

## WHAT TO TAKE WITH YOU AND WHY

Other possible niceties would include a hook hone, a de-liar scale for the curious or honest, a portage anchor and attendant rope and a burlap sack.

Portage anchors are a simple nylon mesh bag with a drawstring top and a brass ring to tie to. They resemble a heavy duty hair net and can be purchased or easily made. These handy anchors weigh almost nothing until filled with rocks and roll up to be quite small. It makes the task of locating an anchor a simple one because if there is one thing the Canoe Country has plenty of, it is rocks. You should not underestimate the importance of an anchor for fishing. Add some parachute cord and you have a nice, light anchor line.

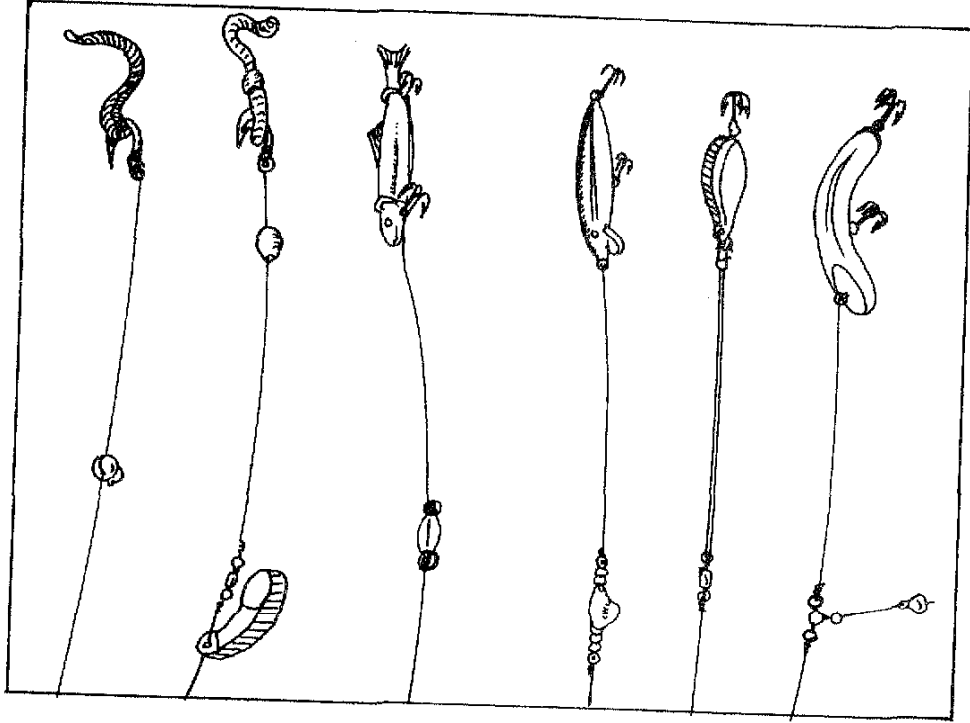
The burlap sack is for keeping fish fresh and cool. Placing fish in a thoroughly soaked bag will maintain a steady temperature, cool enough to keep them fresh for a day or more. This should be enough time to get them to the next camp or back to the car. Nothing more than a variation of the old desert water bag trick, just make sure you hang the sack up in the shade.

Your tackle needs will be based on what species of fish you are after and to a certain extent, how serious you are. Some individuals will be willing to carry a bit more than others. But keep in mind that this is one case where more is not always better. A lot of tackle is interchangeable from one species to the next. A smaller portion is more specific in nature. Of course, if your trip is centered on just one species, your tackle can be tailored for it.

We will get into specific needs in the chapters on each fish. The following list of tackle is a suggestion based upon the premise that you want to try for all of major Canoe Country species. All of the tackle listed are tried and true favorites of the area and while you may not see some of your favorites on the list, a tackle box filled with these or similar ingredients will see you through very nicely.

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- hooks, bait type with short shank in sizes six to four. Bring plenty, minimum of twenty-five.
- sinkers, split shot, slip sinkers and a few bead chain keel sinkers for trolling. Bring a range of split shot,  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce in the slip and keel sinkers. For deep water trolling during mid-summer you'll want some 1 to 3 ounce weights.
- swivels, snap type, two and three way types.
- floating jig heads and corkies in orange, chartreuse and red.
- jigs, hair and feather types.  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  ounce size in yellow, orange, chartreuse, red and white. For lake trout throw in a few  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 ounce jigs in yellow, white, black, red/white and black/white.
- rubber bodied jigs, with and without spinner blades such as Ugly Bugs, Mr. Twisters and Fuzzee Grubs. Best colors seem to be chartreuse, yellow, black, brown and purple.  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  ounce. Take along extra bodies.
- plugs, both surface and diving. Diving plugs such as the Rapalas and Lazy Ikes and surface plugs like the Rapalas, Heddon Torpedo and the Jitterbug. Trolling plugs can be two to five inches in length, surface plugs for smallmouth should be no longer than 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 inches. Smallmouth will want small plugs. Colors best in silver, gold, blue, orange and perch.
- spinners, such as the Mepps and Vábrax in sizes 1 and 2. Silver or gold blades and with or without squirrel tails.
- spoons, both heavy for casting and light for trolling ("flutter spoons").  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{7}{8}$  ounce in silver, gold, hammered brass, gold/orange and red/white. For deep water vertical jigging for lake



Popular and simple bait and lure rigs for all around fishing are, top to bottom:  
 - Short shank hook and splitshot for leeches or worms  
 - A slip sinker, swivel and corkie for floating bait off bottom  
 - minnow harness and sinker for bottom still fishing  
 - keel sinker with built-in swivel for keeping line twist to a minimum  
 - while trolling with plugs or spoons  
 - steel leader and spoon for northern pike fishing  
 - three-way swivel with dropper (1-3 feet) and heavy sinker for deep water trolling

- trout, some 1/2 and 1 ounce Heddon Sonars.
- a couple of bobbers, slip type preferably.
- poppers, both hair and cork, for the flyfisherman. Best sizes for smallmouth are 8, 6, and 4. Some eelworm and muddler streamers and a few dry flies.

At first glance this may sound like a lot of tackle but once assembled you should find that it will pack quite small and portable. When concentrating on one type of fishing on a trip you can beef up that area, eliminate others. You should also find that the bulk of your equipment will be made up of the smaller lures and things rather than large plugs and the like.

All of your tackle except the pliers, rolled up stringer and the fillet knife should fit into one small box. Some anglers, myself included, may prefer those flat tackle boxes that are about the size of a cigar box. In fact an old cigar box can work well. If you have need of more space than this you probably have too much stuff.

A box like this will sit nicely under the top flap of a Duluth pack, no matter how stuffed it already is. You want to keep the tackle, as well as the rod, accessible so that you won't hesitate to take a few casts as you paddle along.

What about live bait? Well, it is a fact that live bait can improve your fishing success. At times, when the fish are finicky, live bait may be the only thing that will work. That doesn't mean you must have it. If all you have are artificial lures and you know how to use them, you'll catch fish. But bait will give you an advantage.

Live bait does not always travel well and it is always an added nuisance. Only you can decide if it is worth your time and effort. However, there are baits that travel better than others and there are also frozen, salted and freeze dried baits. The preserved baits can take the place of live baits when