

## "DRUMMING UP GOOD FISHING"



27 inch, 12 pound Drum, Lake Macatawa

Fished Lake Macatawa today (Saturday June 7, 2003) and found the drum (freshwater sheepshead) quite active. I started fishing in Lake Michigan but the big boat races drove me back. Lake Mac water temperature was 60 degrees and the water color about 3 feet. Many alewives were present in both lakes. I trolled the shallow running Spoonplugs (#500, 400, and 250) with no results. When I stopped to anchor and cast a small structure that had produced a few fish last year, I ran into a school of active drum. They would not take a cast Spoonplug, but a slower jump lure (1/2 ounce blade bait) did the trick. In less than 2 hours, 22 fish were boated, 4 over 8 pounds. The largest was 12 pounds and 27 inches. Drum put up a great fight, although not quite as lengthy as a bass. They are a deep bodied fish and fight sideways like a big bluegill. Drum are abundant now in part because they are one of the few fish which will eat zebra mussels. They will attack lures much larger than they can get into their relatively small mouth, and I have caught many on the larger Spoonplugs in the past. 2 bass boats were watching me catch a number of them, many on consecutive casts, and when I landed the largest, I motioned them to come over. They had not heard of Spoonplugging or Buck Perry, but graciously took a picture of me with the largest fish. They probably still are wondering what went on!!

Chase Klinesteker



Drum from Lake Michigan