HERE ARE SOME BAITS YOU MIGHT WANT TO TRY:

Walleye - live leeches fished on slip-sinker jigs; crawlers on crawler 'harnesses' work well, too.

Smallmouth Bass - twisted tail jigs bounced over rocky drop-offs.

Largemouth Bass - surface plugs, or poppers on warm, calm, summer days.

Northern Pike—bronze and red-white spoons. Muskellunge - surface plugs.

Crappie - tiny minnows on tiny non-lead head feathered jigs.

Yellow Perch & Bluegill - tiny feathered jigs with red worm. Lake Trout - light-weight spoons (trolled).

Brook Trout - try spinners, or flies for the skilled fly caster.

Steelhead and Salmon - yarn fly or spawn bags, usually drifed using one or two split-shot.

Live bait, although messy, hard to care for, and difficult to fish, generally works best. 'Tough-to-catch' species such as walleye, crappie and smallmouth bass are those that most often require live bait. However, even these species will fall for the right combination of bait and presentation.

Questions about the Forest?

Call an office or visit our web page *www.fs.usda.gov/r09/ottawa*

Ottawa National Forest	**Ottawa Visitor Center**	**Watersmeet/**	**Kenton**	**Ontonagon**
Headquarters &	E23979 US 2 East	**Iron River Ranger District**	**Ranger District**	**Ranger District** 1209
Bessemer Ranger District	Watersmet, MI 49969	E23979 US-2 East	4810 E M-28	Rockland Road
E6248 US-2 Ironwood, MI	(906) 932-1330	Watersmeet, MI 49969	Kenton, MI 49967	Ontonagon, MI 49953
49938	Hours vary by season	(906) 358-4551	(906) 852-3500	(906) 884-2085
(906) 932-1330				

Questions about fishing regulations? Contact the Michigan DNR

https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/things-to-do/fishing

LEAVE NO TRACE

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USDA Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Ottawa Nation Forest | July 2025

FISHING ON THE OTTAWA

Over 500 named lakes and nearly 2,000 miles of river and stream await the angler in the Ottawa National Forest. Stream fishing is available throughout the Forest, and lake fishing is concentrated in the southern half of the Forest.

The Ottawa National Forest offers outstanding opportunities for hunting and fishing. These activities are regulated by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). ***The information contained in this document is meant to enhance your fishing experience.*** The Michigan Fishing Guide is available wherever fishing licenses are sold.

WHEN TO FISH

In the Upper Peninsula, the Michigan trout season runs from the last Saturday in April to September 30. Later seasons are set for bass, walleye, northern pike, and muskellunge. See the MDNR Fishing Guide for exact dates.

Generally, spring (May-June) is the best time for lake fishing on the Ottawa; summer (July-August) is somewhat slower, with fall (September-October) somewhere in between. Stream fishing for lake-run salmon and steelhead usually picks up around April 1 in streams with an extended trout-salmon season, such as the East Brand of the Ontonagon River North of M-28, or those with no closed season, such as the Black River.

The best fishing on these streams starts around mid-September and lasts until the snow flies. Stream fishing for resident trout is generally best near the end of the legal season, especially for brook trout, which start upstream migration at this time.

HOW TO FISH

Walleye and crappie tend to bite under low light conditions (early morning, late evening or on overcast days).

Fish for bass crappie, pike and panfish near logs, brush, or in weedy areas.

In bright sunlight, and after storms or cold snaps, most fish tend to go deeper and are harder to get to bite. Use live bait, and fish deeper and slower under these conditions.

WHERE TO FISH: Access to the fishing water of the Ottawa can vary from a paved boat ramp and parking lot to an undeveloped trail. Locations and access provided are denoted on the recreation map.

