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Just for Fun – Using AI to Catch Muskies

By Lee Bartolini

Many of you have probably heard about the current popularity of Artificial Intelligence (AI) programs. A number of new platforms are currently available on the internet. One that has been in the news a lot recently is CHATGPT. This program allows a person to have a computer generate reports, articles, reviews, or just about any kind of document on just about any topic they wish in a matter of seconds. So, just for fun, I opened an account on CHATGPT, and I instructed the AI program to “Write a one-page article on How to Catch Muskies.” Sixty seconds later, I had the following article on my screen. You be the judge on the authenticity of the article. I was really surprised at what was created. As noted above, the instructions did not tell the AI program what to include in the article.

Title: Mastering the Art of Muskie Fishing: Tips and Techniques for Landing the Ultimate Trophy

Introduction: Catching a muskie, often dubbed "the fish of ten thousand casts," is a thrilling and rewarding challenge for anglers seeking the ultimate freshwater trophy. As one of North America's largest and most elusive predators, the muskie demands patience, skill, and dedication. In this article, we will explore effective strategies and essential tips to increase your chances of catching this elusive giant.

1. **Research and Location:** Begin your quest by researching the best muskie fishing locations. These elusive predators thrive in large lakes, reservoirs, and rivers with clear, cool waters and abundant forage fish. State fishery agencies, local fishing forums, and experienced anglers are excellent resources for identifying prime muskie habitats. Focus on areas with submerged structures, drop-offs, and weed beds, as muskies often use these as ambush points.
2. **Gear and Tackle:** A sturdy and well-balanced fishing setup is crucial when targeting muskies. Opt for a heavy-duty, medium-heavy to heavy-action casting rod, usually around 7 to 8 feet in length, to handle their powerful strikes and strong fights. Paired with a high-quality baitcasting reel with a smooth drag system, this combo will provide the control and power required for a successful catch.
3. **Choose the Right Lures:** Muskies are renowned for their unpredictable feeding behavior. As such, it's essential to carry an assortment of lures to increase your chances. Large bucktail spinners, jerkbaits, topwater lures, and glide baits are popular choices among seasoned muskie anglers. Match the lure's size and color to the local forage fish, and don't hesitate to experiment with different retrieval speeds and patterns until you find what triggers their aggression.
4. **Master the Figure-8 Technique:** The figure-8 is a critical maneuver that can turn a muskie follow into a strike. Once a muskie follows your lure to the boat without committing, perform a large figure-8 motion with your bait at the water's surface. This motion often triggers an instinctual strike response from the muskie, as they see the prey trying to escape.
5. **Practice Catch and Release:** Due to their slow growth rate and popularity among anglers, muskie populations can be fragile. To preserve the species for future generations, practice catch and release whenever possible. Handle the fish with care, use proper release tools, and support their weight properly to minimize stress during the release process.
6. **Learn from Experience:** Muskie fishing is a continuous learning process. Pay attention to the conditions, weather patterns, and seasonal movements that yield successful catches. Keep a fishing journal to record your experiences, noting the date, time, weather, water conditions, and techniques used. This data will prove invaluable in developing patterns and strategies for future trips.

Conclusion: Catching a muskie is a test of skill, determination, and patience. Through diligent research, the right gear, and mastering essential techniques, you can increase your odds of landing the ultimate freshwater trophy. Remember, muskie fishing is as much about the experience as it is about the catch, so embrace the journey and respect the resource to ensure a sustainable and rewarding pursuit for years to come.

Lake of the Woods Outing 2023

Tony Enger

This year there were 14 participants. 21 fish were caught during the week. Even though there were minimal big fish caught, there were big fish sightings. The participants dealt with algae bloom later in the week which brought the fish catches down for those days.

This year's big fish award was given to Travis Storch who boated a 50.5" on the second day of the outing. Congratulations to Travis! Travis was also able to boat a 40" fish during the trip. This year's outing winner for number of muskies by points was Mike Johnson who boated 5 fish, 37.75", 38", 37.5", 43" and 43" for a total of 70 points. Congratulations to Mike! Another big fish was boated by Steve Soma at 47".

I want to thank all those who took part in the 2023 LOTW Outing. We all want to give a shout out to Ellen, Justin and Krista at Mylie's Place Resort for great accommodations.

The 2024 LOTW Outing has been booked and will take place August 17-24 again at Mylie's Place Resort located on Sabaskong Bay of Lake of the Woods. There are additional spots available for next year's outing. Contact Tony Enger for details.

Thanks to all again for making the outing a success.



BILL WOOD MEMORIAL/LAKE WINTER 39th OUTING

JUNE 23-24, 2023

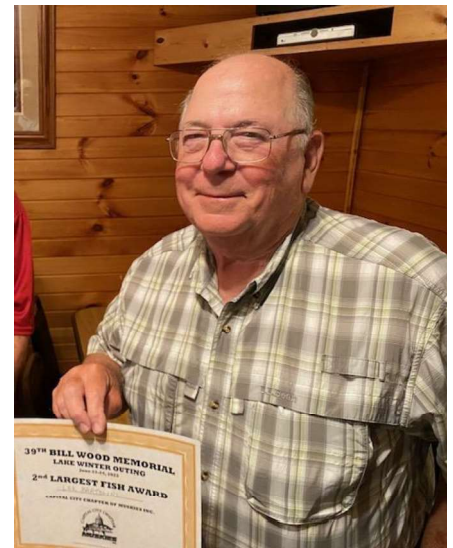
Geoff Crandall

The 39th annual Bill Wood Memorial/Lake Winter Outing was held on Saturday June 23 & 24, 2023. Even though Bill Wood is no longer with us, our memories of the good times we had at this outing with him, Swede, Bob Patterson, Don Borchert, George Radl, Ron Wolters, Gene Edwards, were and others, still live on. We had 18 anglers participate in the outing.

2023 Rules: Muskies were caught between 7:00 a.m. on Friday 6/21/24 and 5:00 p.m. Saturday 6/22/2024. It was catch & release only (no transport). **Muskies caught by use of power trolling or live bait were eligible for an award. Any lake, creek or river in Sawyer County was eligible. Awards were available and awarded for the following categories.**

- Longest Muskie (**Jim Lawler** 43" on Chippewa Flowage)
- Second Longest (**Lee Bartolini** 37.5" on Black Dan Lake)
 - Honorable Mention (**Karen Phillips** 34.5")

The 40th Bill Wood Memorial/Lake Winter outing will be held on June 21 (Friday) and June 22 (Saturday), 2024. We had problems finding lodging near Winter this year so mark your calendar and make your reservations early. Come on down for a good time!



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