

Identification & Status

Identification Tips

1. Upper and lower jaw equal in length.
2. Adipose fin present on wild fish.
3. Deeply forked tail.
4. Larger scales than trout and salmon.

Anadromous Length: 38 cm

Landlocked Length: 22 cm



Minnow

Physical Appearance

- Silvery sides, a silvery white underbelly, and a dark blue or green back.
- No spots or upper body markings.
- Between 90 and 100 scales along the lateral line.
- Small but well developed teeth.

Status: Globally Endangered

Atlantic Whitefish

Coregonus huntsmani

Habitat

The Atlantic whitefish is anadromous; they live their life in saltwater and return to freshwater to spawn. It is important that there are no blockages in the river to ease up and down stream migrations.

Whitefish image: Kelly Bentham. Minnow: www.bigstockphoto.com.

Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk
Canada



Contact DFO at 902.354.6030 with any observed reports of Atlantic whitefish.



Atlantic whitefish are found only in the Petite Riviere watershed.

Angling

For angling information and to review the Angler's Handbook, visit www.gov.ns.ca/fish/sportfishing/angling.

Threats

- River blockages such as dams
- Invasive species
- Acidification
- Habitat loss and degradation

Spawning

Atlantic whitefish migrate into freshwater in early fall and move upstream in early October/November with spawning occurring in late fall or winter. They overwinter

in freshwater and return to the ocean in spring. Spawning of the landlocked population also occurs in early winter.

Food

The main food source in the Tusket River includes amphipods, periwinkles and marine worms. In the Petite Rivière, plankton, insects, minnows and fish eggs dominate.

Similar Species

Atlantic whitefish are commonly confused with brook trout and Atlantic salmon. Brook trout vary in colour from green to brown and have red dots surrounded by blue halos along the flank. Atlantic salmon vary in back colour from blue to green to brown. Their sides and stomach are silvery with black spots above the lateral line when they are in seawater. Atlantic whitefish have between 90 and 100 scales on the lateral line, while Atlantic salmon have between 109 and 124 scales. Brook trout scales are too small to count.

Quick Check on Similar Species

Atlantic Whitefish



Brook Trout



Atlantic Salmon



Photo credits. River: BCAF. Adjacent. Atlantic whitefish: Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute. Brook trout & Atlantic salmon: US Fish & Wildlife Service.



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