



The awe of fishing in the Northwest Territories

Gear and Flies

A guides recommendation

Fishing like you've only dreamed. A fly fishery that has come true for many anglers looking for their personal best. Fresh, feisty fish in beautiful clear waters waiting for your fly. With a lodge record of over 60 pounds, the next big one just might be yours! An unofficial fly record of 44.3 pounds on an 8 weight rod has been achieved in 2022.

At Aylmer Lake Lodge and the fishing in the region are unique and in many ways for the fly angler a one-of-a-kind experience, a true dreamer catcher location. There are very few places in the world where a person can fly fish several species of Lake Trout and Grayling in shallow water aspects for the entire open water season. This alone makes it unique to fly anglers. It is a fly angler's dream situation for massive fish in both species without having to fish deep with fly rods.

The first unique aspect is that neither fish have to be pursued in deep water. Lakers are customarily known to be deep-water trout at many times of the year. It is common practice to catch both lake trout and grayling in Aylmer Lake on dry flies, streamers, or even nymphs in the top end of the water column. Streamers/ Lures are also commonplace to cast from shore or from the boat for both species. Characteristically, this means fishing in less than twelve feet of water depth right up to the shoreline regions. There is no shortage of places on Aylmer Lake and the Lockhart River system to walk and wade sand spits, shoals, and small inlets. It gives the angler the freedom to move about while chasing the dream.

Matchlessly the guides can set you in a position to fish comfortably from a boat and cast or troll to the same fish and still have you catch fish up shallow without the need for specialty fly lines.

Gear Needs to suit the fish needs.

RODS

For the rod, the angler has several choices. We would break this down to dry fly rods and streamer rods. Any rod in 8.5 feet to ten feet in a medium-fast action or even fast action in a five weight is sufficient as a dry fly rod for Grayling. A six-weight is also a good option. For Lake Trout dry fly fishing a seven to ten weight is a better choice because of the larger fish and more leverage on heavier tippets will be required. You can specifically target both species. For the extremest that wants to stalk nothing but large Lake trout then we would suggest a nine or even ten weight rod in a nine or ten-foot length. Here you will be mostly fishing medium to large streamers and mouse patterns that can be heavy flies if built from fur or nonhydrophobic materials.

Reels

This will be the test and how well your reel will hold up. We would recommend any reel to match your rod with a quality drag system made with a Delrin braking system. They need to be easily adjustable.

Allow for a quick change with spare spools to match lines needed for the occasion.

Fly Lines

The primary line should be a dry line with the ability to cast dry flies effectively. For the lighter weight rods like the 5 or 6 weight, a long belly line will be useful for longer casts of smaller fly patterns be it dry flies or small nymphs and streamers. We would also recommend a slow sink fly line in type 1 or 2 ips. or intermediate sink rate. This can be either a full sink or a 12-foot sink tip line. For the larger and heavier rods lines with a good WF floating that rolls big flies and then an intermediate full sink and a Di3 will do you well for the lake trout.

Leaders

Leaders in the 9-12 foot length in 0x to 3X are the norm. Typically fluorocarbon is used but good copolymer leaders in the same range work well as they have additional shock absorption built into them for larger fish. Even the grayling on a five-weight can have a hard take on the dry and charge out like a bucking horse.

Matching tippet material will also be required and even dropped down to 4X or 5X for grayling if desired on lighter rods for dry fly fishing or Euro Nymphing techniques. Quality Fluorocarbon tippets are a norm. Bring enough to last.

The Fly's

Fortunately, you will not require as many flies as a person might think. But you do need quality flies to last through the hundreds of fish you will catch with both Lake Trout and Grayling. The patterns we will suggest are all proven for the Alymer Lake system, but always bring your confidence flies as they will always fish best.

Streamers for Lakers

Streamers are a mainstay for the Lakers. A size 6/0 down to 3/0 are good size hooks for this operation. The overall length only needs to be on the larger hook sizes of 5-7 inches and on the smaller hook size of 3-5 inch lengths. This keeps the flies much more castable. Using hydrophobic materials that shed water instantly on the first back cast is the key to casting both distances and accurately to rising fish. Simple patterns are the only need. Don't make them overly fancy. Casting weight is more important to the angler. You need to cast them effortlessly.



Colour combinations after size are the key. High visibility colour in Black or White is an excellent contrasting colour. Colour combinations such as above in Green's and Hot Orange are super colours as is Yellow and Pink. Or White and Blue and all Hot Orange as all these patterns will represent both baitfish such as Whitefish, Grayling and the Arctic Rainbow Smelt that abound the lakes and river system.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNDczmlzbQ0&list=PL77coRIKgf9VwF-RSNvRrBcbsUsQNal2V>

Streamers for Grayling

Yes, the Grayling are both large enough and aggressive enough to take small streamers. My personal best came on a size 1 Rainbow Smelt pattern I call the Funky Smelt. When people see the pastel of colour in this pattern they are astonished that it even caught a fish. But it truly does work well on Alymer Lake.

Small simple patterns work best. Colour combinations can be much like the Lake Trout patterns and are tied similarly. Good colour combinations are all White, all Black, White/Orange, White/Blue, Olive/Orange and Yellow/Pink. A simple Craft Fur or Long Chenille style pattern is easy to tie and very effective. Make these in the #1/0 to #6 size streamer hooks. Rainbow Smelt abound and are a primary food source for both species.

Dry Fly's for Lakers

For many Lake Trout anglers dry fly fishing this species seems like an oxymoron. This is usually because their experiences with Lakers in other regions are of deep water in nature. Here at Aylmer Lake there is the uniqueness of the Aylmer system and the Lockhart River. Thousands of Lakers have been regularly caught on the dry flies from large floating topwater lures, to mice, Caddis, Midge, and Mayfly patterns. Even popper-style patterns like Gurglers. Medium sized Trout Poppers, and waking style patterns are my personal favorites mostly because they bring any big laker and Grayling out to feed aggressively. And the fish hit them hard. You really catch the excitement with a good topwater pattern.



Gurglers in White, Black, or Cat Whiskers
#4-8

Use 1X or 2 X strong hooks for this style of pattern. You will need it. Dryfly patterns are a mainstay in both classic dries and emerger styles. A good Klinkhamer, Elk Hair Caddis and Balloon Caddis are excellent choices in sizes #8-12. Just never forget a Black bodied Klinkhamer Caddis pattern. As they are likely the best Caddis emergers ever made and produce a ton of fish. All the dry flies in this category should be in sizes 8-12. Here is where your quality fluorocarbon tippet or copolymer tippets will shine. There are many Youtube videos on the internet that will support your fly tying for these types of patterns. *Davie McPhail* or *Rick Passek (theflyfishfanatic)* has some outstanding videos on these types of fly patterns that work extremely well in the region. A good skater or mouse style top water lure pattern in larger sizes #2/0 - 8 are a must have for Grayling and Lake Trout. With the Lake Trout a Blair Mouse #4/0 - #4 are excellent pattern to bring with you. Just make sure the hook is stout.



Floating patterns like these attract and catch a lot of fish.

Fly Gallery

Streamers



Dry Flys

Klinkhamer Fly patterns



