northern pike and largemouth bass fishing, but the river holds other fish, too. The key fishing ports on the Ontario portion are Kingston, Gananoque and Brockville.

For information about both sides of the river, call 1000 Islands International Council in Alexandria Bay, N.Y., at 800/8 ISLAND.

## Georgian Bay & Tributaries

Georgian Bay is a 5000-square-mile portion of Lake Huron, which is host to unfathomable fish tonnage. World-record-

proportion muskies, big lake sturgeon, browns, kings and

smallies are beckoning.

The offshore fishing is underutilized. The inshore bays and tributaries have moderate to high pressure but do harbor big fish.

The 30,000 Islands near Perry Sound and the Moon River are famous muskie and walleye areas. The walleye and muskie nursery is the French River. Manitoulin Island is a smallmouth and ambush point.

For information on most of the eastern shore and North Channel, contact NOTO (Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters Association) at 705/472-5552. For great trout and salmon fishing, investigate Owen Sound, Severn River and St. Mary's River.

## Quebec

Quebec also has great fishing — little-known muskies with record potential, myriads of walleye and large northern pike.

The major fishery in the south is the St. Lawrence, which consists of the locked Lakes, St. Francis and Saint Louis.

This province's border with Ontario shares a mid-size river called the Outaouais in Quebec and the Ottawa on the Ontario side. Cabonga reservoir in Reserve De La Verendrye, known for big pike and walleye, is within a four-hour drive of Montreal.

Contact Tourism Quebec for lodging and fishing information at 800/363-7777. 🌲



John Field holds a walleye pulled from Lake Ontario.

PHOTO: JOHN FIELD