



Ice Fishing for Perch



Seminar: Manitoba's Perch Potential

December 28, 2013

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Manitoba's Perch Potential

This seminar was derived from fishing East Shoal Lake over the whole of last winter 2013. First fished on Jan 4th and last fished near the end of March.

I wouldn't be able to do any of this without the support of my wonderful wife ; Kari, thank you very much for your love and support!

Special thanks to;

Cabela's Canada – Peter Tully

Ice Team/Clam Corp. – Matt Johnson

Vexilar – Cory Studer

Pro-Cure Bait Scents- Meagan Jackson



• Perch

Where?

Well it's no big secret right now that East Shoal Lake is where its happening. A look at the Manitoba Master Angler database will often give an indication of where a particular bite is happening for a particular species.

- either look for species or lake (if you've heard rumours)
- Tackle shops/sports shops
- Bulletin boards and friends also will serve you well

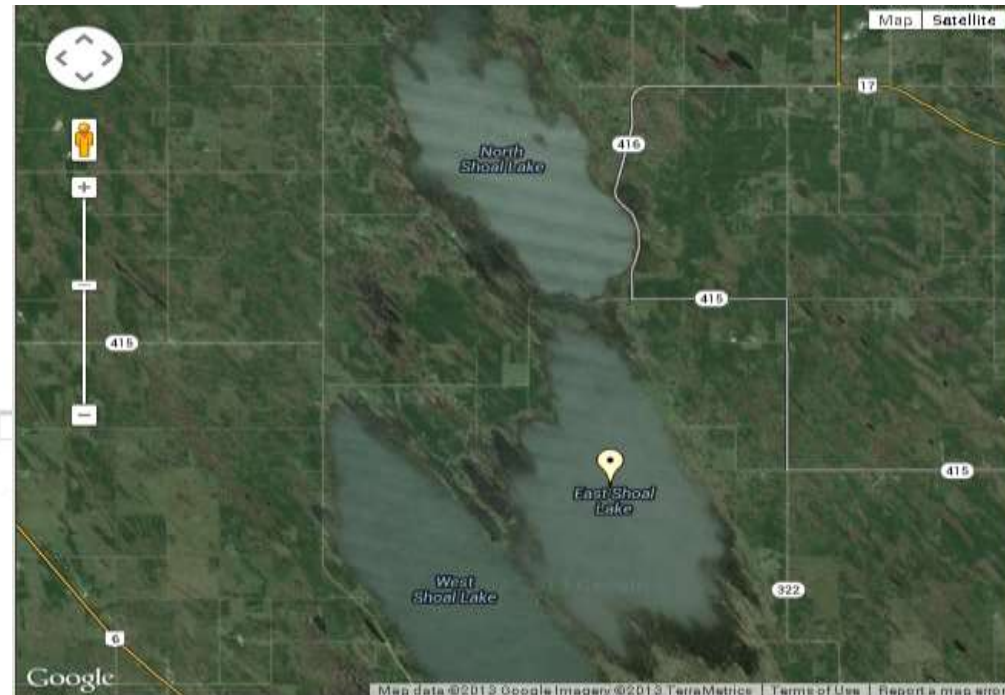
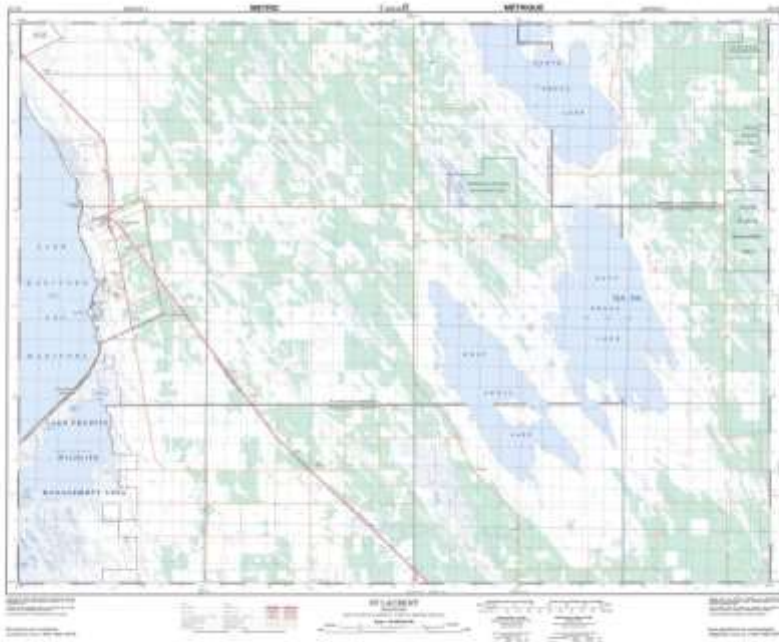
The screenshot shows the Manitoba Master Angler Awards website. At the top, there are navigation links for "Go Fishing" and "Go Hunting", and a "Master Angler Awards" dropdown menu. Below this is a search bar with "Perch" entered in the "Search For:" field and "Body of Water" in the "Body of Water:" field. There are also fields for "First Name", "Last Name", and "Angler ID #".

