Lakes Produce Good Early Season Fishing

High water and cool weather greeted the opening of Idaho's trout fishing season June 4. Thousands of men, women, and children inaugurated the year in spite of cloudy days and low temperature that prevailed for a week prior to the first day. The crowd out at the start included many who had already cracked the lake season in the Panhandle May 1 and tested many streams of north-central Idaho as early as April 15.

As usual, the best catches were made on lakes and reservoirs. Fishermen flocked to boat water and stuck with it for the first few weeks while streams subsided and had a chance to clear. There were indications that generally better fishing on creeks would be ripe by July Fourth.

Reports from license vendors showed a tremendous number of fishermen would again be churning Idaho water in 1949. The previous record of 215,000 for sale of licenses of all kinds was set in 1948.

Bag limit and possession limit for trout (20 fish but not more than 10 pounds and one fish) is the same this year as last. So is the general season which ends October 31.

Silver Creek in Blaine County, a noted fly stream, opens July 1 as usual. Migration of chinook salmon in tributaries of Salmon River is expected the latter part of July

A 12-pound kamloops from Lake Pend d'Oreille. Conservation officer Lester Gissel and Jim Brenick, Sandpoint, examine the first day catch.

Several Bird Species Nearing Extinction

Several species of American birds face extinction unless careful conservation is extended on their behalf. Only 33 whooping cranes have been sighted in the United States this year. These are the largest of the crane family, standing nearly five feet high.

The California condor, with a wingspan of more than 10 feet, and the trumpeter swan are reduced drastically in numbers.

According to an Audubon Society report, no ivory-billed woodpecker has been seen for the past two years. Already extinct are the passenger pigeon and the heath hen, driven from millions to extinction in a few short years, by the wastefulness of mankind.

Commission Plans North Idaho Meeting

The fish and game commission will hold its summer meeting in northern Idaho, beginning July 6 at Lewiston. Two days will be spent traveling District Two for a first-hand look at department projects and wildlife habitat. R. G. Cole, chairman, has set aside July 8 for a public hearing at Lewiston at which suggestions and recommendations for the upland bird program will be received. Hunting seasons for 1949 will be determined.

Two days will be spent traveling through District One. Then the commission will go back to Lewiston to complete its business. T. B. Murray, director, will present long-range plans for the several divisions. The program is being outlined by the division heads. When adopted by the commission the broad plans will become the policy and specific goals of the department.

Seizure of Equipment Still Officer's Duty

Fishing tackle or guns used by persons accused of a game law violation shall be seized by the officer making the arrest and used as evidence in court procedure although the gear may not be confiscated.

The change in the law adopted by the 1949 legislature eliminated confiscations but retained seizure of guns and tackle employed in an unlawful act. Conservation officers may seize these articles and use them in presenting cases to the courts. After the hearing or trial, regardless of guilt or innocence, the tackle must be returned to the defendant. Unlawful materials, such as poison, powder, and spears, may be seized and confiscated permanently by the courts.

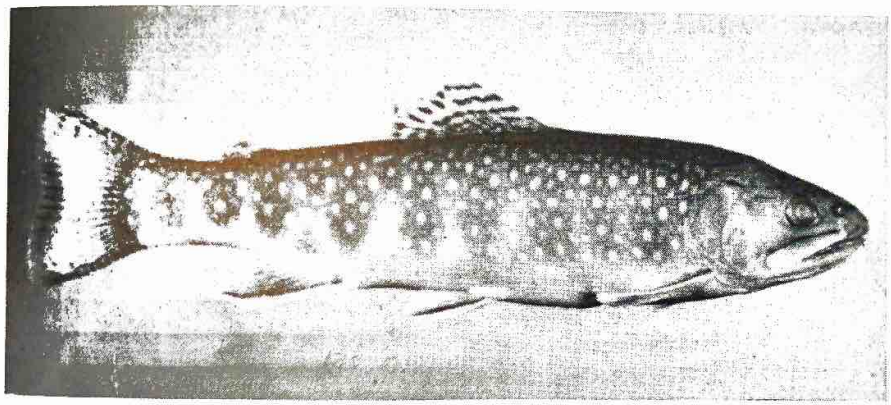
FISHES OF IDAHO No. 6

BROOK TROUT

Salvelinus fontinolis fontinolis
(Mitchell)

