

About Trout

Bull Trout

(*Salvelinus confluentus*)



Illustration by Joseph Tomelleri

In the cold, clear waters of the Pacific Northwest, some of the world's most important and beautiful fish--the trout, salmon and char--have evolved. But none of these native salmonids (the name used for members of the Salmonidae family) are as pretty or as mysterious as our Bull, Native Char, the Dolly Varden Trout.

The average length of the fresh water form is 12-18 inches long and 18-24 inches in anadromous stocks. The color is variable with size, locality and habitat. Adults living in the sea are a dark blue with silvery sides and those living in fresh water are a olive-green to brown. Spawning adults turn a bright red. All are spotted.

The Dolly Varden is a fall spawner. The female digs the redd and is attended by 4-5 males. Generally this species lives 10-12 years. Bull trout spawn in cold tributary streams in the early fall (September - October). They deposit eggs in a redd and juvenile Bull Trout typically rear in the parent stream for two years and then migrate in the spring to larger waters for rearing to adulthood. At age 5, they migrate back to their natal tributary to spawn. Bull Trout are very piscivorous (fish eating) allowing them to reach up to 20 lbs in size depending on food availability.



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