

North Carolina Sport Fish Profiles



Brown trout

Scientific Name:

Salmo trutta

Identification:

The brown trout is golden brown to olive brown with yellowish sides. Its back and sides have dark spots encircled with light yellow or white. Some brown trout also have orange or red spots on their sides.



Illustration by Duane Raver

Habitats and Habits:

Native to Europe and western Asia, brown trout were introduced to North America in the late 1800s. Brown trout are often reclusive, hanging out close to underwater structure, such as fallen trees and undercut banks. Larger specimens are often caught near dark and after rain storms that result in dingy water. They can survive slightly warmer water temperatures than other trout species. Spawning primarily occurs in the fall.

Young brown trout feed on small aquatic and terrestrial insects. Adult brown trout usually reach larger sizes than brook or rainbow trout. As a result, they often consume larger food items, such as crayfish, mollusks and fish, including other trout.

Fishing Techniques:

Fishing dry flies, streamers, and nymphs that imitate natural foods works well. This method is especially popular in North Carolina's many streams that support wild trout. Fishing baits, such as worms and corn, work well for hatchery-reared brown trout. Spin casting small spinners, spoons and crankbaits can be productive as well. Be sure to check the current trout fishing regulations on the type of lures allowed as well as the size limit and creel limit for a particular trout water before fishing.

Good Places to Fish:

Check out the North Carolina Trout Maps (http://www.ncwildlife.org/Fishing/Fish_Maps_Location.htm#trout) to find trout fishing opportunities listed by counties.

Other Information:

NCARP Minimum Requirements: Hatchery raised: 2 lbs., 8 oz., or 18 inches.

State Record: 24 lbs., 10 oz., from Nantahala River, April 7, 1998

World Record: 40 lbs., 4 oz., from Little Red River in Arkansas, May 9, 1992*

** Anglers provide information on their potential world-record catches directly to the International Game Fish Association, which maintains the world records for sport fishing.*