



MUSKELLUNGE



Identification

- "Torpedo" shaped with a very long head
- Body markings vary from vertical bars, spots, clear, or a combination of these; forked tail with **pointed** lobes
- Very large teeth, and **6-9 pores** under each side of their lower jaw

Habitat

- In shallow, stained water, among aquatic plants like water lilies, pondweed, cattails, and tree stumps.
- In deeper, clear water, near rocks, reefs and shoals.

Spawning Patterns

- April to June when water temperatures are 10-15°C. Spawning typically occurs in shallow weedy bays at depths less than 2 feet.
- Eggs are scattered at random over the course of several days. A female typically lay as many as 120,000 eggs but only up to 34% successfully hatch.

Diet

- Mainly other fish species like perch, ciscoes, and suckers.
- Sometimes eat small muskrats, mice, waterfowl, frogs, and crayfish.

Age and Size

- Can live 30 years.
- Usually 28-40 inches long; Ontario Angler Award minimum length is 36 inches.
- Ontario record weight is 65.00 lb.

Fishing Tips

- Fish during sunrise and sunset to up your odds; muskie are known to be challenging to catch, so be patient!
- Use a heavy action rod with very strong fishing line; muskie prefer large tackle, and use a leader to avoid breakoffs.
- A wide net is needed, and use pliers to remove the hook to avoid injuring the fish or yourself.
- Try large soft plastics, plugs, in-line spinners, jerkbaits and crankbaits.