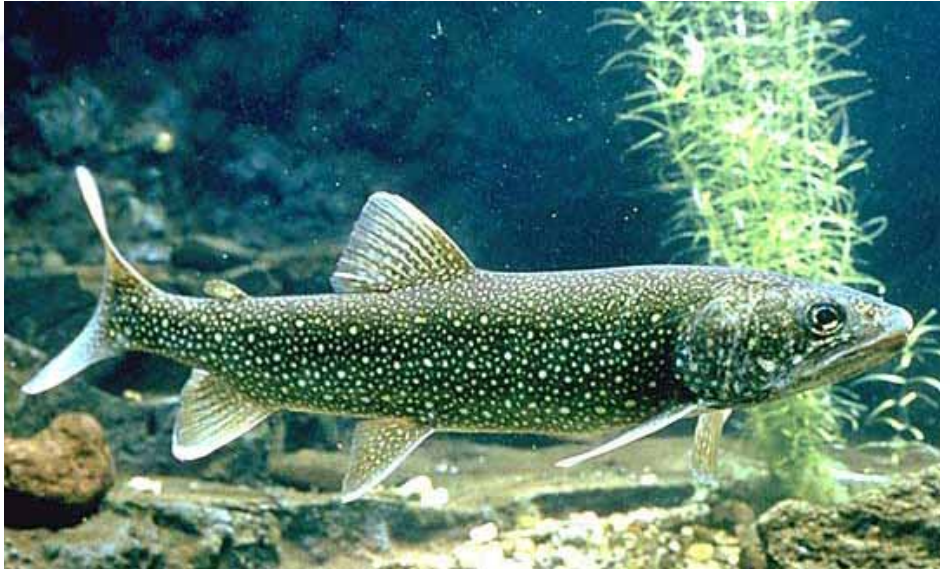


LAKE TROUT WERE NOT ALWAYS SO ABUNDANT IN LAKE GEORGE

Lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*) are the largest trout native to North America and are highly sought after by anglers. They are found in over 80 New York lakes, including Lake George, which is well known for its lake trout fishery. Lake trout are elongate fish, with a streamlined body and a distinctly forked tail. The tops of lake trout are dark olive to gray-green, which fades into a greenish-bronze, and eventually to white on the belly. They inhabit deep, cold lakes, especially those with boulder-strewn or gravel bottoms. In Lake George, lake trout are generally found in deep, cooler water especially during the summer and will move into the shallower water only during colder times of the year.

Lake trout spawn during the fall on gravel or boulder bottoms in the lake. Males usually enter the spawning area first. Unlike other trout or salmon, no nest is built; instead the bottom is swept clean

LAKE TROUT



The Lake Trout population is high in Lake George.

by the movement of the fish. After a few days the female enters the area and several males may spawn in groups with one or more females. Spawning can last up to a few weeks.

Lake trout were not always so abundant in Lake George. In the 1800s overfishing nearly decimated the lake trout populations,

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Lake Trout

LAKE GEORGE FACT SHEET

which was later threatened again by chemicals used such as DDT. However, since the 1970s lake trout have been successfully reproducing in Lake George. According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) Angler Diary Program, lake trout catch rates are high overall.

However, data suggest that the average lake trout size has declined in recent years. The observed reduced lake trout size could be due to a variety of factors. Many believe that there are too many lake trout in Lake George, which may have resulted in smaller sized lake trout, an increase in predation on landlocked salmon as well as forage fish like rainbow smelt. Recently, the NYS DEC proposed regulations to reduce the catch size limit for lake trout from 23 inches to 21 inches to allow more fish to be kept. After public meetings, the NYS DEC decided not to pursue the proposed regulations further because of the split public opinion. Lake trout growth rates in Lake George still exceed many other lakes in the area and catch rates are greater than they have been in the past. However, the NYS DEC continues to closely monitor lake trout populations in Lake George.



Lake trout are highly sought by anglers in Lake George. A fish must be 23 inches before it can be kept.

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