

# About Salmon

**Sockeye** (*Oncorhynchus nerka*)

Other Names: red salmon, blueback (Columbia and Quinault Rivers), kokanee or "silver trout" (lanklocked form)

Average size: 5-8 lbs, up to 15 lbs

Fall spawner

*Spawning colors*



*Illustration by Joseph Tomelleri*

*Pre-spawning colors*



*Sockeye are the most flavorful Pacific salmon. In Washington, sockeye are found in Lake Washington, Baker Lake, Ozette Lake, Quinault Lake, and Lake Wenatchee. In Oregon, dams and other impacts have eliminated Sockeye runs from the Deschutes River and the Grande Ronde System (Wallowa Lake), however, Kokanee Salmon are available in these systems and have been introduced to other systems as well.*

*Spawning: Sockeye are unique in that they require a lake to rear in as fry, so the river they choose to spawn in must have a lake in the system. This seems to be the most important criteria for choosing a spawning ground, as sockeye adapt to a range of water velocities and substrates.*

*Large rivers that supplied sufficient room for spawning and rearing historically supported huge runs of sockeye, numbering into the millions. One such run still exists today on the Adams River in British Columbia, a tributary to the Fraser River. The Canadian government has built viewing platforms for visitors, and annual runs of over a million sockeye are common.*

*Rearing: Juvenile sockeye rear for one or two years in a lake, although they are also found in the inlet and outlet streams of the lake. Sockeye fry are often preyed on by resident lake fish, and because they use freshwater year-round, they are susceptible to low water quality.*