

THIS POPULAR SPORT FISH IS ABUNDANT IN LAKE GEORGE

YELLOW PERCH

Yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*) are extremely abundant in Lake George and are a popular target for ice fisherman. Although perch are not known for putting up a fierce fight for anglers, it is a popular panfish and good eating. Yellow perch are elongate, slightly compressed with a bold pattern of five to nine vertical, black bars on a yellow or greenish-yellow background. Yellow perch travel in schools and are often found in vegetation in lakes, but they can also occur in deeper waters. They feed most actively during the day and are motionless during the night.

Yellow perch spawn in the spring when water temperatures reach 45 to 52°F. No nests are built and no parental care is given to the eggs or young. The male perch will move into relatively shallow areas before the female, generally in depths between 5 to 10 feet



Yellow Perch- *Perca flavescens*
averages 6 - 12 inches

Yellow perch are one of the most abundant fish in Lake George.

over sand, gravel, or vegetation. The female will enter the near shore, shallow water area where she will deposit gelatinous eggs in a long, zigzag pattern in rows cemented together that are a couple of inches wide and 2 to 7 feet long on vegetation, logs, or debris. A single female fish can produce 10,000 to nearly 50,000 eggs. One or more male fish will follow the female and fertilize the eggs. After fertilization, hatching takes place in less than 2 weeks depending on water temperature.

Yellow perch can live as long as nine years. The average size of perch ranges from 6 to 12 inches and weigh less than three-

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Yellow Perch

LAKE GEORGE FACT SHEET

quarters of a pound. Young perch feed primarily on zooplankton. As the perch grows it will begin to feed on larger aquatic invertebrates, and eventually will eat things like crayfish, smaller fish, and dragonfly nymphs.

The existence of perch in Lake George has been referenced since the mid 1850s by Charles Nelson who indicated that perch were abundant and of the finest quality. It is likely that perch were in Lake George a considerable amount of time prior to this documentation. Perch continue to be an extremely abundant fish in Lake George. A study in 1974 estimated the yellow perch population in Lake George to be between two to four million with a biomass of a whopping 450 metric tons.

Interestingly, the yellow perch have also been identified as a substantial predator of white sucker eggs and may play a significant role in their population size. In Lake George, and tributaries upstream to the first barrier impassable by fish, 50 yellow perch of any size can be caught daily year round.

Perch remain a highly desirable fish during winter months when they are caught through the ice by jigging. It is not unusual for people fishing



Yellow perch are a popular sport fish during winter months for ice fishing. It's common for anglers to catch 2 - 3 dozen a day when ice fishing.

through the ice to catch two and three dozen perch per outing.

For additional information on fishing regulations in New York State please visit www.dec.gov.

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