

What's the Difference?

The Atlantic Whitefish versus Lake Whitefish

Atlantic Whitefish



Physical Characteristics:

- Can reach up to 38 cm in length
- Dark blue/green colouration on back with silver/white on undersides and belly.
- Dusky dorsal and forked caudal fin with an adipose fin (typical of salmonids).
- Typically have more than 88 lateral line scales.

Habitat:

- Found only in southwestern Nova Scotia.
- Present in Petite Rivière Watershed, Lunenburg County and in Tusket River Watershed, Yarmouth County.
- Typically anadromous, spawning in freshwater. Populations in Petite Rivière are landlocked, unable to return to the ocean.

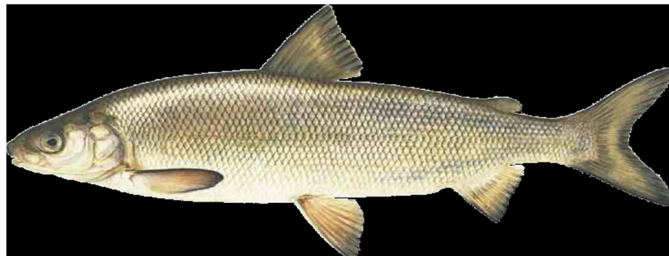
Status:

- Endangered

Interesting Facts:

- Most primitive of all Whitefish species.
- Also known as the Acadian, Sault, or Round whitefish.
- Are threatened by hydroelectric dam construction, preventing passage into the sea. Introduced species (such as Small-mouth Bass) are affecting the population sizes as well.

Lake Whitefish



Physical Characteristics:

- Pale green/brown on back or dark brown/black (inland lakes). Silvery white underbelly.
- Clear or lightly pigmented fins
- Less than 88 lateral line scales
- May develop nuchal bump behind head.

Habitat

- Much more common and larger distribution than Atlantic whitefish.
- Inhabit large rivers and cold freshwater lakes across Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Labrador, through to British Columbia. Also found in the Northwest Territories.

Status:

- Not at risk

Interesting Facts

- One of the most economically important freshwater species in the Northwest Territories and the Prairie provinces.
- The meat of the Lake whitefish is very flavourful. It is marketed fresh, smoked, and frozen. It has also been called 'golden caviar'.