Below the search bar, there are filters for "Group By" (Species, Lake), "Sort By" (Size, Date), and "Ang. Method" (Jug, Net, etc.). There are also "Returns" and "and" filters.

The main content area shows "Master Angler Awards" with "Total Records: 6575". Below this, there is a note: "Awards processed before 1991 do not have lengths as they were calculated using weight." and a legend: "* R* means the fish was released, T means caught while Ice Fishing, T means caught while Fly Fishing."

The results are displayed in a table titled "PERCH":

Master Angler	Address	Location	Caught	cm/inches	*	Rank
Click Link	MANITOBA	West Shoal Lake	5 MAR 2013	42.43 / 16.70	R	1
Click Link	MANITOBA	East Shoal Lake	17 MAR 2013	40.09 / 16.10	R	2
Click Link	MANITOBA	West Shoal Lake	5 MAR 2013	40.84 / 16.00	R	3



Where

Background on Shoal Lake:

- The lake was never mapped for depth. It was mapped on Canada Map 6 (outline only – pre 2007)
- The lake grew in size over successive years with the greatest increase in size in 2011 (The 300 year flood event on the Assiniboine)
- The lake has also grown due to some municipalities and their drainage programs. The lake has no natural outlet – 30-40cm it'll flow into the Grassmere drainage.
- lake levels about 6 feet higher than pre 2007



• Perch



When?

Another part of working with this question will be to understand what these fish do throughout the season.

Spring - shallow to spawn.
Spawning is usually later in the season : Towards the end of March the fish will bite best on or near to those places where they'll spawn.

Summer – Spread out and roam or will tend to move towards structure or deeper water

Fall – Can be all over but structure or deeper water will attract more.

Winter – go deeper and move to the undefined “Flats”



- Perch



**Have a look at the article I wrote just recently about perch movement through the seasons;
<http://www.cateyeoutfitter.com/articles97.php>



When? How?

Unlike walleye, perch bite well throughout the day

Early morning, later evening are not prime times.

Moving strategically is key. If you're not getting bit after a half hourMOVE

Having appropriate equipment to move will make a big difference with success.

Electronics are also an important consideration.

- Perch

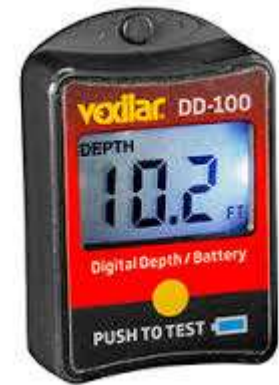


New Electronics that will help with perch fishing

How?

FL X-28

- digital depth,
- Auto Range,
- Two zoom zones,
- battery status,
- FIVE color palettes to select from for maximum visibility,
- five foot depth range adjustments starting at 10 feet,
- Maximum range of 300,
- Day and Night display brightness settings,
- Low power options for fishing in super shallow water,
- Weed Mode for better performance while fishing in weeds.



The DD100 can be added to any FL Series Vexilar.



How?



Perch

Well if you've been to one of my seminars in the past you'll know what I think with regards to maps and our modern mapping capabilities

- Having a map is a safety issue. East Shoal lake can blow up into white-out conditions in a matter of minutes. Being able to get back safely is #1
- A huge break-through for me on East Shoal lake happened when I took a look at the map from the 2003 Canada mapping software
- -What was the break through... well what used to be shore line was now 6 feet underwater.... Get it?



How?

Fishing wide open areas and moving more frequently was how I had my best success in the middle of the Winter

If it was cold a flip top was more convenient than a pop-up. I would also only drill the minimum number of holes on colder days. On warmer days I would drill more and walk from hole to hole.

The advantage to a pop up is that it doesn't take up a lot of room. If you're fishing alone and use the smaller models they can almost be as fast to set up as a flip topalmost

Fishing outside with an "Ice Armor suit" is like wearing a shelter.

- Perch



Gear

A lot of rods loaded and ready to go in a secure case is a great idea. Pre-loaded means that if a pike comes along and breaks you off you'll be ready to go in half the time.

