

YELLOW PERCH (*Perca flavescens*)



- The yellow perch is a common game fish. Yellow to gold in color, it has 6-8 black triangular vertical stripes running down its sides and orange lower fins.
- Yellow perch average from a half to one foot long, and weigh between a half pound and one pound but they can grow much larger, especially in the Hudson River.
- Yellow perch are found mostly in lakes and rivers preferring clear water and a moderate temperature. They are intolerant of low oxygen levels and turbidity.
- Perch are mainly diurnal, being active at day. Unlike the solitary pikes, perch gather in schools. They breed in late winter and throughout spring.
- They prefer shoreline or near-shoreline habitat with weeds and structures for protection. Their diet includes zooplankton, insects, and other fish and their eggs.
- **To target yellow perch:** Fish at, or near dawn or dusk or during the day in and around weed beds with topwater lures, jigs, worms, and minnows.

WALLEYE (*Sander vitreus*)



The walleye, despite its resemblance to pike and names like "yellow pike" and "yellow pickerel", is not a pike but rather it is in the perch family.

- Walleye are long, brown-green to silvery fish with dark dorsal patches, sharp teeth, a namesake large glassy eye, and dark blotch at the rear of their first dorsal fin.
- Walleye average one to one a half feet in length and in smaller lakes like the kind at West Point, average between one and five pounds but can get much larger.
- Walleye typically live in deep lakes and rivers. They are nocturnal, often coming in to shallow water to feed at night on other fish, crayfish, insects and snails.
- Walleye were once annually stocked in Popolopen Lake and Stilwell Lake. This stocking was discontinued years ago but leftover fish are still caught each year.
- **To target walleye:** Fish at, near dawn or dusk or in day in and around weed beds with topwater lures, jigs, worms, and minnows. Use a steel leader.

Tiger Muskie & Walleye Catch, Release, and Report: All tiger muskie and walleye must be released. **Note:** Natural Resources is interested in any catch of these species. Please consider reporting your catch on iSportsman.

How about White Perch? White perch (*Morone americana*) despite their name, are not truly perch but rather are bass like striped bass. They can be caught in the Hudson River off of West Point but are not in any of our lakes, ponds, or streams.

WHERE ARE THESE FISH AT WEST POINT?

	CAT	PIC	BUL	PER	WAL	TIG
Beaver Pond	—	PIC	BUL	—	—	—
Bull Pond	—	—	BUL	—	—	—
Cragston Lakes	—	PIC	—	PER	—	—
Cranberry Pond	—	PIC	BUL	PER	—	—
Lake Frederick	CAT	—	—	PER	—	—
Lake Georgina	—	—	BUL	—	—	—
Lusk Reservoir	—	PIC	BUL	PER	—	—
Mine Lake	CAT	PIC	BUL	PER	—	—
Popolopen Lake	CAT	PIC	BUL	PER	WAL	TIG
Round Pond	CAT	PIC	BUL	PER	—	—
Stilwell Lake	—	PIC	BUL	PER	WAL	TIG
Weyants Pond	—	PIC	BUL	—	—	—
Wilkins Pond	—	—	BUL	—	—	—

Abbreviation Key: CAT— Channel Catfish, PIC - Chain Pickerel, BUL - Bullhead species, PER - Yellow Perch, WAL - Walleye, TIG - Tiger Muskellunge.

Handling Fish: Always take care to avoid small ray fin spines when handling most fish and be especially careful when handling catfish and bullhead due to their larger spines as well as pickerel, tiger musky and walleye due to their teeth

BASIC FISHING SAFETY REVIEW

Do these things to keep people and animals safe:

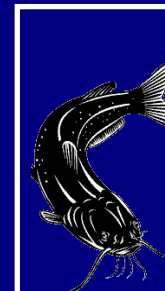
- **ALWAYS HAVE VEST, PFD IN BOATS** - All individuals in a boat must have their own USCG approved PFD.
- **ICE FISHING** - Use discretion in judging ice thickness. No fires, vehicles, or permanent shanties on ice.
- **REPORT FISH & WATERS ISSUES** - Call a wildlife responder if human or animal well-being is a concern.

REPORTING FISH & WATERS ISSUES

Know when and what to report and who to contact

- **WHEN TO REPORT:** Call right away If you see 1) a fishing or boating violation, 2) environmental concerns e.g. fish kills, spills 3) fish /w injuries, parasites, or tags.
- **WHAT TO REPORT:** Please report 1) when & 2) where issue happened, 3) what the issue was 4) your name and phone number.
- **CONTACT:** For fish/boating violations, call WP Game Wardens at 845-938-3333. For other issues, call Natural Resources at 845-938-2314, -7122. (M-F, 0800-1630).

CATFISH, PIKE & PERCH OF THE WEST POINT MILITARY RESERVATION



Building 667A Ruger Road
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CATFISH, PIKE & PERCH AT WEST

West Point offers eligible anglers a host of excellent fishing opportunities in its many lakes, ponds, and streams. Trout, bass, and sunfish surely garner the most attention, but these are far from our only fish. Among other interesting fish species West Point has on hand are three catfishes (channel catfish, yellow bullhead, and brown bullhead); three pikes (stocked hybrid tiger muskie, chain pickerel, and redbfin pickerel); and two species of perch (yellow perch and old stocked walleye).

