



# Walleye

## *Stizostedion vitreum*



### Physical Features

Walleye are primarily composed of gold and olive colors. There is an olive/gold broken pattern along the sides of the fish. The color of the belly of the fish is consistently white. The walleye have large mouth with a very sharp set of teeth. Spiny fins on the anal and dorsal sections of the fish provide protection. Walleye can be easily distinguished from sauger, due to the white tip on the bottom portion of their caudal fin, a feature not present in sauger.

### Habitat and Food

The diet of an adult walleye consists of primarily fish (bullheads, yellow perch, darters and minnows), but may also include aquatic invertebrates such as crayfish and Mayfly larvae. Walleyes have excellent eyesight, and are able to pick up light in the dimmest of waters including at night therefore they often feed at night. Walleye hang close to structure such as rocky points, weed edges, and almost any underwater structure that contains forage.

### Spawning

The walleye life cycle begins mid-April to early May. The walleye journey upstream to their spawning ground. The first to arrive are the males. When a sexually mature female arrives to the area, the male walleye begin to approach the female. There could be one or more male species. The males push the female

on her side where she releases eggs and they are then fertilized. Female walleye deposit on average 50,000 eggs. Adult walleye do not protect the fry. The eggs can hatch anywhere from 7 to 26 days post fertilization. Female walleye grow faster and become larger than male walleye. Walleye can reach at least seven years of age.

### Angling Tips

Fathead minnows fished on the bottom are an angler favorite. Minnow imitators early in the year are also a favorite, fished near rocky points and deep holes. Heavy jigs, tipped with a minnow, fished near the bottom is a common bait when fished through the ice. These fish are excellent to eat, but as with all fish check fish consumption advisories before eating.

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### For More Information Contact:

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