



Yellow Dog Lodge, Inc.  
259 Sunset Point  
Cochrane, AB Canada, T4C 0K9  
Lodge Office: (403) 668-9936  
Cell Phone: (403) 875-2645

### ***3. What species of fish are there in the lakes?***

**Arctic Grayling** – the sailfish of the north! Most beautiful of all northern species.

These fish are elusive in the summer but can be caught with spring and fly fishing gear through out the fishing season. They are best fished in spring just after ice out. Often found with running with white sucker in the streams. The Arctic Grayling occur primarily in cold waters of mid-sized to large rivers and lakes, returning to rocky streams to breed. The various subspecies are omnivorous, crustaceans, insects, and fish eggs and larvae forming the most important food items; larger individuals feed on adult fish and even small aquatic mammals, such as water voles, while the immature fish feed on zooplankton, including insect larvae. Spawning takes place in the spring, when the fish seek the shallow areas of rivers with fine sand substrate and moderate current. The males then establish individual territories and court the females by flashing their colorful dorsal fins; the fins are also used to brace receptive females during the vibratory release of milt and roe. As these fishes are non guarders, the eggs are left to mix with the substrate. Although the graylings do not excavate nests, the highly energetic courtship and mating tends to kick up silt and cover the eggs. The eggs are small (approximately 3 mm in diameter) and hatch after two to three weeks. The fry grow quickly during their first year or two of life.

**Lake Trout** – the most abundant sport fish in the lakes.

Lake trout is not a trout but is actually is classified as a char, the lodge record weighing almost 47 lbs. The lake trout is a slow growing fish; it is also very late to mature. Lakers as they are commonly called can be caught trolling, spin fishing or jigging. The fish are easily caught and barb less hooks are the way to go. Many a fisherperson has boated more than 30 fish in a single day. You will have fun catching these fish all day long. Lake trout are dependent on cold, oxygen-rich waters. They are pelagic during the period of summer stratification in dimictic lakes. Lakers can be found spawning in the channel between the two lakes in late August to late September.

**Northern Pike** – the most exciting fish to catch.

Pike are found in sluggish streams and shallow, weedy places in lakes, as well as in cold, clear, rocky waters. The pike generally hides in wait for prey, holding perfectly still for long periods, and is then capable of remarkable acceleration, sometimes propelling it a meter into the air (though it rarely leaves the surface). It catches its prey sideways with its sharp teeth, in order to kill it, before turning lengthwise to swallow. It eats mainly fish, but on occasion water voles and ducklings have also been known to fall prey to pike. It is moreover a cannibal and this cannibalism serves in maintaining stability in the pike population. Young pike have been photographed eating pike of a similar size. Northern Pike also feed on others of their kind, insects, and leeches. It has a tremendous appetite.

**Walleye** – sometimes called pickerel.

Walleye are found in Johnston and Barker Lakes, a short 10 minute float plane ride from the lodge. Walleye are light sensitive and prefer these tea stained lakes. They can be most readily caught in June and September, but also in less numbers during July and August. Walleye range



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from shallow 5 to 10 feet in the spring, to deeper 10 to 25 foot depths during the summer when the water warms. Cool cloudy days are the best fishing days. The walleye catches range anywhere from 20 fish to over 100 fish per day and average size is from 4 to 5 lbs.

**Whitefish** – hard to catch but can be seen jumping in the evening.

The reclusive lake whitefish prefers to swim in the company of a school of fellow whitefish in the gloomy, cool water at depths of up to 200 feet and deeper as summer's heat climbs, the main reason it requires extra skill to catch one. The whitefish spawns in early winter in shallow rock or sand bottomed lake waters less than 25 feet deep. The young hatch the following spring, and grow large enough to leave the protective shallows for deeper waters by early summer. Whitefish generally grow slowly, but this varies by region and food supply. Lake Whitefish can reach a size of more than 10 pounds and an age of over 25 years, although this was more commonplace 50 years ago.

**Burbot** – generally caught in the winter through the ice.

The burbot is often maligned as being too ugly to be worth an angler's time, however, hidden by its mottled green camouflage is a valuable food and recreational fish. The burbot is the only representative of the cod family in fresh water in North America, and like its saltwater relatives, has mild-tasting white flesh. Burbot are distributed in fresh waters throughout the lakes, and occupy most large clear and rivers and many lakes in the area. Burbot can be caught in the summer as well as through the ice in the winter. Burbot can be caught using standard bait fishing techniques with hand-held rod. A 2/0 or 4/0 single hook baited with a chunk of fresh or frozen fish (cisco or whitefish) and a sinker located 18 to 24 inches above the hook is a good setup. Cast the bait out and allow the weight to rest on the bottom. In a river the bait will move around near the bottom in the current. When a consistent tug is felt, reel in your catch.

**Cisco** – common bait fish in the lake. They usually run in schools and it is common to see balls of these bait fish on the depth finder. When you see bait balls get ready for some great lake trout action.

**White Sucker** – usually found in the stream or on sandy bottom, forage fish for pike.

Suckers are soft-rayed fishes that possess a toothless, protractile mouth with distinctive thick lips. The white sucker is a bottom feeding fish and spends most of their time in shallow, warm waters. In bays, estuaries and tributary rivers, both species make their homes in holes and areas around windfalls or other underwater obstructions. White suckers lay their eggs among pebble and gravel beds in lake and river shallows during the spring. Maximum life expectancy for white suckers appears to be 17 years and usually grow to be 12-20 inches long. As youngsters under 12 inches in length, suckers are eaten by northern pike walleyes and burbot. As bottom feeders, both species dine exclusively on aquatic plants, algae, and small invertebrate animals - especially worms and crustaceans. White suckers have been accused of consuming large quantities of eggs from more desirable fish species, but there is no conclusive evidence to support this contention.



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## Fishing Licenses

If you are between the ages of 16 and 65, you must carry an NWT fishing license with you every time you go fishing. Licenses are available at the lodge and from most hardware and sporting goods stores in nearly all communities, from fishing lodges, or from regional offices of the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Government of the Northwest Territories.

Fishing License Fees vary according to where you live:

NWT Resident:

Season \$10

Canadian Resident:

Season \$20

\*3-day \$15

Non Canadian Resident:

Season \$40

\*3-day \$30.

*\*A 3-day license is valid for 3 consecutive days, commencing on the date stated on the license. GST is added to all fees. The length of license (number of days) and fees are subject to change.*