

## Massasauga Provincial Park Three Legged Lake Access



Participants: Janice and Bill  
Total Distance: 32.5 Km. with 2,405m in 5 portages.

**Sat. Oct. 9/04:** 7.5Km, 320m in 1 portage. *Janice:* We arrived at Oastler Provincial Park and picked up our permits. We were warned that if you weren't experienced canoeists that you might want to reconsider and not canoe into the park today. The winds are strong; gusting up to a predicted 60km/hr with choppy waters and whitecaps. We said we were good to go. We drove to the Three Legged Lake access, unloaded, parked in the upper parking lot and left at 12:15pm. We left in a drizzly rain with those tremendous winds in our face. They were from the west, strong, and swirly. All this wind created big choppy water. As we were heading across Three Legged Lake we looked back to see how the other group was getting along. They were still getting their gear ready. They are planning to do a short trip and we have decided to stay put for 2 nights and day trip. We will be on site 19 and their first night is on site 13. We did the easy 320m portage to Spider Lake. The portage is wide with a couple board walks in the middle to keep you out of the mud. The downhill grade is on the Spider Lake side. We headed out on Spider Lake and snuck through on the right side of the first island. There is a canoe/beaver trail that is open. We crawled up the left shore, past site 001 and 002, around the large island point, and west through the narrows. What wind! We only saw one other canoe and they were heading the opposite way; lucky guys. We had quite a time rounding the corner at site 011. The wind would gust and stand you still and then wobble the canoe this way and that; very hard to get anywhere. We tacked across to the south on big rollers. Bill would turn us into the set of waves with the huge sharp crests. There are lots of whitecaps on the lake and we have noticed that site 13 is occupied. I wonder what that group will do when they get there, or are they their friends. We got to our site #19 at 2:45. We set up the tent in the hollow at the back side entrance. We have an A-frame tent/tarp set up to cook in and hide from all that wind. It finally quit raining about 3:30 or 4:00pm. We were having supper when I heard something and Bill peeked out and saw a solo canoeist heading for site 21. That was about 6pm. At about 6:15 Bill noticed the group that was to camp at site 13 heading over to their site. We didn't see them after that. I wonder what happened. It's about 7 degrees in our shelter, a rather cool night.

**Sun. Oct. 10/04:** 17.5Km, 1,765m in 3 portages. *Bill:* We were up at 9:15am and the wind had died down in the night, but it was still breezy. We had cream of wheat for breakfast. We lazed around and made plans to do a day trip. I checked out the lantern because the air valve was not shutting when I pumped it up. I will have to do it at home with the fuel out of it. We left at 12:15 and had lunch at site #22. The 800m portage to Clear Bay was nice and flat and had board walks over the muddy spots. There was an abandoned house and cabin to the left of the put-in. We walked all around and looked at all the old stuff. There was an old truck, a tractor, a polaris snowmobile and some boats. There were numerous sheds, a root cellar, a dog house, and 2 wells. Someone did a lot of work here, but it is all left abandoned now. We went into the next bay to the east and did the 320m portage to Clear Lake. It was easy to do also. We had a gorp break at site #33 at 4:15pm. It was a nice site with a good view, flat tent sites and a nice rock front. We checked out site #31 on the island, which backed onto site #32 that we stayed at 8 years ago. They have since closed site #32 down, but it looks like people still use it for a lunch site. The 645m portage was up a little and wound through the bush. It was covered in freshly fallen leaves and a little hard to follow in some places. There is a hill at the end where it drops down to Spider lake. We were at site #22 at 6:00. We paddled to site #20 and checked it out; not a bad site. We made it to our site just as the sun went down. I went up the hill and got our food bags down. We had a cheese cake for an appetizer and then proceeded with the rest of our supper. We ate way too much. Janice had a mouse come up to her foot, but when she said "there's a mouse at my foot" it left and didn't come back. The stars are out tonight and the wind has died right off. Janice is cold and she can hear an owl in the distance.

**Mon. Oct. 11/04:** 7.5Km, 320m I 1 portage. *Janice:* We had a relaxed morning and we enjoyed the scenery. The night was cold, but we were plenty warm in the tent. It was 4 degrees C when we checked the thermometer at 9am. We watched as the canoes started to leave the lake. We left our site at 11am and paddled northward across the now calm Spider Lake. What a different lake than what we came in on! We turned easterly and checked out the shoreline along the way, south to the beaver/canoe channel east of the island, and then on to the 320m portage back to Three Legged Lake. We portaged across and had lunch at the other end. It was nice in the sun and we watched as other people portaged and put-in. One couple told us that the warden would not allow them to start their trip on Saturday. She was new to canoeing and they stopped them. We told them what the waters and the wind were like and we agreed it was probably a good thing they didn't canoe that day. We arrived at the access point (our take-out) at 1:30pm. The fall colours were magnificent; fiery red maple, orange oak, and yellow birch mixed with cedars, pines and hemlocks. They were gorgeous when the sun hit them. A lot of leaves came down in the winds over the weekend. We heard two trees come down and someone told us about another one coming down on a tent, but no one was in it thank goodness. We are thankful we always remember to check out above the tent site as well as the ground. We were at this park in 1996 and did Spider Lake, Clear Lake, Clear Bay, Three Finger Bay, Goose Neck Bay and Spider Bay. It is still as nice as I remember it; there is a constant hum of boats, planes, and trains though. Well, we're off home. Happy Thanksgiving!