

INFORMATION SHEET FOR “GETTING TO KNOW SOME PENNSYLVANIA FISHES”

- ❖ **BROOK TROUT**—Pennsylvania’s official state fish. The brook trout is the only stream trout that is native to Pennsylvania. It is a cold-water fish that lives naturally in small, cold, clean streams. Its back is dark olive-green or gray-green, and mottled with dark, squiggly markings from head to tail. The belly and sides are shaded lighter, and at times have green, gray, or lavender tones with irregular marks. The sides also have red dots scattered around that have bright-blue halos. The belly is pale orange and has a blackish or gray streak down the middle. The pectoral, pelvic, and anal fins are pale to bright orange with a white edge followed by a black stripe. There are dark blotches on the dorsal and caudal fins. The tail fin is less forked and is squarish. The wild brook trout can be from five to eighteen inches long. Their life span is about five years. The brook trout spawn in the fall from mid-September to the end of November.
- ❖ **BROWN TROUT**—The brown trout is not a native Pennsylvania fish. The first one came in 1886. It is a cold-water fish, but can also be found in cool streams, rivers, lakes, and impoundments. The brown trout’s back and upper sides are dark-brown to gray-brown with yellow-brown to silvery lower sides. Its fins are clear, yellow-brown and have no markings and the belly is white-yellow. They spawn in the fall when water temperatures are in the mid-forties to high forties. The eggs hatch the next spring when the parents are not around. During the summer months they like to eat at night. Their life span can be ten to twelve years.
- ❖ **RAINBOW TROUT**—The rainbow trout was introduced to Pennsylvania at the turn of the century to help restore the state’s degrading trout fishery. Most of the rainbow trout are raised in a hatchery and then stocked in cold-water streams, creeks, and rivers. The back and sides of a rainbow trout are silvery-gray to dark green. There is a pinkish or reddish lateral stripe that runs from the gill to the tail. There are small blackish spots sprinkled on the head and sides. The caudal fin has rows of small dark spots. There are also more spots found on the dorsal and adipose fins. The lowers do not have spots and are pale pink. The rainbow trout has a whitish belly. The rainbow trout spawns in the spring when the water temperature is near fifty degrees.
- ❖ **GOLDEN RAINBOW TROUT**-- The golden rainbow trout was first stocked in Pennsylvania in 1967. They are stocked throughout the state in trout waters. It is raised in hatcheries and stocked for fishermen. It is a cold-water fish. The golden rainbow trout has a deep golden-yellow body and a reddish lateral stripe. There are no spots on the body or fins. The lower fins are pinkish. They also have pink or red tones on their cheeks.
- ❖ **SMALLMOUTH BASS**-- The smallmouth bass is a native Pennsylvania fish that can be found throughout the state. It is a cool water fish. The back of a smallmouth bass has a brownish or bronze appearance. The sides are lighter, and its belly is white or pale-yellow. The scales will have a golden sheen. There is a series of eight to fifteen olive colored vertical bars on each side. The eye has orange-red and dark lines that radiate backward. The smallmouth bass spawn

from May to early June when the water temperature is sixty to seventy degrees. The male guards the eggs which hatch in two to nine days and then protects them. They can grow to be twenty inches long.

- ❖ **BLACK CRAPPIE**-- The black crappie can be found throughout Pennsylvania in cool water with a lot of aquatic vegetation. The back of the black crappie is olive to metallic green or a bluish gray. Its sides are silvery with dark spots that appear to be in horizontal rows. Splotches make a wavy pattern on the dorsal, anal, and caudal fins. A black crappie has seven or eight spines on its dorsal fin. They spawn in spring and early summer when the water temperatures reach sixty-six to sixty-eight degrees. The male protects the eggs that will hatch in three to five days and continues to guard the young until they leave the nest.
- ❖ **YELLOW PERCH**-- Yellow perch can be found throughout the state of Pennsylvania. They are not a native fish. The yellow perch has a set of vertical stripes that are its most distinctive feature. They are some of the side and back scales, which are dark and form the vertical stripes as they near the belly. Its belly is white or grayish. The upper part of the head, back and sides is olive-green to golden-brown. The pectoral, pelvic, and anal fins are pale yellow. The yellow perch prefer cool lakes, ponds and slow moving streams. They spawn in April and May when water temperatures are in the mid-forties to mid-fifties. The eggs take from eight to twenty-five days or longer to hatch because of the water temperature. The adults do not stay around to guard and protect the eggs and young.
- ❖ **BLUEGILL**-- The bluegill can be found throughout the state of Pennsylvania in warmwater streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds that has aquatic weeds so that they can feed and hide. The back of the bluegill is olive to brownish, and the sides shade to brownish, orange and pink. The sides have eight to ten sets of double, bluish vertical bars that are chainlike in appearance. Its belly is white to yellow or a coppery-orange. The sides of the head are greenish to blue-green and have a metallic looking blue on the lower edge of the gill flap and under the lower jaw. The pectoral fin is long and pointed. The bluegill has a long spawning season, starting in May when the water temperature reaches sixty-seven degrees and continues through August. The male bluegill will guard the eggs that hatch in two to five days and stays to protect the young.
- ❖ **LARGEMOUTH BASS**-- The largemouth bass is Pennsylvania's largest sunfish and can be found statewide. The head and back of the largemouth bass is a bright green to an olive green. The sides are a lighter green and its belly is whitish or pale yellow. It has a broad black stripe or a line of broken splotches running along its side from the head to the tail. They like a warmwater habitat that has aquatic weeds. The largemouth bass spawns in spring and early summer when the water temperature is about sixty degrees for at least three days. The eggs take about ten days to hatch and the male guards the eggs and the young.
- ❖ **ROCK BASS**—The rock bass can be found throughout the state in warmwater lakes, reservoirs, streams, and rivers. The rock bass has an overall dark-olive to golden-brown appearance. Its belly is whitish. The scales on the sides have a dark spot at the base. The spots form loose, horizontal rows of dots along the fish's body. The eyes of the rock bass are bright red or orange and the gill cover

has a dark spot at its upper rear corner. The mouth goes past the front edge of the eye. The anal fin has five to seven spines on the front edge. They spawn in May and June when the water temperature reaches sixty to seventy degrees. The male protects the eggs and young until they leave the nest.