

## **“Non-Meeting Wednesdays on the Water**

### ***Island Lake State Park***

For this “**Non-Meeting Wednesday’s on the Water,**” we will be taking place at Island Lake State Park by the Dam, July 16th. This area is where I started learning how to fly fish for bass on the Huron River, such great memories.

For Island Lake Recreation Area is in southeast Michigan and encompasses 4,000 acres of state land offering a wide range of activities. The park has 2 buoy marked swimming areas, multiple picnic areas, multiuse trails, rustic cabins, organization and canoe campgrounds and a few lakes. The best part of the park features six miles of Huron River frontage. I have kayaked the Huron River through the park; it is awesome for fishing and amazing scenery in this section. The activities this park offers includes mountain biking, paddling, hiking, swimming, triathlon training, picnicking, hunting, fishing, state of the art shooting range, and trapping.

Island Lake has a refreshingly undeveloped and natural environment, characterized by four inland lakes, the meandering Huron River and a diverse landscape of open brushland, mature hardwood forests and scattered meadows. As a designated “State Natural River” and part of the “National Water Trail System”, the Huron Rivers goes through the park, providing breathtaking scenery and paddling opportunities that evoke a true "Up North" Michigan experience.

The entrance to get into the park is off Kensington Road, just south of Grand River and 96. When you arrive at the entrance, you will need to stop at the “Contact Shack”. Once you get cleared, go straight at the crossroads. You will go down a hill and turn slightly to the right. You will see a huge parking lot and bathrooms on the left. Pull in there and go to your right around the parking lot (*one way*) down by the outhouse at the west end of the parking lot. Since we all go out fishing at different times, **this is just a rough meeting location and not a real meet up before we head out fishing** as some will be wading, some will be in kayaks above the dam, or shore fishing.

If you decide to wade below the dam, it has excellent fishing down below, but I suggest wading with waders as there are a lot of zebra mussel shells in this location. They really do hurt if you get them in your wading shoes if wet wading (*from experience*). If you wade down, you will have to walk back up the river to get out. I have caught some of the nicest Smallies in this area with a lot of panfish and carp. If you are fishing above the dam, shore fishing or shore fishing below the dam, just make sure you do not hook anyone around you. I will be putting my kayak above the dam to fish the bottom part of Kent Lake for this stop. This area of Kent Lake holds some nice bass (Smallies and Largemouth). Plus, lots of panfish and pike. Just a reminder if you’re planning on bringing your watercraft to fish Kent Lake (*above the dam*) or on the Huron River below the dam, ***it must be a Non-Motorized Watercraft***. Two things you may want to know, the park closes at 10pm and you need a Michigan State Recreation Passport to enter the park. If you do not have it on your license plate, you can purchase a sticker at the Contact Station when you come in.

The gear that you may want to use, I would say a 5 weight or heavier fly rod, but if you want to use your 4 weight below the dam or above good luck. For the arsenal of flies, I would have various topwater flies in poppers, gurglers, various frogs, ants, Foam Bombers, Chernobyl Ants, etc. Streamers (various sizes from small to large) from Clousers, Murdich Minnows, Shimmering Minnows, or your favorite minnow patterns and leeches. Plus bring some nymphs, like prince nymphs, pheasant tails, and soft hackles.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Todd Schotts or Ken Harfoot. We hope to see you out fishing with us on this awesome Summer Tour 2025. If you are not a member of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club, you are more than welcome to come out and join us for our fishing nights of fun we have and hopefully you will join the club also. Thanks Todd & Ken.

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