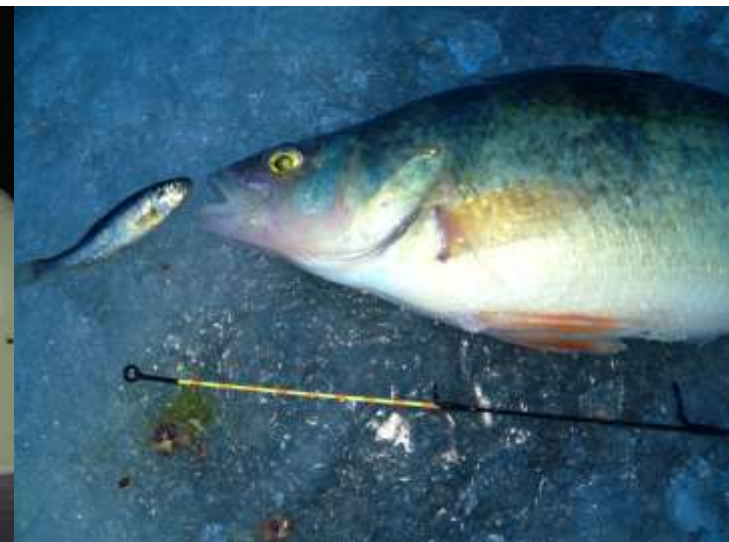
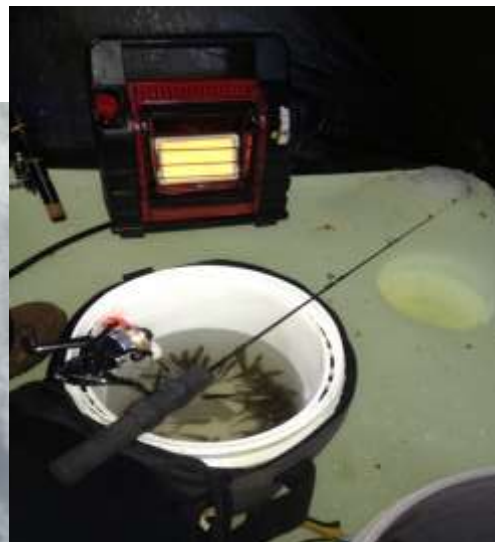
-Pail based rod holders are a good idea as they extend the purpose of the pail and they allow you to position rods where needed

-Soft tipped rods for dead stick lines are very handy as they do not give away your presence until you decide to set the hook.

-A supersensitive flasher is an important consideration if you're thinking about being even more successful with perch.

- A heater and insulated minnow pail make it possible on cold days.

• Perch



• Perch

There are lots of accessories to make your perch fishing day that much more fun.

- Heaters
- Rod holders
- Fans and lights
- Chairs
- Ice scoops
- Tackle organizers
- Sleds
- Bait keepers
- Fan/lights
- Ice Auger

Having the right stuff makes fishing that much more fun



Gear

A variety of tackle options are out there.

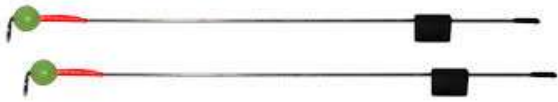
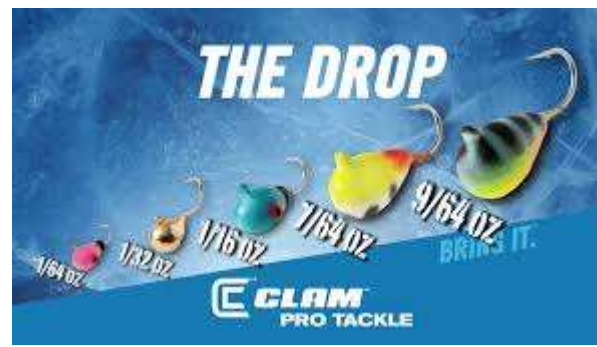
Three words come to mind when I think of tackle for perch ; small, smaller, smallest

-The prior means line sometimes in the 1-2# test range. If a pike comes along (and you're using lighter line) you'll be cutting off the chunk of line where the fight took place (as it'll be all loopy/spun out)

-Rod sensitivity can be enhanced through the use of spring bobbers.

-Live bait seems to work best but artificials should come along as well.

- Perch



• Perch

How?

Well if you've been to one of my seminars in the past you'll also know that having enough tackle is always a challenge.....

- Having a tackle box of options will often make a difference . The East Shoal lake bite can be fickle. Being able to change up your presentation will make the difference
- A huge break-through for me on East Shoal lake happened when I took a suggestion from Gord Pyzer and tried using small dropper chains.
- -And then there were the old "stand -bys" that worked as they have on other bodies of water when fishing for perch



Harvest

As perch are a species that can populate a lake to such an extent that they will stunt themselves in size if there is no reduction in their numbers, taking a few home isn't a bad idea. Perch are a fecund species.

Personally, 10 or 12 and not the provincial limit of 25 is what I'll take home.

Leave some for another day or perhaps leave a few for the future.

- Perch



- Perch

Enjoy a true jewel of a resource...

Hopefully, the lake and its population of perch can withstand the present level of angling pressure seen for the past two years.

I predict it still has a couple of good years left in it....

Get out and enjoy!



Dan Kiazyk
Cat Eye Outfitter



Visit our website often for new articles about ice fishing adventures and techniques and tips
<http://www.cateyeoutfitter.com/intro.php>

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Guided ice fishing trips are available throughout the holiday season as well as most weekends. You need to call at least two weeks in advance to book an ice fishing trip.

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