



# Hot Weather BASS FISHING

*by Don Feigert*

My nephew, Marty, is the best bass angler I know, and he has been since he was a teenager. During that time, he read fishing magazines and watched all the bass fishing shows. He also practiced pro techniques at local farm ponds. I wrote an article about him for the September/October 2001 *Pennsylvania Angler & Boater* magazine titled “Teenage Bass-Fishing Wizard,” when he was 15-years-old. He is now 32-years-old, and his fishing skills are even better.

We put our canoe in at a favorite bass pond one late afternoon last July, when the sky was high and bright and the waters were clear and transparent. We could see through to the bottom, and we spotted a few nice Largemouth Bass. The first rule of fishing on sunny days is that if you can see the fish, they can see you, too. It’s always best to choose a cloudy, overcast day when fish are less skittish, or fish early mornings and evenings when it’s cooler. However, the best time to go fishing is whenever you can, and this was the time we had available, so we made the best of it. We caught 8 bass over 15-inches long and several smaller fish. Following are the 10 strategies we implemented for hot weather fishing under the instruction of my nephew.

1. Fish deep—During any fishing trip, we always try several depths, but deep is usually best when the weather is hot. On this particular day, we fished a spring-fed abandoned gravel pit that Marty’s depth finder measured at 5- to 20-foot deep. Yet, one mineshaft spot was almost 80 feet deep, Lake Erie deep in a 10-acre pond. We avoided that spot for fear of lake sharks and sea monsters and fished mostly at 15- to 20-foot deep, wherever we could find structure. I caught the first nice bass at 18 feet. After that, catch, Marty out-fished me 6 to 2.

photo: Don Feigert



photo - Todd Pulio

*A Largemouth Bass taken from a pond while fishing from a canoe. Wearing long sleeves protects against the hot sun.*

2. Cast toward shore—Weed beds, fallen trees in the water and other structure can trump the “fish deep” rule. Ideal conditions include a steep drop-off at the shoreline with a lot of shade on the surface and logs and branches for structure on the bottom. Lunker bass will often suspend in 5- to 15-feet of water when structure is present.
3. Cast far out—When casting toward shore, position your watercraft, so longer casts are required. Keep your spinning rigs in good working order, so you can cast away from your kayak or canoe. Fish can see you in clear waters, so a hook-up is rare close to the boat near the end of a retrieve.
4. Keep moving—Largemouth Bass move around a lot in small-acreage ponds. Often, you will find bass at different locations on different days. We caught 4 nice bass in the northeast corner of the pond that day, an area that usually has poor results.
5. Rig up two spinning outfits—Depth can change quickly as you move across the water, often from 3- to 20-feet in a few seconds. Keep two spinning outfits at the ready, one rigged with a deep-running crankbait and the other with a surface plug. It is easier to pick up a second rod than change lures on the run.
6. Use the correct fishing line—Marty used to always use braided line for strength and durability, because he targets the largest bass he can find and often catches fish that are 5- or 6-pounds. In mid-summer conditions with leery fish, he now uses fluorocarbon line for the invisibility factor.
7. Bring a lot of lure choices—I wanted to start with a dark jointed minnow lure. Marty advised me to avoid that choice, because it would be too visible in the clear water. I switched to a bass jig-n-pig and caught a bass right away. Then, I watched as Marty caught four bass in 1 hour on 4 different lures. You never know what bass will hit on in a given moment.
8. Lures don't have to represent—The lures bass hit on do not always have to imitate prey. For example, a spinnerbait doesn't look like anything in the natural world, but I have heard its action compares to someone walking a chainsaw through your living room. It is no wonder the fish strike.
9. Some lures do represent—Frog lures are generally green, and minnow lures look like minnows. Marty likes his lures to imitate crayfish. In clear water, he prefers lures in natural colors—green, pumpkinseed or brown—to imitate the colors of the actual prey.
10. Release fish quickly—Do not overplay or fatigue that 4-pound bass, especially on a hot day. Bring it in and net it quickly. Wet your hands before touching the fish. Take a quick photo and ease it back into the water. And, above all, have fun. ☐

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