

The Fish of Island Creek

Alewife

(*Alosa pseudoharengus*)



Description: Gray to gray-green dorsal fin, deep bluish green back, one dusky spot on shoulder behind gills, and light colored belly. Eye diameter is greater than the distance from the front of the eye to the tip of snout. It has a short base dorsal fin, forked tail fin, and sharp saw-toothed belly.

Habitat: Anadromous, live in saltwater, and spawn in fresh water. Found in rivers, lakes, and coastal waters, mainly in ponds and deep pools with little or no current.

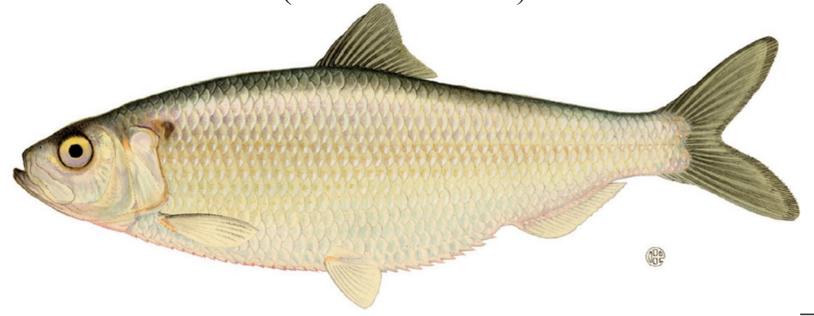
Adult Length: 10-15in. Tend to be larger than blueback.
Adult Weight: 8-9oz.

Food Preference: Plankton, insects, small fish, fish eggs.

Spawning Period: When temperatures reach 55 degrees Fahrenheit, which is usually in late March to early April.

Blueback Herring

(*Alosa Aestivalis*)



Description: Blue-black to blue-green dorsal color, one dusky spot on shoulder behind gills however not as distinct as the Alewife's. Eye diameter is equal to the distance from the front of the eye to the tip of snout. It has a short base dorsal fin, forked tail fin, and sharp saw-toothed belly.

Habitat: Anadromous, live in saltwater, and spawn in fresh water. Found in coastal waters and rivers with swift moving water over a hard surface.

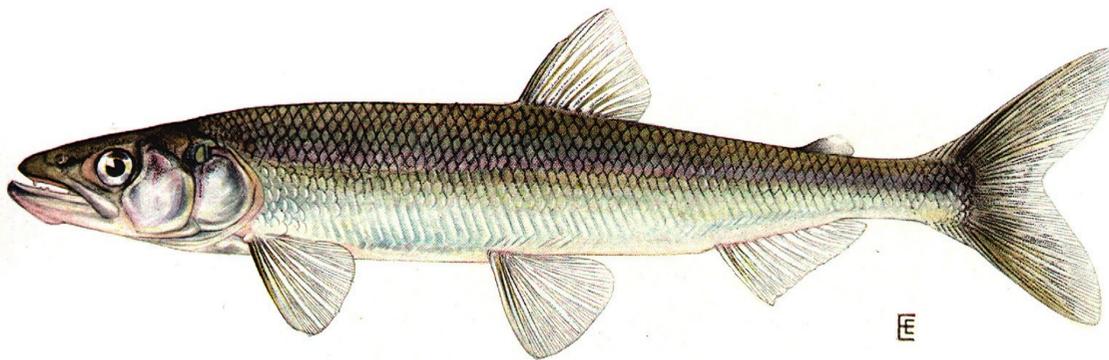
Adult Length: 10-15in. Tend to be smaller than alewife.
Adult Weight: 8-9oz.

Food Preference: Plankton, insects, small fish, fish eggs.

Spawning Period: When temperatures reach 65 degrees Fahrenheit, which is usually in late April to early May.

Rainbow Smelt

(*Osmerus Mordax*)



Description: slender, elongated body, forked tail fin, adipose fin (a soft, fleshy fin behind the dorsal fin), large mouth, and numerous large teeth, pale green back with silvery and rainbow-like colors along its body.

Food Preference: Plankton, insects, small fish, fish eggs.

Spawning Period: When temperatures reach 45 degrees Fahrenheit which is usually in early to mid March.

Adult Length: 7-9in.

Habitat: Anadromous, live in salt water, and spawn in fresh water. Usually found in dark, cool depths (40-50 degrees Fahrenheit). In the fall they travel to estuaries, inland lakes, and streams for the winter until the spawning period in the spring. After spawning, they reside along the coast, normally in waters no more than 20 feet deep and less than a mile from shore.

Adult Weight: 2-3oz.

Timeline of Island Creek

2007 - Board constructed and educational information posted at Island Creek Pond as a part of Chad Conway's Eagle Scout Project.

2006 - Island Creek cleared of debris. Fish Ladder at Mill Pond was reconstructed, and an additional step was added to Island Creek near its intersection with Elm St.

2004 - Boy Scout Troop 62 of Duxbury cleared Island Creek of debris to make easier passage for the fish.

1945 - The Town of Duxbury voted to appropriate \$200 for necessary repairs to the fish ladder at Cushing's Ice Pond, including the approaches to Island Creek Pond.

1908 - Selectmen chose a committee of three to look into the matter of a herring way at Island Creek and to protect the interests of the town.

1879 - B.B Cushing was payed by the town to clear Island Creek brook. He also worked with David Chandler carting herring to Island Creek brook.

1877 - David Cushman becomes Fish Commissioner. He advises the town to stock Island Creek Pond. Cobb & Drew and Alonzo Chandler are paid to stock Island Creek Pond with alewives (herring). R.R. Holmes stocks the pond with salmon.

1865-1815 - Island Creek Notes written by Arnold Freeman circa 1865: "This creek (Island Creek) has its source in a beautiful fresh lake nearly two miles north from the entrance, known as Island Creek Pond; which is about three fourths of a mile in length and nearly half that in width; and formally presented a convenient retreat from the ocean for the alewives to deposit their spawn (who visit our

coast in vast numbers after vernal equinox) and in their ascent, great numbers were taken in nets, both for food and for the land. Fifty years ago (1815) in Island Creek there were two dams across the stream, a grist mill and a saw mill in operation, but these mills are now abandoned, the foundry also and the tack factory are not in operation. At the present time there is no machinery turned by the water of the stream. For some years after these dams were constructed, waste ways of water were provided to accommodate the alewives to ascend in their season. But this has long since been abandoned and scarcely any now enter the stream."

1765 - Deacon Peleg Wadsworth and Thomas Chandler were chosen to care for Island Creek brook and to enforce laws about the herring. The town voted that the water may be stopped until April 15th, and that herring may only be caught within 10 rods of the mill tail.

1757 - Mr. Blaine Philips and Thomas were chosen to care for the herring brooks and to see that no person catch herring upon anyday except Monday and Friday, between sunrise and sunset, and then only near the tails of the mills.

1736 - Justice Arnold and Thomas Loring are appointed by the town to clear Mill Brook and Island Creek to make them more passable for the herring.

1702 - The Town allowed Seabury to make a dam upon Island Creek Pond brook provided that he leave a sufficient and free passage for the herrings up and down.

1693 - "The fishermen of Duxbury, shall clear Island Creek brook, that said men shall have the liberty to get herring for bait from time to time."