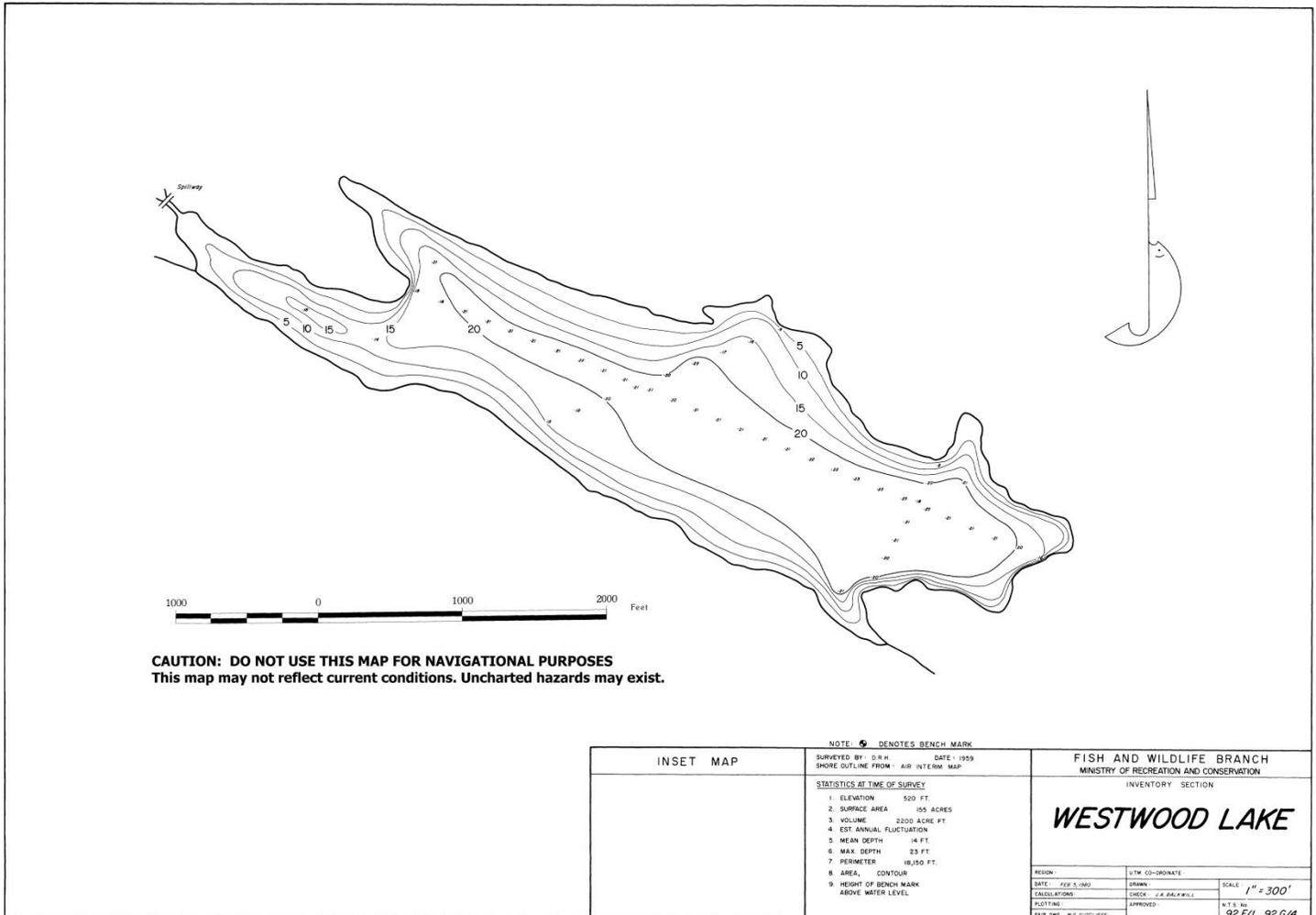


Muddling Along November 19, 2016 Westwood Lake



To reach the Westwood Lake launch ramp . . .

From the Parkway, take the Jingle Pot Road turnoff (at the Jingle Pot/3rd St. Connector intersection) and go up past Jingle Pot Pub and turn left up Westwood Road. Follow to the end and there is a parking lot with a good launch ramp. In spring and fall, there is ample parking, although it can be difficult on weekends when hiking and running groups can tie up a lot of the spaces. I have left my trailer off to the side of the launch ramp where it doesn't interfere with other boaters and leave the vehicle up in the parking lot. So far, I haven't had any complaints!

From Bowen Road, turn west on East Wellington Road, go over the parkway and turn left on Westwood Road and go to the end of the road to the launch ramp.

Westwood Lake is heavily stocked with catchable rainbows in the spring and fall (several thousand fish are put in during the year—about 6000 in 2016). There are also resident cutthroat trout and smallmouth bass. Because of the lakes larger size, there seems to be a greater possibility of trout surviving a year and growing to larger sizes. 16 to 20 inch trout are not common in the lake, but are there if you fish the right flies at the right time and place!

The lake can be tricky to fish at many places because it is a flooded reservoir and there are numerous trees still sticking up in the shallower areas. Some of these do not reach the surface so if you troll through the area with a sinking line, you can lose a fly or two (or worse, a rod!) Some of the best places to fish on the lake are near the drop off to deeper water which is where many of the sunken/standing trees are found. (especially if you are looking for smallmouth bass).

Westwood is located at a higher elevation than the smaller lakes in the area (Green, Diver and Long) so warms up a bit later in the spring. Fishing is usually good from the time of the first stocking in the spring (early March). As the water warms up, fish will start going after abundant chironomid hatches and can be caught on small dry flies at that time. Later in the season, the surface water moves beyond the comfort zone for trout (50 to 60 degrees F) and the fish will move deeper and only come to the surface in the morning or evening. At other times, a fast sink line will be needed to get to fish. In September and later, the fish will move up into shallower water as it cools and there can be some good fall fishing (especially after the catchables are dumped in, in early October.)

Because of its large area, it is often difficult to locate schools of fish, so a slow troll with one sink line and a floating or intermediate line will help to locate fish (and snags!). I usually will stop and anchor if I hit a few fish because I have better success hooking fish when I am casting to them.

This lake has a good population of aquatic insects starting in the spring with a large chironomid hatch which continues through the summer and into the fall. Anchoring and fishing #12 to #16 chironomid flies off an indicator or naked on a long leader, or trolled on a sink line can produce fish. Good colour suggestions are black with red or silver rib and chromies (silver body, red rib). Later in the year other colours can be good producers. Black, white, gold or silver beads can be added to the flies as well. Dragonflies, damsels and mayflies are also found in good numbers on the lake. Flies which imitate the nymphs of these species can be very successful when fished on a sinking or sink tip line. An all round good searching pattern is a #10 olive wooly bugger with or without a bead head.

Leech patterns will work as well because there is a good population of leeches of all sizes in the lake. (a #6-10 leech tied on a 2 or 3X long hook in Black with a red, black or silver bead head seems to imitate leeches as well as dragonfly nymphs.) A medium olive wooly bugger or leech with a gold or black bead head in #10-14 is a good pattern to imitate smaller leeches as well as damsel nymphs.

I have heard of good fishing during any hatches when the flying ants are out in the late spring early summer but have never connected with them when I have been on the lake. I always have a few ant patterns in the fly box though because the action can be exciting if you are lucky enough to connect with a hatch!



A Westwood rainbow with a chironomid emerger in its mouth.