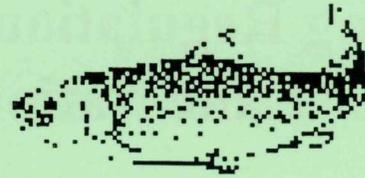


Fish

Crater Lake National Park



In Crater Lake:

In 1888, William G. Steel, the founder of Crater Lake National Park, made the first recorded attempts to stock Crater Lake. National Park Service researchers believe that before that time, Crater Lake contained no fish. William Steel's motives for stocking the lake were probably an attempt to "improve" the lake by adding fishing to the area's recreational value.

Around the turn of the century, a regular stocking program was installed. Stocking continued through the early part of the century until creel censuses showed the fish were naturally reproducing. Six species were introduced to Crater Lake during this time. The last recorded stockings were silver salmon in 1937, and rainbow trout in 1941.

Later investigations revealed that the naturally reproducing silver salmon are actually kokanee salmon. Since kokanee were not intentionally introduced, researchers believe that one of the plantings of silver salmon fingerlings was actually kokanee. Of the six species introduced, two remain:

Kokanee Salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) are a dwarf, landlocked form of sockeye salmon. Kokanee are the most abundant species in the lake, recently estimated to have a population well into the hundreds of thousands. An average kokanee is about 8 inches long, but some grow to as long as 18 inches.

Rainbow Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) is less abundant than the kokanee, but are typically larger fish. The largest documented rainbow trout from Crater Lake was a 6 1/2 lb., 26 inch long specimen caught by the park research team. Most rainbows average 10 to 14 inches.

Rainbow trout and kokanee salmon populations are stable in the lake. Researchers believe that this stability is due to each fish species eating different foods. Kokanee feed on zooplankton and rainbows feed on aquatic insects.

In Park Streams:

Although the lake is by far the park's largest body of water, fish also inhabit many of the small streams within the park's boundary. These streams are generally not accessible because of the steep canyons in which they are found.

According to stocking records, two species, eastern brook and rainbow trout, were planted in park streams. However, four species total have been identified:

Eastern Brook Trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) have been found in almost every park stream.

Rainbow Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) were originally planted in large numbers throughout the park. Today, it appears that their numbers are few and scattered. They have been collected in recent years from Annie, Bybee, Castle, Munson, and Sun creeks.

German Brown Trout (*Salmo trutta*) had one representative specimen found in Sand Creek above the falls, which appears to be a barrier preventing upstream migration. Researchers believe that this fish may be the remnant of an unrecorded or unauthorized planting.

Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) are understood to be the only native fish species found within the park. These less competitive fish are a candidate species under the endangered species act, and are considered rare in the Southern Cascades. Programs to conserve this species are now being implemented.

Fishing Regulations

Crater Lake National Park



All waters within Crater Lake National Park are open to fishing unless otherwise indicated below.

General Regulations:

- License:** No Fishing license is required within the boundaries of Crater Lake National Park.
- Season:** May 20 through Oct 31; however, see **Lake Regulations** below.
- Time:** Fishing is allowed in the park from 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.
- Bait:** All waters are restricted to use of artificial lures and flies **only**. No organic bait of any kind can be used in Crater Lake National Park. This includes live or dead fish, power bait, and fish eggs or roe.

Lake Regulations:

- Limits:** There are no restrictions relative to size, number, or species taken.
- Season:** The lake can be fished year-round except when seasonal limitations prevent safe access. The only access to the lake is from Cleetwood Trail located on the North side of Crater Lake.
- Where:** Cleetwood Cove provides about 1/4 mile of rocky shoreline for angling. Wizard Island is also open while boat tours are running. Fishing is allowed from park boat docks except when a boat is within 200 feet of the dock.
- Boating:** No private boats or flotation devices are not allowed on Crater Lake.
- Note:** Pack out your catch. It is prohibited to clean fish in the lake.

Stream Regulations:

- Closures:** Fishing is prohibited in Sun Creek starting three miles upstream from the junction of Sun Creek and the park boundary, and extending three miles upstream, as posted. Sun Creek is protected habitat for endangered Bull Trout.
- Species:** See reverse side for detailed information on Crater Lake's fish population.