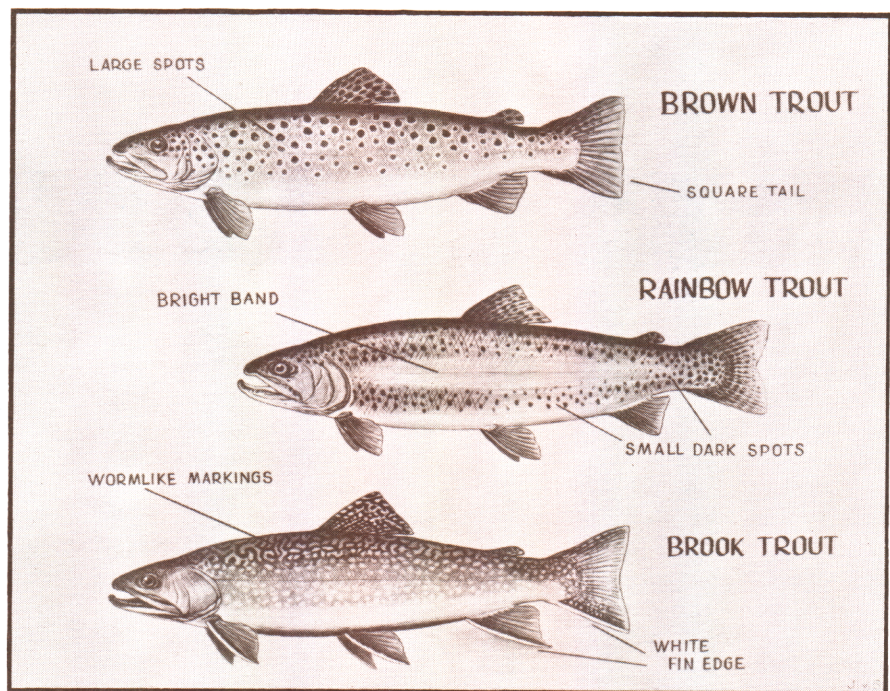


Three kinds of trout that can be used in coldwater ponds. The brown trout is usually not advisable, however.



isms. They prefer zooplankton, insect larvae and crayfish. Supplementary feeding is **not** recommended unless large numbers of trout are stocked.

Trout spawn on gravel beds in streams. They don't spawn successfully in most ponds. Populations are maintained by periodic stocking. Brook trout can sometimes reproduce in gravel or coarse sand where springs upwell in pond bottoms.

Rainbow Trout (*Salmo gairdneri*)

Rainbow trout are the most adaptable of the trouts for use in Michigan ponds. They are readily available from dealers, grow fast, are easily caught, can withstand warmer water than other kinds of trout, and generally do well in all parts of the state where coldwater ponds exist. Rainbow trout grow best when the water is between 54-66°C (12-19°C). They commonly reach a size of 15 inches (38 cm) in about three years. Few usually live long enough in a pond to reach 20 inches (50 cm).

Brook Trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*)

Brook trout are also very suitable for Michigan coldwater ponds, but for best growth they need water of 48-60°F (9-16°C), which is cooler than for rainbow trout. Therefore,

brook trout are more widely used in northern than in southern Michigan. Brook trout are also easy to catch and can provide especially tasty table fare. They may grow as well as rainbow trout up to a size of 10 inches (25 cm), after which their growth is slower. A 15-inch (38-cm) brook trout is an exceptionally large one, but a few of 18 inches (46 cm) or longer occur in Michigan ponds. For fishing variety, rainbow trout may be stocked together with brook trout.

Brown Trout (*Salmo trutta*)

Brown trout are less desirable in ponds because they are relatively hard to catch. While this may furnish a welcome challenge to skilled anglers, it disappoints many people, and a stocking of brown trout usually produces a far lower total harvest over the years than does a stocking of rainbow or brook trout. They can live 5-7 years, despite heavy fishing, even by skilled anglers. Trout over 18-20 inches (46-50 cm) can be very cannibalistic which may render further stocking with fingerling or yearling trout infeasible—unless the large brown trout are removed. This may require use of fish toxicants.

Hybrid Trout

Hybrids between various kinds of

trout are sometimes available and can be interesting to use. They are unusual and often grow faster than purebred trout, but may be hard to catch. They usually aren't practical for the pond owner who is simply interested in recreation and a few fish on the table.

Warmwater Fishes

The primary warmwater fishes used in Michigan ponds are members of the sunfish or bass family: the predatory largemouth and smallmouth basses and the smaller sunfishes, such as bluegills, pumpkinseeds, and green sunfish. Another commonly used warmwater fish is the channel catfish. Various minnows of use in ponds could also be classed as warmwater fishes, but we will discuss them later under the heading of forage fishes.

Largemouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*)

Largemouth bass are stocked in most of Michigan's warmwater ponds. They adapt to a wide range of pond conditions, can grow to large size, and are a very popular game fish. Their growth in Michigan varies, depending on food supply, competition with other fishes, and water temperature. They grow