

# WALLEYE

*Sander vitreus*



In Manitoba, "walleye" and "fishing" are synonymous to nine out of ten anglers. Walleye are found in lakes and rivers throughout the province, except the extreme north. Everyone from the fly-in angler to the bank fisherman of the Red River has an opportunity to catch one. Its classic appearance and popularity with both experience and novice anglers contribute to the walleye's status as a sport fish. Walleye, or pickerel as the commercial fishers call them, are also one of the most desired species commercially. At a premium price, they have become the backbone of the commercial fishing industry in Manitoba.

A walleye's life starts early in spring, often when the lakes are still ice covered. Just behind the males, the egg laden females search out coarse gravel in streams or on shoals in lakes. Given suitable temperature, the eggs hatch in about three weeks.

Most walleye caught in Manitoba are a good eating size, 1 to 2 kg although about 600 Master Angler size walleye are caught each year. Manitoba's record walleye tipped the scales at 8.4 kg.

Walleye are a delight to eat. The delicately flavoured, white, flaky meat is in great demand on both the china plate of the dining room and the tin plate of the shore lunch. They can be cooked by any method: poaching, baking, broiling, barbecuing, smoking or frying.

If fish were awarded trophies, the all around Manitoba grand champion would have to be the walleye.

warm water species