

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

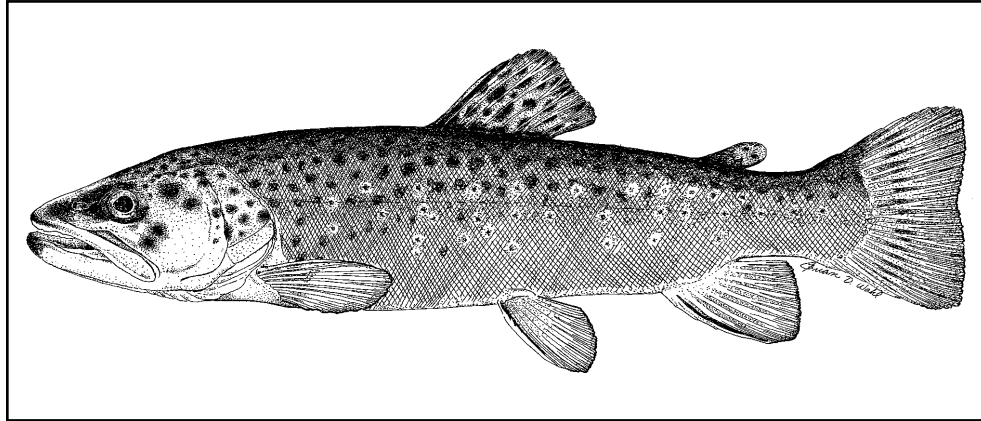
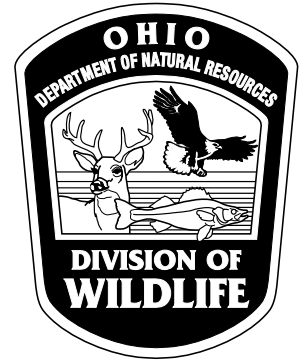
Division of Wildlife

Life History Notes

Brown Trout

Common Names: German brown trout, Brownie

Scientific Name: *Salmo trutta*



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Identification

Brown trout are brown to gold on their back with a cream to slate-colored belly. Most fish have black, gray, yellow and occasionally red spots all surrounded by a white halo. This species has a prominent spotted adipose fin between the dorsal and caudal fin. There are no spots on the squarish tail or vermiculation—wormy marks, on the back.

Range and Habitat

Brown trout are native to Europe but were introduced to North America before the turn of the century. They prefer cold water with temperatures ranging up to 26° C. Preferred habitat includes areas of boulders, cobble, logs, rootwads and overhead cover. Brown trout will feed in riffles containing rock as small as gravel.

Life History

Brown trout generally do not reproduce successfully in Ohio, but in nature they spawn over gravel or cobble substrates in moving water. Division of Wildlife hatcheries rear brown trout for one year (6 to 7 inches) before stocking them. Adult fish feed heavily on aquatic insects but they also eat crayfish and a variety of fish.

Adult Size

The average brown trout ranges from 10 to 13 inches in size. The state record brown trout weighed 14.65 pounds and measured 25.25 inches in length.

Fishing Methods

Most anglers use fly-fishing gear when targeting brown trout. Flies generally match local hatches or nymphs of caddisfly, stonefly, or mayflies. However, brown trout can be caught with worms, crayfish, minnows, and leeches. Catch rates are usually greatest during cooler weather (fall through spring) or early in the day or late evening in summer. Anglers should concentrate on areas with downed logs, root wads, and overhanging banks.