By
JAMES C. SIMPSON
Idaho Fish Culturist

The brook trout is native to northeastern United States and south to Georgia. It has been introduced into Idaho and planted in a large number of waters; however, its acclimated range in this state is limited. The preferred habitat of the brook trout is small spring-fed streams and brooks. It does well in high mountain lakes. It does best in water where the temperature does not exceed 65°F., although it can survive in turbulent water where the temperature may reach 75°F.



The brook trout—a favorite in meadow streams

Brook trout, also referred to as eastern brook trout, speckled trout, or mountain trout, spawns in the fall from September to mid-December, depending on the temperature of the water. Spawning fish usually seek out spring-fed streams with gravel bottoms. The nest, a round or oval depression in the gravel, is prepared by the female. As she deposits the eggs they are fertilized by the male. Soon after they come to rest in the nest they are covered with gravel by further gravel fanning activities of the female. The number of eggs produced per fish will range from 500 to 2000, and range in size from 280 to 700 to the fluid ounce. Brook trout eggs supplied to Idaho hatcheries are for the most part purchased from other states or from commercial producers; however, an attempt is being made to establish a brood stock at the Ashton Hatchery. Albino brook trout are rather common among fish reared at hatcheries; it is doubtful, however, if many survive in the wild state. Their light golden color makes it possible for them to be easily observed by fish eating predators.

Brook trout are non-migratory. In fact, many small mountain streams and lakes in the state, and particularly in the Salmon River drainage, are now overstocked.

Distinguishing characteristics of the brook trout are: back usually heavily mottled or barred with dark olive or black, red spots on the side and the front edges of the lower fins with a white border. Scales are very small, between 230-250 in the lateral line. It can be easily distinguished from dolly varden trout, a close relative, by its mottled back and mottled dorsal and caudal fins. The body of the brook trout is stout or robust and the head heavy, while the body of dolly varden is more slender.

The popularity of brook trout as a game fish ranks high with most anglers. This is accountable largely to its feeding habits; it is generally willing to take most any lure. The food of the brook trout consists of insects, crustaceans, and other fish. Unless hatchery trout are kept graded heavy losses occur due to predation by the larger fish. The quality and flavor of its flesh is unsurpassed by other trouts.

The size of the brook trout varies greatly; in small streams or overstocked lakes. It will mature at a length of 6 inches and a weight of three ounces, while in larger bodies of water with a favorable food supply and temperature it will grow to as much as 18 inches and a weight of several pounds. James R. Simon in his book *Wyoming Fishes,* reports one weighing 10 pounds from Torrey Lake in the Wind River Mountains.

Department Finances Reviewed by Clerk

By R. E. HOFFMAN, *Chief Clerk*

Fiscal operations of the state fish and game department are conducted on a schedule established by legislative action. The legislature sets up an appropriation for a period of two years and the department must keep within the appropriation during that period. At the last session, the legislature appropriated only one year's budget, as expected revenues were unknown.

State offices operate on a fiscal year from July 1 to June 30. All expenditures by the fish and game department out of its regular fund are appropriated by the legislature from funds deposited in the state treasurer's office by the department. This fund comes from sale of hunting and fishing licenses, fines, state's portion of furs sold, and other miscellaneous small revenues. No revenue is received by the department from any other source. No tax money is available for fish and game purposes. The fish and game fund cannot be used for any other purpose except the propagation and protection of big game, bird or fish within the boundaries of the state.

The department is currently in the last month of the 1947-49 biennium for which the department had an appropriation of nearly two million dollars. At the end of April, $1,600,000 of this sum had been spent. Current operations indicate that a carry-over of about $100,000 will be left at the close of the fiscal year. A share of the surplus is in the salary bracket, as not all of the department's planned expansion program, set up in 1946 prior to the legislative meeting, was not carried through. The department was unable to hire experienced, competent personnel for the positions it intended to add to its staff. Since all hiring is on merit system basis, only qualified men could be hired.