This brochure seeks to inform readers more about these eight species and includes points about appearance and size, habitat preferences, diet, and more. For anglers, we also include recommendations for how to fish for these species and in which local waters these species can be found here at West Point. Important safety and regulatory reminders are included here as well. While we hope this brochure informs and prepares readers, it is by no means a comprehensive guide.

For more see NYSDEC's website: www.dec.ny.gov

Harvesting: These species are protected in NYS. They may be harvested in season per NYS regulations. For more see: www.dec.ny.gov. Fishing at West Point is coordinated thru, regulations available at www.westpoint.isportsman.net

License & Permit Requirements: All anglers years old or older require 1) a NYS license and 2) a West Point fishing permit to fish alone at West Point unless otherwise stated. Guests need a pass-holding sponsor and a NYS license.

CHANNEL CATFISH (*Ictalurus punctatus*)



- A common game fish, the channel catfish is a blue-gray or olive-brown fish, lacks scales but has a forked tail, six barbels (whiskers), and sharp spines.
- Channel catfish average one to two feet long and two to four pounds can get much larger. They eat, fish, insects, crayfish, snails and small birds and mammals.
- Catfish live in well-oxygenated rivers, lakes and ponds. They forage at night, rest on bottom during day, and nest in cavities like burrows, logs, or rock crevices.
- Channel catfish have keen senses of taste and smell due to special cells on their barbels and skin they use to detect food and signal other catfish.
- **To target catfish:** Fish shallows at dawn, dusk or deep holes in day. Use bottom rigs with dead or cut bait, crayfish, worms, or even hotdog pieces.

YELLOW BULLHEAD (*Ameiurus natalis*)



- Yellow bullhead are olive-yellow to gray-black with white underbellies. They lack scales but have rounded tails, spines, and white barbels (whiskers).
- Brown bullhead are brown-green with yellow-white underbellies. They, too, lack scales and have rounded tails, spines, and black-yellow barbels.
- They average a half foot to one ft long and up to two pounds. Yellow bullhead prefer like clearer waters while brown bullhead prefer siltier, weedier waters.
- Like catfish, bullhead are nocturnal and crepuscular opportunistic bottom-feeding predators eating algae, leeches, worms, mollusks, crayfish, fish and eggs.
- Bullhead are more tolerant of low oxygen levels and a wider range of temperatures than catfish and so are more widespread but less popular among anglers.

TIGER MUSKIE (*E. masquinongy* x *E. lucius*)



- Easily our biggest pike, it is also our largest game fish, the tiger muskellunge AKA tiger muskie is a large, sterile hybrid of muskellunge and northern pike.
- Tiger muskies are large, long tan to gray-brown fish with dark rear slanted patterns of bars and spots, long sharp teeth, and 5-6 chin pores under its lower jaw
- Tiger muskies grow fast. From eight to ten inches at stocking, they can be two feet long in two to three years. 35-40+ inch, 12-15 lb. fish are caught here.
- Like most pike species, they are ambush predators waiting in vegetation or on bottom for prey to swim by like fish, crayfish, frogs, and small birds and mammals.
- **To target tiger muskie:** Fish at or near dawn or dusk day in and around weed beds. Try large jerking lures or large spoons. Use a steel leader.

Tiger Muskie & Walleye Catch, Release, and Report: All tiger muskie and walleye must be released. **Note:** Natural Resources is interested in any catch of these species. Please consider reporting your catch on iSportsman.

Fish Stocking: Natural Resources coordinates tiger muskie stocking in Popolopen Lake in autumn and channel catfish, minnow stocking as needed. Unapproved stocking or release of any fish at West Point is strictly prohibited.

CHAIN PICKEREL (*Esox niger*)



- The chain pickerel, our most common pike, is a large game fish. Only mid-sized as pikes go, it outdoes other pickerel yet is dwarfed by northern pikes and muskies.
- It is olive to yellow-green with yellow spots and bars in a chain-like pattern, has long sharp teeth, a black eye stripe and 8 chin pores under its lower jaw.
- Chain pickerel average one and a half to two feet long, and one to four pounds but do grow bigger. They eat smaller fish, insects, crayfish, and frogs.
- The great ambush ability of chain pickerel (and all pikes) is due to its torpedo-like long body with rear-placed fins, letting it dart explosively from rest at prey.
- **To target chain pickerel:** Fish at, near dawn or dusk or in day in and around weed beds with topwater lures, spinning or jerking bait. Consider a steel leader.

REDFIN PICKEREL (*Esox americanus americanus*)



The redbfin pickerel, our smallest pike, is a green-gray fish with vertical, rear slanted bars running its sides and, of course, has its namesake red fins.

- These fish rarely exceed a foot in length or a pound in weight and are not considered a game fish.
- The redbfin pickerel is actually a subspecies, sharing the same species as the grass pickerel (*Esox americanus vermiculatus*) which is found elsewhere in New York.
- They are found in shallow, highly weedy waters. They feed on insects, small crustaceans, snails, small fish, frogs and their eggs.
- Redfin pickerel, like chain pickerel and most other pike species, breed in late winter and early spring, and grow very rapidly in their first year of life.

What about Northern Pike and Musky? Every year an angler or two will ask about northern pike (*Esox lucius*) as well as muskellunge (*Esox masquinongy*). These species are found in New York State but neither are here at West Point.