***Lakes with Forest Service Campgrounds**

****Sylvania (Special Rules Apply)**

C-Crappie **CI-Carry In**

B-Bluegill **BL-Boat Launch**

P-Panfish **Size-Acres**

Lake Name	Size	Depth	Access	Pike	Walleye	Bass	Musky	Trout	Panfish
GOGEBIC COUNTY									
Albino	17	16	CI	NP					
Allen	70	40	BL	NP	W	BA			B
Banner									
Barb	66		CI					T	
Bass	187	13	BL	NP					
Beaton	323	80	BL					T	P
Big Ba-teau**	220	34				BA			B
Bluebill				NP					
Bobcat*	73	15	BL	NP		BA			C, B
Buck	19	20	CI	NP		BA			P
Castle	28	50	CI					T	
Cisco				NP	W	BA			B
Clark**	820	75	BL			BA		T	
Clear**	38	48		NP					P
Corey**	18	10				BA			P
Cornelia								T	
County Line	62	65	BL			BA			P
Crooked**	579	66	BL	NP		BA			B

Conditions change frequently, log the date, location, temperature, weather, fishing method, and your catches to refer back to here:

Stream Name	Brook Trout	Rainbow Trout	Brown Trout	Steelhead	Lake Trout	Salmon	Small-mouth Bass	Walleye
Iron County cont.								
Ketchum Creek	B							
N. Branch Paint	B							
Pendleton Creek	B							
Silver Creek	B							
S. Branch Paint	B	R	BN					
33-Creek	B							
Ontonagon County								
Cascade Creek	B							
Cisco Br.	B							
E. Branch Ontonagon	B	R	BN	ST		SL	SM	W
Lambert Creek	B							
Leveque Creek	B							
Middle Branch Ontonagon	B	R	BN				SM	W
Newholm Creek	B							
Sandhill Creek	B							
Scott/Howe Creek	B							
Sucker Creek	B							
Two Mile Creek	B	R						
W. Branch Ontonagon							SM	W

Lake Name	Size	Depth	Access	Pike	Walleye	Bass	Musky	Trout	Panfish
Gogebic County Cont.									
Cub**	28	13				BA			P
Cyrus	22	26	CI			BA			B
Dawn								T	
Deer Island**	281	48				BA			P
Devils Head**	92	47				BA			B
Dinner	110	25	BL		W	BA			P
Doyle**	9	46				BA			P
Dream				NP					P
Duck	616	25	BL	NP	W	BA			C, B
East Bear**	40	30				BA			C, B
Eel	44	20	BL	NP		BA	M		C, B
Elbow	20	21	BL	NP		BA			
Finger	60	30				BA		T	
Glimmerglass**	26	10				BA			P
Golden Silence**						BA			P
Grass	52	25	CI			BA			P
Hay**	14	35				BA			P
Heart	175	7	CI						P
Helen**	60	51				BA			

Lake Name	Size	Depth	Access	Pike	Walleye	Bass	Musky	Trout	Panfish
Gogebic County cont.									
Henry*	43	30	BL			BA			B
High**	60	95				BA		T	P
Hiltop	16	56				BA		T	
Holly	35	13		NP		BA			B
Honey-suckle						BA			P
Imp*	111	80	BL					T	P
Johnson Springs**	13			NP					
Kathe-rine**	40	55				BA			
Kerr**	8	26							P
King	17	42				BA			B
Kunschke					W	BA			B
Lac Vieux Desert	4260	38	BL	NP	W	BA	M		P
Langford*	470	15	BL	NP	W	BA			C, B
Little Duck	41	69						T	
Little Langford	14	17	CI			BA			
Little Ox-bow				NP	W	BA	M		C, B
Little Pomeroy						BA			P
Loon**	358	50				BA			P
Long	168	51	BL		W	BA			P
Marion*	317	40			W	BA	M		P
Marsh**	65	24				BA			P

Stream Name	Brook Trout	Rainbow Trout	Brown Trout	Steelhead Trout	Lake Trout	Salmon	Small-mouth Bass	Walleye
Gogebic County cont.								
Mid. Br. Ontonagon	B	R	BN	ST			SM	W
Montreal			BN	ST				
Morrison Creek	B	R						
Pelton Creek	B							
Presque Isle River	B		BN					
Tamarack River	B		BN					
Slate River	B						SM	W
Wellington Creek	B							
Houghton County								
Silver River	B		BN					
Sturgeon River			BN	ST				
W. Branch Sturgeon	B		BN	ST				
West Firesteel	B		BN	ST				
Iron County								
Brule River	B		BN					
Bush Creek	B							
Cooks Run	B		BN					
Defiance Creek	B							
Golden Creek	B							
Iron River	B							

