



A Glacial Relic

More than 10,000 years ago receding melt waters from the last ice age scoured and shaped the landscape of the Haliburton Highlands. Stranded in a few of the Highland lakes was a unique lake trout strain that evolved with special characteristics.

In the mid 1980's Fisheries scientists discovered that these native lake trout were genetically distinct from all other lake trout stocks in the Province. Local anglers long suspected that these fish were different because of their smaller, torpedo-shaped body, strong fighting ability and their delicious salmon-coloured flesh.

Our native lake trout, known as “Haliburton Gold”, is found in only a handful of lakes in Haliburton County. They have been designated as a heritage species.

The Haliburton Lake Trout Project: *“Building a Better Fishery Together”*

The Haliburton Lake Trout Project (HLTP) is an exciting, community-based effort designed to enhance our lake trout fisheries. Volunteers and professionals from the Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) have joined forces to improve angling opportunities and learn more about this precious resource.

A major component of this project is devoted to protecting the “Haliburton Gold” lake trout strain and reintroducing them into selected lakes within the County. Volunteers work at the hatchery, stock lakes, restore habitat, assist in gathering research data, raise funds and communicate the goals of the project to the community. OMNR and OFAH fisheries specialists provide scientific and technical expertise to ensure that the project is grounded in good science.

The HLTP has become a model for partnership development in the delivery of fish and wildlife programs for the Province. This project promotes public awareness and stewardship in the management of our lake trout fisheries in Haliburton County. Community support and involvement are vital to the project's success.



Lake Trout

Salvelinus namaycush

Description

- Average length 40-50cm. (16-20 in.).
- Colour varies depending on location but usually grey or black.

Distribution

- Native species to North America.
- Range restricted by preference for cold deep lakes.



Biology

- Fall spawner- usually early to mid autumn.
- Female scatters eggs over large boulders or rubble bottom.
- Spawning occurs at night.
- No redd or nest is constructed.
- Female lays approximately 1100 eggs/kg.
- Newly hatched fry will remain on the spawning shoal and feed off their yolk.
- Fry will seek deeper water after yolk sac after absorption.
- Juveniles become sexually mature at approximately age 6 or 7 years.
- Adults have been recorded >30 years of age.

Feed

- Depends on their environment. Adults usually consume forage fish such as ciscoe, but will also consume whitefish, smelt, other fish species and mammals.
- Planktivorous populations (i.e. adults continue to feed on zooplankton) exist across Central Ontario.

Fishing Techniques

- Lake trout come near the surface during the spring due to the cooler water temperatures and are regularly taken on light spinning gear.
- Use a light line and weights to get down deep in the water as summer progresses.
- Local fisherman report that steel, lead core or lead core alternatives all work well for reaching the depth that lake trout dwell at.
- Lake trout like small lures, use bright colors on clear days.

References:

http://pond.dnr.cornell.edu/nyfish/Salmonidae/lake_trout.jpg
<http://www.seineriverlodge.on.ca/lake.htm>