

ANGLING

DESTROYING WORTHLESS FISH-HABITATS OF PIKES—OPEN SEASON FOR TROUT

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"The American Angler."

As interest in angling as a pastime increases the proper facilities for its indulgence has, for some years, been the aim of many fish commissioners, but, so far, they have somewhat failed in one important duty, that of the persistent removal or destruction of worthless and obnoxious fish from waters containing the so-called game fish—the trouts, the black bass, and the pikes. A recent movement in this direction by the authorities in Indiana is much to be commended, as their object is to destroy the carp, the gar, and other water animals that live and thrive on mud bottoms, eating the spawn and fry of better fish, and in one instance, that of the carp, destroying the wild vegetable growth, wild rice particularly; thus placing a barrier of lack of food to the visits of wild fowl, especially the canvasback duck.

It appears, unfortunately, that the Indiana Commission has extended, or proposes to do so, its war against objectionable fish to include those of the pike family. This is an error. The unspotted mascalonge of the Ohio River, and the pike found in considerable quantities in the waters of Indiana, are essentially game fishes, and both are edibly good. The head and shoulders of a mascalonge wrapped in coarse linen crash, boiled and served with butter and egg sauce, is a delicious morsel, and the same sections of a large pike, cooked in similar manner, are hardly inferior.

Take away the pikes, and the anglers of Indiana have only the black bass and a few others of the perch family to seek on the rod, and, although the black bass is essentially the game fish of Indiana waters, the large pike, commonly called pickerel in that and other western and northwestern states, and the "little pickerel" of the Mississippi Valley with worm-like tracks on its back, are much sought by rod fishermen, the first for its fighting qualities, and the latter as a choice table fish.

In the State of Michigan we hear that a like error prevails in waters, particularly in Corey's Lake, that do not contain any species of the salmon family (trouts included). On that lake the anglers kill and throw away all the pikes of whatever species they chance to get hold of by any means, being possessed with the idea that these fish are destructive to bass

life. They are wrong. The black bass, as is well known, can take care of itself and progeny, and the final will be that the pike ("pickerel") will gradually succumb to the bass, as has been shown in all waters where these antagonistic fish live together, the spines of the front back-fin of the bass being the weapon of offense.

The limit of range of habitat of some species of fish has always been an open question with the ichthyic authorities, and it is frequently changed by recent and more thorough investigations; in many cases the boundaries are as yet undefined. This is particularly true of salt water fishes, and partially so regarding the pikes of fresh water, a subject which seems to particularly interest American anglers, judging from correspondence recently received. I will try and make the matter clear to them.

THE mascalonge, the head of the family of pike, is found in the Great Lake system, the Ohio River, in some of the lakes of New York and Wisconsin, and in the Mississippi River and northward, the typical form, with whitish belly and distinct round or squarish black spots, being confined in habitat to the Great Lakes, their outlets and tributaries. A subspecies, commonly known as the Ohio mascalonge, inhabits Chautauqua and Conneaut Lakes, N. Y., and other clear lakes outside of the Great Lake system; it is sometimes taken in the Ohio River, and may be recognized, primarily, by the dark narrow cross shades on the body, which seem to break up, now and then, into faint dark spots. A second and last subspecies is found only in the large waters of Wisconsin and Minnesota. It is known as the unspotted mascalonge, and may be recognized by the absence of spots on the body.

The pike, or "Great Northern pickerel," so-called from the days of Frank Forester, and known as the "pickerel" in northern New York and the western and northwestern states, has a very wide range of habitat. It is closely allied, if not identical, with the common pike of Europe. It is found in many fresh waters of Asia, north to Siberia, and all through the northern parts of Europe, and in America as far north as Alaska; it lives in the eastern United States waters south to New York and

the Ohio River, and is found in Europe as far south as Italy and Greece. It may be recognized on sight by the yellowish spots on the belly and the grayish V-shaped spots on the scales. There is but one species of this pike—*Lucius lucius*.

