

# Atlantic Salmon

*Salmo salar*



**Common Names:** Landlocked Salmon, kelt, smolt

**Description:** The back ranges in color from blue to olive, sides are silver and the belly silvery white, with scattering of small dark spots often faint and shaped like X's or Y's on the back and sides. The jaws are short reaching and usually do not extend past the eye. The anal fin base is short with 9-10 rays and the dorsal fin is centrally located with a short base.

**Similar Fish:** Brown Trout, Coho Salmon

**Feeding:** Atlantic salmon prey on invertebrates, land insects, and fish while at sea. The adult salmon will prey on Atlantic herring, rainbow smelt, and small mackerel.

**Range:** The Atlantic salmon is native to the northern Atlantic from Connecticut to Quebec and spends much of its time in the Atlantic Ocean, coming into freshwater streams to spawn.

**Habitat:** Atlantic salmon requires free flowing rivers of moderate gradient that remain cool in the summer and contain clean gravel particles suitable for spawning. Juvenile salmon feed and grow in rivers for 1 to 3 years before migrating to the ocean. Atlantic salmon are highly migratory.

**Typical Size:** The average size of the Atlantic salmon is between 6 to 15 pounds with an average length of 26 inches. Repeat spawners can get much bigger with weights well past 20 pounds. The average life span of the salmon is 4 to 6 years.

**New York State Record:** 24 pounds, 15 ounces caught in Lake Ontario (4/5/97)

**World Record:** 79 pounds, 2 ounces caught in Tana River, Norway (1928)