Every summer, I get together with a group of anglers to head to Rainy Lake for a week of walleye fishing. During our stay at Island View Lodge, we have ample time to explore and target walleyes on the many pieces of structure that are found throughout the lake.

If there is one thing we have learned about Rainy Lake, it is the fact that the walleyes on this lake love rocks. However, if you are generalizing about walleyes, I would have to say that these fish love rocks no matter what lake you are fishing on or where they are found. Rocks and walleyes simply go hand-in-hand.

The problem people have when live bait rigging walleyes on the rocks is the snags. Being snagged frequently is not only frustrating, it is also time consuming. Once a snag occurs, it is necessary to try to maneuver the boat in an effort to get unsnagged, or worse yet, retying due to a break off.

There is no magic solution for totally avoiding snags when live bait rigging rocks. However, there are some strategies that can be applied that will greatly reduce the number of snags that occur.

The first suggestion I have is to change the style of sinker to something that is more pencil shaped than round. We have found that Lindy No-Snagg sinkers and Northland Rock Runner weights greatly reduce the number of snags due to their design.

When moving, these sinkers will ride in an upright position which helps the weight slide up and over crevasses and creases in the rocks instead of finding a permanent home. Once a person is snagged, these pencil style sinkers usually will come free when the boat is moved in the opposite direction.

Another tactic we use is to fish with heavier weights than normal. We usually use half to three-quarter ounce weights. This allows for the line to be quite straight down and not back at an angle. The straighter down your line is, the fewer snags you will have.

Something else we do that reduces snags is to lift the weight off of the bottom so it isn’t dragging through the rocks. This is a sticky proposition as yours and Snags.

Snags
1. Municipal Park - picnic area, pavilion, softball field, beach, fishing pier, public access
2. Minnesota Pioneer Park
3. 1872 State Mark’s Episcopal Chapel in the Woods
4. Marcus Zusammen County Park - biking trail
5. Limestone Lake County Access - picnic area, fishing pier, public access
6. St. Marys Memorial County Park - beach
7. Harry Lassen County Forest - picnic area, biking trail, ski trail
8. Schrader County Park - picnic area, camp ground, beach, fishing pier, public access
9. Lake Martha State Park - picnic area, camp ground, fishing trails, ski trails
10. Nat Memorial County Park - Nature center, hiking trail, ski trail
11. Maple Lake County Access - picnic area, fishing pier, public access
12. Clearwater/Pleasant Country Park - picnic area, beach, fishing pier, public access
13. Carl Johnson County Forest - picnic area, biking trail, ski trail
14. Stanley Eddy County Park - picnic area, fishing trail, ski trail
15. Lake Louise County Park - nature
16. Fair Haven Dam County Wayside - picnic area, fishing pier, historical marker

AERIAL MAP OF THE ANNANDALE AREA

Hook a great deal on community news

The Annandale Advocate has been telling the stories of our area for more than 125 years. Community news, school news and much more are covered every week in the pages of the Advocate and online. Subscriptions today for just $39 per year or just $35 for our e-edition. Call or stop by our office, Or go online to www.annandaleadvocate.com and subscribe any time.
Anglers looking to get out and hook some fish are excited to meet this lake this year. In preparation, the fishing outlook has been released for the Heart of the Lakes region. In it, we can expect some good fishing conditions for the species. Find a few of the local lakes and if you are headed out of the area for the opener you can read the outlooks for other areas online at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/flowers.html

Clearwater Lake

Clearwater Lake is a 3,156-acre lake located two miles north of the City of Annandale on the border of Wright and Stearns County, Minnesota. Clearwater Lake is the largest lake in the Sauk River Chain of Lakes management area and a popular destination for bass fishing and other vegetation. There are no public access points on the west basin due to property located on the east basin.

Northern pike provide a good larval food base for the larger fish species due to their relatively high numbers.

Sugar Lake

Sugar Lake is a 1,015-acre lake located five miles north of the city of Cold Spring, in northern Wright County. The lake has excellent water quality and supports a diverse array of waterfowl and vegetation.

Sugar Lake Lake indicated an abundance of game fish, making an excellent destination for anglers. The lake offers great fishing opportunities for small- to mid-sized black crappie, large-mouth bass, northern pike, and channel Catfish. Additionally, anglers can expect a chance to catch quality small- to mid-sized black crappie and walleye with the potential for trophy muskies as well.

The walleye and muskellunge populations have a significant number of fish of larger size and is a popular recreation area for bass fishing and other vegetation. There are no public access points on the west basin due to property located on the east basin.

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Around the Wright, Stearns, and Sherburne County area, many of the shallower bays are likely to be finishing up spawning. He suspects things are probably moving a little slower than normal for this time of year.

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**Spring bass and the inside weed line**

By Jerry Carlson

I t was a long time ago that I learned the value of targeting edges when searching for fish. Edges come in a wide variety of forms in the water world. Fish utilize edges where they are found.

One of my favorite edges is the spring of the year in the shallow, or weedy, areas where the soil meets the water. This inside weed line edge is extremely productive when searching for early season largemouth bass.

Not all lakes have this ideal weed line. Many anglers that do have this inside weed line will not have it everywhere. You need soil or sand and then a transition to weeds once the water gets to be a few feet deep.

Most of the bass I fish in the spring are caught in this area. This allows me to actually visualize what the transition from sand to weeds looks like. Patrolled positions on edges are a must for that.

Being able to see exactly where the edge is forming allows me to focus my efforts on the weed line. I will target that edge with my fishing move.

Sometimes I find it helps to cast from the deep water to the shallow and work back across the edge. At other times, I find it more efficient to work parallel to the weed line. A lot depends on how tight the fish are hanging to the edge.

I have two main presenta- tions I use for this fishing. One is the rockly the wormy and the other is the Ned rig. Both are simple, deadly presentations and that is why I always do both with each rod and ready available. A switch box is also a good inside weed line option for those that like that method.

Many times, I find the Ned rig to be my go-to option. Because of the slow and steady retrieve it has with the Ned rig, I am able to cover a little faster than with the wacky worm presentation. This is especially true on days when the wind is right.

I also find that the Ned rig is much easier to fish in the weeds. Wacky worms and worm tipped will go well together.

In the spring of the year, northern and sometimes crap- pie can also be found on this inside weed line. The Ned rig will readily catch both.

Although I am a big believer in using braided line for most of my bass fishing, I find that no-pound mono is the best choice for this shallow water presentation. Because of the fluorocarbon leader, I will use a fluorocarbon leader.

Although I fish for edges for bass of all sizes along this edge I concentrate on in the spring in the area where the sand line meets the first line of weed growth. This inside weed line is a key magnet in the early season.

**Putting your stamp on conservation**

S tent anglers go above and beyond to make fishing better in Minnesota by purchasing a walleye stamp that help the Department of Natu- ral Resources add walleye to lakes where there otherwise would not have been.