The pond pickerel has an extended habitat. It inhabits waters everywhere south and east of the Alleghany Mountains, and it has been found as far south as Crooked Lake, Florida, former investigations making northern Alabama its southern limit of range; the ichthyologists formerly made a subspecies of the Florida pickerel, which classification has now been dropped. This pickerel may be distinguished from its congeners by its cheeks and gill covers being entirely covered with scales, its well-forked tail, and the dark lines and streaks on the body, which have the appearance of cross bars or reticulations.

The small pickerels are two in number, neither growing more than twelve inches in length. One, "the banded pickerel," is abundant from Massachusetts to Florida in lowland streams and swamps. It is found only east of the Alleghany Mountains, the westernmost record being the Escambia River, at Flomaton, Ala. It is known by the black bar below the eye and the blackish curved bars (about twenty, and sometimes faint) on its sides. The other species called "the little pickerel," lives in the waters of the Mississippi Valley. It is unknown east of the Alleghany Mountains, and may be recognized by the curved streaks, looking like worm tracks, on its sides.

IN the previous issue of *OUTING* was given the open seasons for trout, commencing at various dates in April. The list included only a portion of the section where the law legalizes fishing for trout in that month; a complete schedule is now appended, to which is added the States wherein the season opens in the month of May, or later. The reader will also bear in mind that the points named as likely fishing grounds are the railroad stations nearest the trout streams.

On the Pacific coast, in Washington, Oregon, and California the open season begins on April 1 and closes on October 31, with a size limit of five inches in Oregon, and none in California and Washington. All of these States contain most fruitful waters for trout, which are mainly of the rainbow, steelhead, and cut-throat species, although the eastern brook trout has been somewhat profusely planted in the streams of those States, of which waters there are many hundreds, but it is impracticable to

name more than a few of them in these columns:

In California the entire route of the Southern Pacific Railroad is mapped with trout streams, and down from the Sierras and other elevated sections there are many scores of galloping brooks, each of which contains its quota, generally a large one, of trout, mainly rainbows. I name only a dozen, from which the reader may select, sending to the *OUTING* Bureau for the latest data:

Lakes Tahoe; Chico; Milbrae; Kern River; Whitney's Creek; Redding; Lake Merced; Laquinitos Lake (the last two near San Francisco); McCloud River, near Baird; the waters around and near San Bruno.

In Oregon trout waters are also numerous and easy of access from the business centres. I name:

Clackamas; Eugene; Gold Hill; Milton; Troutdale; the streams flowing from the Cascades near Albany; Corvallis; Rogue River and Evans Creek near Woodville.

In Washington a condition exists similar to that prevailing in the two States last named. Trout may be said to be almost ubiquitous in the mountain streams, of which only a few can be recorded here:

Alderton; Cascades; Winlock; Dayton; Ritzville; Spokane; and Waitburg.

In Nevada the season also opens on April 1 and closes October 1, with a six-inch limit. I have a record of only two of the best trout sections, viz.: the waters around Carson and Palisade stations.

We now reach those States wherein the law prohibits fishing for trout until May 1 and later dates.

In Maryland the general season opens on May 1 and closes August 15. There are, however, local laws which govern the Ashing in Frederick and Baltimore counties. In the former the open season dates from March 1 to August 31, inclusive, and in the last from March 1 to June 30, inclusive, and a six-inch limit prevails in all counties. Most of the best trout streams are in the western part of the State. They are: Deer Park; Mountain Lake Park; Oakland; Huttons; and Swanton.

In both North and South Dakota the season opens on May 1, with no size limit. In the former it closes on December 31, and in the latter on September 30. I have no record of the trout waters in either of these States; black bass, pike, and numerous coarse fish prevail in all sections.

In Idaho the legal day is May 1, and the open

season ends on October 31; there is no size limit. I name a few good localities:

Camas; Franklin; Granite; Soda Springs; Sand Point; Rathburn; Mountain Home; Montpelier; Minidoka; Inkom; and McCammon.