The budget is broken down into four classes: Salaries, travel, operating expense, and capital outlay. Travel includes meals and lodging; operating expense is cost of actual operations; and capital outlay is purchase of major items of equipment, land and buildings. A fixed amount is alloted each section. Funds may be transferred from one section to another, except for salaries. Money can be transferred out but no money transferred

(Continued on page 6)

SALT PROGRAM AIDS GAME MANAGEMENT

Idaho's big game animals are taking game department management with a grain of salt. In fact, tons of sodium chloride have been furnished them, T. D. Biladeau, game supervisor of the Idaho fish and game department, reported.

Combined game department and forest service salting totaled 212 tons this spring, Biladeau said. Of this total, 89 tons were distributed over mountain areas by airplane. Ninety tons were placed by forest service pack strings, and by stockmen for game use. Fifteen tons were distributed in the Selway by game department pack strings.

Plane salting is used to draw game animals away from winter range early in the spring. Early migration of game from winter range areas helps preserve range for future seasons, and is beneficial to game. Elk and deer cows and does often stay on the winter range to bear young before migrating to summer range. Salting on summer range helps disperse animals and prevents overbrowsing. Late in the season, salt will help hold game on summer range and prevent too early use of winter feed areas.

North Idaho areas are in greatest need of salt for game Biladeau said. The humid climate washes a considerable portion of the minerals out of the soil. Plants do not absorb as much mineral in these areas as in other sections of the state, hence less natural mineral is available to game.

FARM-GAME PLAN ADOPTED

(Continued from page 2)

be furnished by the fish and game department.

Since its introduction less than a month ago, the plan has met with the approval of sportsmen's groups and rural leaders. The game department intends to establish farm-game co-operative units in areas near large population centers where management is acutely needed. Modifications of the plan will be made after introductory units have been in operation long enough to uncover weaknesses or phases that need adjustment.

Preliminary work is now in progress on several units in the Payette area. Farmers interested in the plan are urged to contact the conservation officer in their district.

Pilot Joe Monaghan (in plane) and Eagle hatchery superintendent Frank Gaver unload trout eggs just flown in from Ashton. Nearly 12,000,000 eggs will be transported by air this season.

Repellants Ease Crop Damage by Pheasants

Southern Idaho farmers have had satisfactory success with the use of chemical repellants furnished by the game department this spring. Maurice Lundy, supervisor of the department's bird division, reported the program, designed to alleviate damage to farmers' seedings, was well received by the majority of land owners who took advantage of the free chemicals made available by the department. Enough repellent to treat 86,000 pounds of corn seed was issued.

Most farmers reported that the pheasants pulled only a very small amount of seed in comparison with former years. The chemical makes treated corn seed unappetizing to the birds. A small amount of trouble came from areas where birds dug out seed, tasted it and after discarding the untasty seed, dug up more seed for another taste test. Farmers planting untreated seed reported heavier damage in areas of bird concentration.

A motion picture of winter game feeding was made by the game department during the severe winter. It is available for sportsmen's meetings.

Fish Eggs are Flown to Idaho Hatcheries

Some of Idaho's future fish population may boast their first airplane ride at an early age, in fact before they were hatched. For the first time in history of the Idaho fish and game department, fish eggs are being flown from eyeing station to hatchery.

A trip that formerly took two to three days, and involved packing and re-icing the eggs, with subsequent loss of time and spawn, now is accomplished in a few hours.

By plane, any hatchery in Idaho is within three and a half hours' range of the spawning stations at Ashton and Henry's Lake. Eggs are eyed and packed in special crates. Four hours after take-off the eggs are safely in the water at the hatchery in which they will be hatched and reared.

Fish culturist James C. Simpson and Pilot Joe Monaghan have worked out a flight schedule for the transport of more than 12,000,000 eggs to Idaho hatcheries.

Also on the aerial agenda is the planting of some mountain lakes with trout, to be dropped by plane. Plane planting of inaccessible lakes has proven effective.