

# Fishing Koshkonong, Wisconsin's eighth-largest lake

By Jeff Brown

Reprinted from past Lakes Edition

One hundred and sixty-eight years ago Lake Koshkonong was a vast marsh. Sac, Fox, Potawatomi, and Winnebago Indians lived along its shores and paddled among meadows of wild rice in birch-bark canoes to harvest the rice and take fish, ducks, and clams.

The water level rose significantly after the first dam was installed along the Rock River at Indianford in 1846, and the

marsh became Wisconsin's eighth-largest lake and a prime fishery, with walleye its bread-and-butter.

You'll probably have to catch a few sub-legal walleyes before you get a keeper; minimum legal size is 15 inches. Once you do, however, it's common to land fish in the 18- to 22-inch range.

There are a few big walleyes here, but you'll really have to work the lake to catch them. Trolling with plugs and spinners works best for walleyes in summertime.

Northerns also prowl

the shallow waters here; if you work the lake you'll come away with a few over the 26-inch minimum legal limit.

Look for their bigger, fiercer cousins too; the Department of Natural Resources stocks 2,000 muskies here each year. Since 2012, the size limit for muskies is 40 inches.

On a good day you'll also find largemouth bass among the weed beds in the bays and smallies near the river mouths at the northeast and southwest ends of the lake.

Panfish call Lake Koshkonong home as

well; many anglers find success targeting crappies and there are lots of perch too, especially in spring. Summer usually sees schools of white bass running the river channel into the lake.

The river channel also houses channel and flat-head catfish, some in the 10- to 12-pound range, with a few even larger.

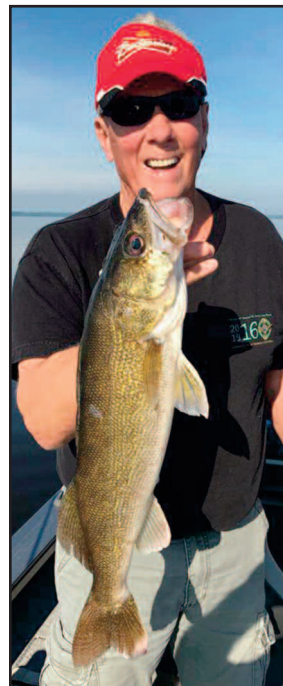
Lake Koshkonong is flat-bottomed and shallow and lacks natural structure for fish to hang around. Your best bet, no matter what you're fishing for, is to fish the points where gently sloping rock piles and shoals concentrate fish and the river mouths, where fish are attracted to food pushed by the current.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Edgerton: take Highway 59 east to Neville. You can put in at The Anchor

for a fee.

You can also put in at a public launch by Norm's Hideaway: go north on Highway 51 until it joins Highway 73 by the truck stop; continue north on Highway 73 over Interstate 90 until you come to the intersection with Highway 106; turn right to head east on Highway 106. After 4.3 miles turn right to go south on Loga Road; take the second right on Carcajou Road, then take the first left on Kuehn Road.

From Janesville or Milton: head north on Highway 26; stay north on the Highway 26 bypass (do not take "business" Highway 26 into Fort Atkinson). The Department of Natural Resources maintains a public boat launch where the bypass crosses over the Rock River.



Walleye caught on Lake Koshkonong. (Photo courtesy of Pike Pole Fishing Guide Services)



Popular local rock band Mourning Dayze, which carries major ties to Edgerton, will perform in Central Park on Wednesday, July 11, at 6:30 p.m. The well-loved band is the subject of a recently released book, "Mourning Dayze: A Wisconsin Garage Band Rockin' Since 1965." It was written by frontman Rick Pfeifer, who began the group in high school under the moniker "The Coachmen." The book chronicles the band's journey and includes input from many past members. Mourning Dayze has held the same lineup of players now for 25 years. Visit [www.mourningdayze.net](http://www.mourningdayze.net) for more information. (File photo)





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