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LOCH LEVEN TROUT (SALMO TRUTTA LEVENENSIS)

by

Dr. George A. Rounsefell  
Aquatic Biologist  
Division of Fishery Biology

In Europe the genus Salmo is represented by two distinct and well recognized species: Salmo salar, the sea salmon, and Salmo trutta, the trout.

Many ichthyologists formerly recognized more than one species of European trout, but it has more recently been conceded that all are but varieties of Salmo trutta. The anadromous variety, which because of its sojourn in the sea, where food is plentiful, often attains a large size, is known as Salmo trutta trutta. The young, brightly marked with red spots, are practically indistinguishable from the parr stage of the sea salmon, Salmo salar, and like the salmon, they take on a bright silvery dress before migrating as smolts to the sea.

The brown trout, Salmo trutta fario, the common trout of Europe, varies somewhat in color and size in different localities, but this is usual in any widespread form. It is typically a freshwater variety, perhaps merely a landlocked variety. In the United States the rainbow trout, long known as Salmo irideus, was found to be actually the same as the steelhead, Salmo gairdnerii, and indistinguishable in individuals with the anadromous habit. The same relationship may hold true for S. trutta trutta and S. trutta fario.

The Loch Leven trout, Salmo trutta levenensis can be regarded as merely a local variety of Salmo trutta. The fact that hatchery men seem to have great difficulty in distinguishing between Loch Leven and brown trout is not surprising as both are said to occur in Loch Leven. The description of Loch Leven trout as smaller and more silvery in appearance strongly suggests that the variety has been recognized because the trout tend to take on a silvery appearance after descending the streams into this lake. This view coincides with conditions in western North America where the rainbow or steelhead, Salmo gairdnerii takes on a silvery appearance in certain lakes much as though the lake were a small ocean, giving rise to local varieties as the Kamloops trout, Salmo gairdnerii kamloops.