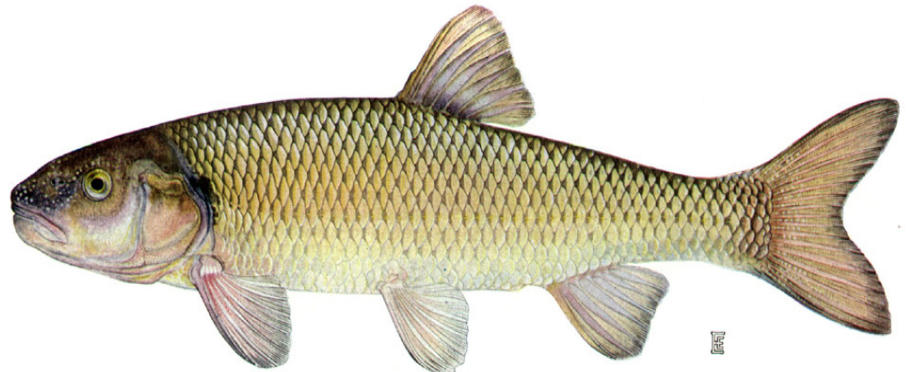


FALLFISH IS THE LARGEST MINNOW THAT LIVES IN LAKE GEORGE

FALLFISH

Fallfish (*Semotilus corporalis*) is the largest minnow that populates waterbodies throughout the Northeast and is an important forage species for larger fish, such as trout and salmon. It is believed to be originally absent from the Adirondacks and introduced to Lake George by bait-pails used by anglers. It is unclear when fallfish were first introduced. Fallfish are on the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Baitfish "Green List," meaning they can be purchased and used in any body of water throughout New York where it is legal to use fish as bait. Fallfish do not tolerate muddy water and are not considered a threat to native fish populations.

Fallfish are often found schooling with other fish species in the littoral zone of the lake – areas of 25 feet or less in depth – but are abundant in clear small streams, lakes and ponds. They can reach nearly 17 inches in length and can live as long as 10 years. It is a



It is believed that fallfish were introduced into the waters of the Adirondacks as bait. Now listed on the NYSDEC Baitfish "Green List," it is widely available for purchase throughout the state.

slender, silver fish with large scales and a moderately forked caudal fin with pointed lobes. Males are larger than females and are more brightly colored. During spawning season, males take on a rosy color and develop tubercles on their heads.

Spawning takes place from April to June when the water temperatures in streams raise above 14.4 degrees C. The males build nests constructed of piles of gravel. The males will excavate a

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Fallfish

LAKE GEORGE FACT SHEET

shallow pit, and then move gravel into a pile in the center creating a nest that can be up to six feet across. Other fish species will also use these nests and are not chased away by the male, primarily common shiners and blacknose dace. Nesting males will defend their territory from other male fallfish with displays, chasing and by biting. During spawning, one male and between three to seven females, and possibly one or two non-nest building males, will group over the nest, arch their bodies, quiver and release eggs and milt. Eggs are 2.7mm in size and adhesive. The eggs hatch in 139-144 hours depending on the water temperature.

Newly hatched fallfish larvae are 6.82mm long and depend on their yolk sac. Juvenile fallfish feed on plankton in the water column then switch to eating flies and terrestrial insects. At a year old, they start feeding on algae, other fish, insects and crayfish.

While fallfish may be on the green list of safe baitfish that can be used in any New York State water body, with the exception of specially designated trout waters where baitfish is prohibited, they are also a great catch.



Male fallfish create nests during spawning, consisting of a pit filled with gravel.

For additional information on fishing regulations in New York State please visit the website of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (www.dec.ny.gov).

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