



The lake trout also known as laker, can be distinguished by its white mouth, irregular whitish spots on the back and sides, deeply forked tail and a white leading edge on the lower fins.

The food of adult lake trout consists of fish, insects and small invertebrates. Sexually mature adults weight 6 to 7 pounds at about 6 years of age. Lake trout may live 20 years or longer and attain weights of 30 pounds or more. They are usually found on the bottom between depths of 90 to 250 feet, but may be found at lesser depths when the water temperature is near 48 degrees F. Generally, lake trout are caught only from boats in Illinois.

The lake trout in Lake Michigan have been maintained by an annual stocking program since 1965 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with hopes of reestablishing a naturally reproducing population. Lake trout disappeared in Lake Michigan in the early 1950s due to the ravages of the sea lamprey and an intensive commercial fishery.

During the spring months, lake trout can be taken in the upper layers of warmer water, but as the season progresses and water temperatures go above 48 degrees F., lake trout are normally taken near the bottom. During the summer months (July-September) they tend to occur near the bottom where temperatures are between 45 and 50 degrees F. During the fall months mature lake trout move into shallow waters and reef areas in search of spawning areas.

Shiny metal spoons are successful lake trout lures when fished properly. Certain salmon lures and flies in combination with a dodger also are effective. Lake trout feed on alewives, smelt, chubs and sculpins.