Lake Name	Size	Depth	Access	Pike	Walleye	Bass	Musky	Trout	Panfish
Ontonagon County cont.									
Erickson	12	49	CI			BA			P
Gogebic				NP	W	BA			
Prickett	775		BL	NP	W	BA			B
Six-Mile	66	13	CI	NP	W	BA			P
Robbins Pond*								T	
Steusser	34	53	BL	NP		BA			
Sudden	42	15	BL	NP	W				
Tanlund								T	
Victoria	260	74	BL		W	BA			

Stream Name	Brook Trout	Rainbow Trout	Brown Trout	Steelhead	Lake Trout	Salmon	Small-mouth Bass	Walleye
Gogebic County								
Black River	B	R	BN	ST	LT	SL		
Bluff Creek	B	R						
Deadman Creek	B							
Duck Creek	B		BN					
Gaylord Creek	B							
Imp Creek	B							
Little Presque	B							
Marathon Creek	B							
McGinty Creek	B							

Lake Name	Size	Depth	Access	Pike	Walleye	Bass	Musky	Trout	Panfish
Gogebic County cont.									
Mastadon				NP					
Mink	63	6	CI	NP					P
Mishike	13	30	CI					T	
Misty						BA			
Moon	93	40				BA		T	P
Moraine	77	22	BL	NP	W	BA	M		C, B
Moose-head*	43	27	BL	NP		BA			C, B
Moun-tain**	100	39				BA			P
Orchard				NP					
Ormes	49	65	BL		W	BA			P
Plymouth	26	15	CI					T	
Pomeroy*	303	15	BL	NP	W	BA	M		C, B
Presque Isle				NP		BA	M		C, B
Presque Isle Flow-age	65	10	BL	NP	W				C, B
Queen						BA			
Range						BA			B
Redboat	24	31	BL					T	
Scout	24	15	CI		W	BA			B
Snap Jack**	48	62				BA			P
Sucker									P
Summit	24	31	CI			BA			P
Sun	31	30	CI			BA			P

Lake Name	Size	Depth	Access	Pike	Walleye	Bass	Musky	Trout	Panfish
Gogebic County cont.									
Taylor	110	41	BL			BA			P
Thrush	17	20	BL			BA			P
Thousand Island				NP	W	BA	M		B
Trapper**	16								P
West Bear**	56	20				BA			B
White-fish**	500	51		NP	W	BA			P
Houghton County									
Bob*	133	15	BL		W				P
Echo	45	41	CI		W	BA			P
Estes	22	54	CI			BA			B
Hager	37	13	CI			BA		T	
Irish	12	39	CI			BA			B
Kunze	13	51	CI						
Lake-on-Three	25	39	CI	NP		BA		T	P
Lower Dam	17	20						T	
Markey	51	69	CI			BA			
Penegor	10	55	CI					T	
Pequet	13	75	CI			BA			P
Saunder	8	22	CI			BA			B
Iron County									
Bass	96	8	BL	NP		BA			B

Lake Name	Size	Depth	Access	Pike	Walleye	Bass	Musky	Trout	Panfish
Iron County cont.									
Bela	70	8				BA			
Bennan	56	18	Hike						P
Brule	250	20	BL	NP	W	BA	M		P
East Paint	225	5		NP		BA	M		P
Golden*	285	100	BL			BA		T	P
Hagerman	584	54	BL	NP	W	BA			P
Hannah-Webb	64	35	BL					T	
James	217	15	BL	NP		BA			
Killdeer	8		BL					T	
Little Smokey	78	20	BL	NP		BA			P
Mallard	318	5	CL						P
Mitigwaki	256	10		NP		BA			P
Norway*			BL		W	BA			P
Ottawa*	551	90	BL	NP	W	BA			P
Paint	332	15		NP		BA	M		P
Perch*	994	14	BL	NP	W				C, Perch
St. Kathryn*	151	25	BL	NP	W	BA			P
Tepee*	115	40	BL	NP		BA			B
Winslow	255	25	BL	NP		BA			B
Ontonagon County									
Bond Falls	2118	80	BL	NP	W	BA			C
Courtney*	33	34	BL					T	
Deadman	46	35	BL	NP					P