

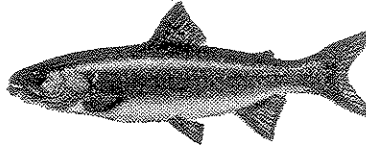
Heddon Fish Flashes

James Heddon's Sons, Dowagiac, Michigan

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LAKE TROUT
Crystivomer namaycush

One of the largest and most powerful of our fresh water fishes, the lake trout, deserves a much brighter place in the angling sun. Its true fighting character is shadowed by the methods necessary in fishing for it.

Since most lake trout are caught in summer, in extreme depths, it is necessary for the fisherman to use tremendously heavy weights to sink their bait. Some of these weigh several pounds.

Despite the huge size and stellar fighting qualities of this fish the cumbersome sinker virtually reduces the affair to a "haul and wind" process.

However, during early spring just after the ice goes out, and in the fall, anglers with light tackle have the time of their lives taking these splendid fish in the shallows. If the lake trout could be taken like this the year around, it would undoubtedly be one of our top ranking game fish.

(see two)

(2)

NAMES...Forktail Trout, Gray Trout, Great Lakes Trout, Laker, Landlocked Salmon, Longue, Mackinaw Trout, Namaycush Trout, Salmon Trout, Tongue.

CHARACTERISTICS...The lake trout is a charr and therefore closely related to the Dolly Varden trout and brook trout because of the formation of the teeth in the roof of its mouth.

Although color varies widely because of different water conditions, generally it ranges from very dark gray to a light pale gray. The body is profusely covered with pale spots which often are tinged with pink. Tail is forked and flesh varies from white to rosy pink..

RANGE...From New England states westward through Great Lakes to British Columbia, and north of this area to Labrador, Hudson Bay and Alaska.

In early spring, lake trout can be found on reefs or shoals from 10 to 20 feet down. However, lake trout cannot thrive in waters warmer than 65°F and prefers temperatures of 40°F to 50°F. In summer, these fish are found in water of 40 to 100 feet in depth.

SIZE...The world's rod and reel record is a 63 pounder taken by Miss L. L. Hayes in Lake Athapapuskow, Manitoba, Canada, August 22, 1930. Shallow water lake trout average around 5 pounds; those from deep water average from 8 to 15 pounds.

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(3)

FLAVOR...Smaller lake trout are very tasty but the larger ones are quite fat and have an oily flavor some find objectionable.

FOODS...Flies, insects, small whitefish, herring, smelt and other small fish.

LURES...When in the shallows, lake trout will take fly lures like the Wilder Dilg, Popper Spook and Bass Bug Spook; also pork rind lures like the Ace and the smaller River Runts.

In deeper water, plugs like the Vamp Spook, Go Deeper River Runt, Punkinseed and Dowagiac Spook are excellent; also larger spoons like the King and Queen. To reach extreme depths it is necessary to add a keel sinker about 18" ahead of the plug.

METHODS...The majority of lake trout are taken trolling. However, when in shallow water they can be taken by bait casting, fly casting and spinning.

TACKLE...For trolling, heavy tackle is required. Tubular steel rods like the "Pal" in sturdy action, or the "Riptide" split bamboo rod, are ideal for lighter trolling. Where extra heavy sinkers are necessary, a rod like the 2546 "Pal", which has a 6 oz. tip, provides the necessary backbone.

A good trolling reel is a size 3/0 salt water model equipped with a star drag. Many trollers use a short, stiff rod with an oversize single-action reel built in for handiness.

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For bait casting, an outstanding outfit is a medium or stiff action in the "Pal" tubular steel, and a reel like the "Pal" which will hold 100 yards of 15 pound test line, with arbor removed.

For fly fishing, heavier rods like the "Power Plus" built on a #2 3/4 ferrule, made of split, tempered bamboo, are best. This rod is 9 feet in length and has the necessary backbone to handle the surges of this strong fish. It is advisable to use ample backing of casting line, in addition to the regular length of fly line, to handle long runs. Leaders should be chosen according to the average size of fish being taken. An excellent reel for this outfit is the Imperial single action model.

For spinning, a medium action, 7-foot tubular steel rod like the "Pal" will prove best. Small lures like the Ace spoon, Midget River Runt and Midgit Digit are excellent either cast or trolled slowly in the shallower waters.

Some lake trout are taken still-fishing with live bait. Any standard still-fishing outfit is satisfactory for this purpose.

Although many fishermen cast a skeptical eye on lake trout fishing because of the heavy tackle necessary for taking them, this kind of fishing has a steady following. It is very regrettable that this fine game fish lives in depths that usually require bulky tackle to match the style of fishing instead of the average size of the fish.