

## MOLEGA LAKE

## LAKE ROUTE 7



*One of the counties largest lakes, Molega has big coves and lots of islands and although it is getting developed, there are still places to get away from it all.*

*Where:* West of Bridgewater  
*Skill Level:* Beginner  
*Time:* Day or overnight trip  
*Distance:* About 30 kms around lake

Molega is not a Mi'kmaq word but derived from Spanish, meaning a gold or silver mining town. The site of the old mine town, Molega Beach, is actually on Ponhook Lake (Lake Route 8). Like Ponhook and Lake Rossignol, this lake has that big sky feel. It is surrounded by steep little drumlins that make good landmarks when out on the water. It has four large islands and dozens of smaller ones. The largest, Round Island, is also a good landmark because of its distinctive shape.

Like many lakes in the area, the number of roads and cottages have increased considerably in recent years. An extensive road system has been built all around the lake though you can't see it from the lakeshore which is still mostly forested. The cottages are concentrated in specific areas and it's still possible to get out of sight of civilization for that wilderness feel. Four undeveloped areas where the canoeist or kayaker can explore undisturbed are outlined under Points of Interest.

Most of the shoreline is lined with boulders making it difficult to land but there are several natural sandy beaches (see B). The shorelines of Molega and Ponhook Lake are also host to several species of rare plants including three endangered coastal plain plants that have an ecological niche between high and low water: Red Root, Goldencrest and Long's Bull Rush. These species migrated from New England when the sea level was lower and this is the only area of Nova Scotia where they are found. About 40 sites have been identified on Crown Land and protected under Special Places and 70 on private land. These sites are not signed so take care when walking the shoreline not to destroy plant life. For more information see the Atlas of Rare Vascular Plants in NS, Curatorial Report Number 97; or call the Department of the Environment, Parks Division in Belmont (902)662-3030.

### Water Safety Notes

*Wind* - (See Lake Notes)

Because of the size of the lake, wind and swells can be a problem for small boats. Pick your route according to the wind direction.

*Boat traffic* - Expect motor boats and other water traffic especially in the summer.

*Obstacles* - Watch out for rocks when the water is low.

### Points of Interest

*1 Long Cove* - This protected cove has slatey shores and numerous little rock piles. An eagle makes its nest on nearby softwood Island. Mint Brook, just west of here, is another ideal protected spot for the canoeist with a small beach and channel.

*2 Black Rattle Lake* - In the spring when the water is high, you can paddle up into the marsh at the top end of this lake and see the work of the beaver.

*3 The southwest bay* - The south east end of this bay has a hidden cove with islands that invites the canoeist in to explore as well as a grouping of small islands at the mouth west of Rockaway Island.

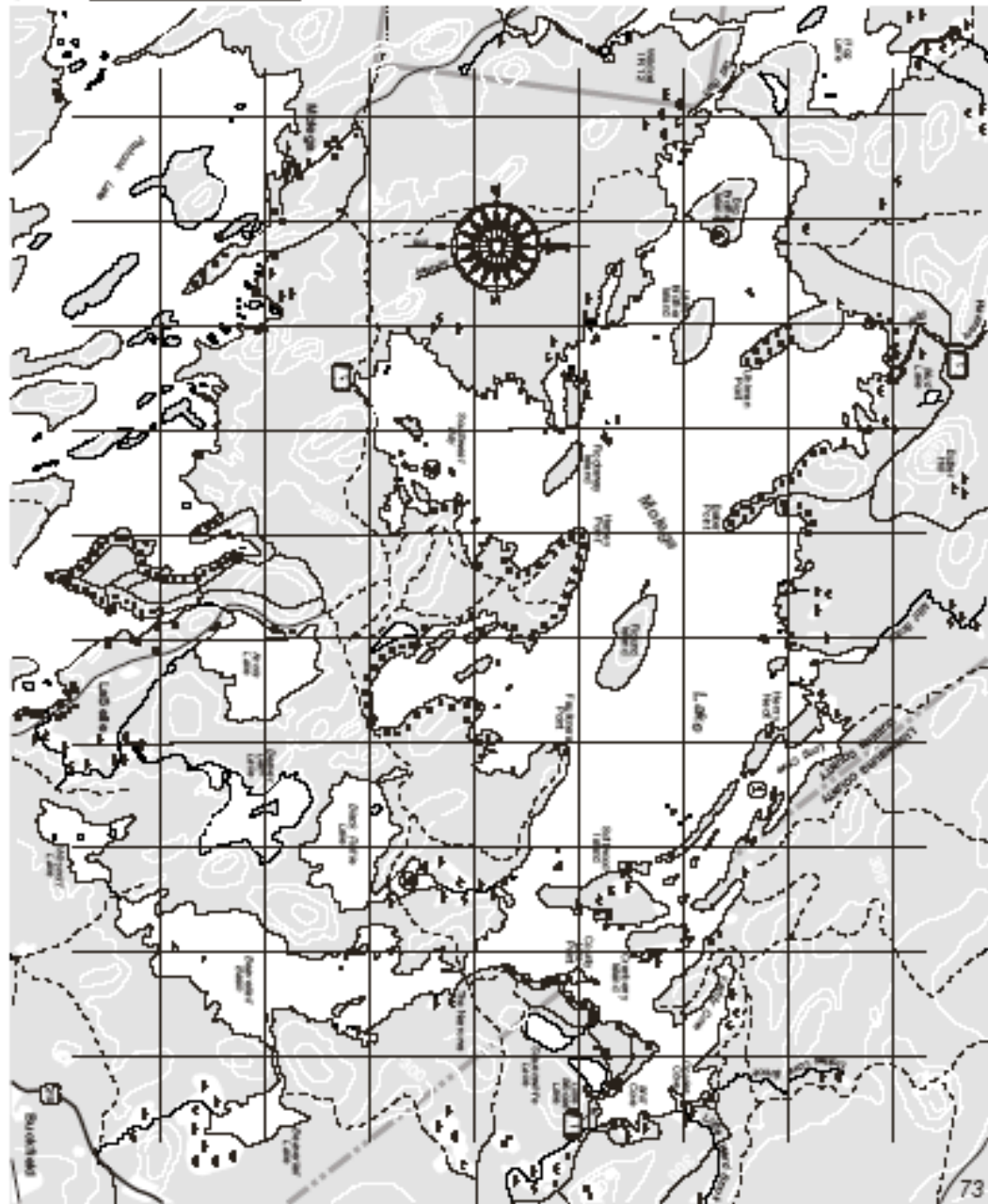
*4 Big Brother Island* - The area around this island is also undeveloped as yet. Big Brother has a small pretty beach suitable for camping or a picnic as well as an open forest.