In Wyoming the law is the same as that of Idaho, but the limit of size is six inches. The State is corduroyed with trout waters, and grand ones, the best of which will be found around and adjacent to:

Carter; Aspen; Twin Creek; Cokesville; Fort Steele; Hilliard; Fort Washakia; Laramie; Piedmont; Rawlins; and Sherling.

The open season in Michigan begins on May 1, and closes August 31, with a six-inch limit of size. In the northern part of the State there are many excellent trout waters. Formerly these sections were noted for grand grayling fishing, but this poetic fish, the shadowy *ombre*, is gradually passing away under the onslaughts of the fiercer and spawn-eating trout and the devastating axe of the woodman with his lumber rafts sweeping the spawning beds of the grayling, which reproduces its kind in the spring when freshets prevail—the heyday of the lumber marts and sad ones for this beautiful Ash. But if the grayling is now only “a passing shadow,” there are still left in Michigan many excellent trout waters the localities of which may be named as follows:

Calumet; Marquette; Hancock; Au Train; Baraga; Cheshire; Boyne Falls; Hermansville; Grayling; Ewart; Crystall Falls; Houghton; L’Anse; Kalkaska; Otsego Lake; Negaunee; and Sault Ste. Marie.

In Vermont the season opens on May 1, and closes September 1; only a six-inch limit is legal.

The trout streams of the State are industriously fished, but the visiting angler will not go far astray if he visits:

Woodstock; Shaftsbury; Arlington; Island Pond; Bethel; Barre; Wolcott; Windsor; Summit; Randolph; Morrisville; and Jamaica.

IN Colorado the open season lasts from June 1 to October 31, with a size limit of eight inches; in this respect the laws of the States lying beyond the Mississippi River, are examples for the Eastern legislators. This State is permeated with trout streams. Go anywhere outside of twenty-five miles of the thickly settled sections and a trout stream will, no doubt, gurgle or roar at your side or before you. I could name hundreds of such localities, but have only space for a dozen or so:

Lyons; Pouche; Wagon Wheel Gap; Mc-

Gees; Villa Grove; Nathrop; St. Elmo; Rackwood; Platte River; Beaver Brook; Malta; Golden; Henry; Leadville; Buena Vista; and Cimaron.

In Arizona and New Mexico trout fishing is legal from June 1 to October 31. In the former the size limit is seven inches, and there is none in New Mexico. I have a record of only three localities in Arizona, near which trout are said to be abundant: Flagstaff, Winslow, and Hackberry. In New Mexico six, to wit: Chama; Embudo; Monero; Gallup; Espanola; and Fort Stanton.

Utah is the only State in the Union where the law of the open season for trout prohibits fishing until June 15, but as compensation gives the angler until December 15 to ply his rod and flip the fly. Seven inches is also the commendable size limit. In Utah there are many excellent trout waters, the best of them being located in the following sections:

Wahsach; Park City; Thistle; Pleasant Valley Junction; Clear Creek; Milford; Ogden (waters ten miles distant); Logan; Echo; and Richmond.

In the States and territory named below, hook and line fishing is permitted at all seasons of the year, with no restrictions as to size of fish captured:

Montana; Arkansas; Alabama; Kansas; Delaware; Tennessee; Georgia; South Carolina; Illinois; Kentucky; Texas; and Oklahoma.

IN the Dominion of Canada the fishing laws are at variance in the different provinces. In New Brunswick the open season is from May 2 to September 14; in Ontario from May 1 to September 14; in Quebec from May 1 to September 30; in Manitoba, from January 1 to September 30. [All the above dates are inclusive.] In Nova Scotia the season opens on April 2 and ends on September 30; in the Northwest Territories the legal season is from May 1 to September 15; on Prince Edward Island, from December 1 to September 30, and there are no restrictions in British America on hook and line fishing at any season of the year. There are no restrictions as to size of trout taken from Canadian waters, except in Quebec, where the limit is six inches.

The omission of the word “inclusive” after the dates specified, and the phrasing of the laws in many sections are apt to confuse the reader as to the exact opening and closing days of the season. I have endeavored to make the laws easily understood, as compiled, from State enactments to January 1, 1902.