# Molega Lake

# Lake Route 7



Scale: 1000 M 0 1 KM



## PONHOOK LAKE

## LAKE ROUTE 8



*One of the largest lakes in the two counties with big undeveloped islands, coves and beaches.*

*Where:* West of Bridgewater below Molega Lake

*Skill Level:* Beginner

*Time:* Day or overnight

*Distance:* About 30 km around lake

Ponhook is a Mi'kmaq word meaning "The first lake in a chain." This chain is possibly the route to Lake Rossignol and on to Kejimikujik Lake via a string of eight lakes known as the Christopher Lakes (See Lake Route 3). Like Molega, Ponhook has pockets of cottage development but still has some wilderness areas in particular on the large islands in the middle of the lake.

Also like Molega, the shoreline of Ponhook Lake is host to several species of rare plants including three endangered coastal plain plants that have an ecological niche between high and low water: Red Root, Goldencrest and Long's Bull Rush. These species migrated from New England when the sea level was lower and this is the only area of Nova Scotia where they are found. About 40 sites have been identified on Crown Land and protected under Special Places and 70 on private land. These sites are not signed so take care when walking the shoreline not to destroy plant life. For more information see the Atlas of Rare Vascular Plants in NS, Curatorial Report Number 97; or call the Department of the Environment, Parks Division in Belmont (902)662-3030.

The shoreline along the south end of the lake has sloping stony beaches and it gets rockier as you head north. On a fall day in Salmon Bay, we saw two large salmon jump and a bald eagle. The narrow passage between Big and Little Glode Islands with their steep hardwood slopes is a colourful paddle in the fall. A couple of beaches in this area (see B) are fine places for a picnic or swim.

Water Safety Notes (See Lake Notes)

### Points of Interest

**1 Molega Beach** - Gold was discovered at this isolated location in 1886 and by 1888, the population had grown to about 400. Four stamp mills were built and the 1930s and 40s were quite productive. During the boom days, a small steamer operated between here, Greenfield and near Brookfield. Today you can see old tailing piles and exploratory holes off the roads near the beach and an old foundation at the beach. (See *The Gold Hunters Guide to Nova Scotia*, by Tony Bishop).

### Access Point One - Greenfield Boat Ramp

From Bridgewater: Turn north at Exit 13 off Highway 103 and travel 6.5 km. Turn left here onto the 210 to Greenfield. Go over the bridge and take the first right about one km. From Liverpool: Turn north at Exit 19 off Highway 103 and go north on Route 8 about 20 km. Turn right, continue to Greenfield and take the first left before the bridge. A steep paved ramp is on your left and a small parking area on your right.

### Access Point Two - Boat Launch just below Echo Lodge on the Medway River

Turn onto the Echo Lodge Road off Route 8 between Liverpool and Caledonia. This road is 2.7 kms. from South Brookfield or 2 km past the Cameron Brook Provincial Park. Drive 2.4 kms until the road splits in three. Take the middle lane and then the right lane when the road branches again. A small loop and ramp give access to the Medway River. Park off to the side so not to block other vehicles.

### Access Point Three - Cameron Lake

Park at the Cameron Brook Provincial Park off Route 8. Launch your boat on the other side of the

Ponhook Lake

Lake Route 8



Scale: 0 1 KM

