



Kejimikujik  
National Park and  
National Historic Site

# Sportfish Management & Protection

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# 2024



Parks Canada    Parcs Canada

Canada

# Welcome to Kejimikujik!

Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site has a long and storied legacy of fishing in its dark waters. The waterways and lakes of Kejimikujik are an important cultural landscape to the Mi'kmaq who have used them for over 4000 years for traveling and fishing. Petroglyphs in the park depict people in canoes as well as fish. In the early 1900s, a resort was built in what is now Kejimikujik, and this region became widely known for its world-class guided fishing excursions. Fishing remains an important activity to many visitors to Kejimikujik.




Parks Canada

Environmental impacts and the threat of invasive species have made conservation of native fish stocks a priority for Parks Canada. As of 2018, the invasive Chain pickerel has been expanding through the waterways of Kejimikujik. As part of efforts to preserve and protect the fish stocks as well as monitor the spread of this invasive fish, we have initiated an **Angler Diary** (see insert). Researchers at the park use the information collected from Angler Diaries to help assess the status of fish populations within the park, including the Brook trout.


We ask anglers to observe all fishing regulations, complete their Angler Diary, and submit them to the Visitor Center. Please release all native fish (see pages 6 and 7 for helpful tips) and humanely euthanize any invasive Chain pickerel that are caught. Please see page 5 for instructions on what to do with Chain pickerel.

We hope you enjoy your time here and develop lasting memories as you return year after year! We thank you for your participation in our Angler Diaries program!

*Happy Fishing!*



Scan here to learn more about the culture and history of the Mi'kmaq at Kejimikujik



Scan here to learn more about European settlement at Kejimikujik

# Rules and Regulations

**Fishing seasons take place from April 1st to August 31st**, however when the first day of an open season falls on a Sunday or Monday, the open season shall begin on the Saturday immediately preceding that Sunday or Monday. When the last day of an open season falls on a Friday or Saturday in any year, the open season shall end on the Sunday immediately following that Friday or Saturday.

- **A National Park Fishing Licence is required** to fish in the park. The exception is anglers under 16 years of age who are accompanied by a licence holder
- **The entire park is 'Catch and Release' of all native fish species.**
  - All native fish must be returned to the water (this includes ALL species other than Chain pickerel and Smallmouth bass)
  - No person may possess Brook trout or any other native fish species within the park boundary
- **It is mandatory to retain Chain pickerel and Smallmouth bass caught inside the park.** If you catch one of these invasive fish, keep it, kill it, and turn it in at the Warden's Office (see instructions on page 5)
- The map on the back shows the 'Fly-Fishing Only' and 'No Fishing Zones'. The following regulations apply within the fly-fishing zones:
  - Fly-fishing only
  - **No Fishing of any kind is allowed within: Rogers Brook, Grafton Brook, Pebbleogitch Lake, Beaverskin Lake, Cobrielle Lake and Mountain Lake**
- It is required to fill out your Angler's Diary and submit it
- It is illegal to place live fish eggs or live fish into park waters
- It is illegal to have a line with more than one artificial fly or other type of bait (or any combination) attached
- Any lure or fly cannot be capable of catching more than one fish at a time
- **All tackle may only include single barbless hooks.** True barbless hooks or a pinched down barb are acceptable. Treble, gang, or barbed hooks of any kind are not permitted
- No person shall use natural bait of any kind (including minnows and earthworms) or have it in their possession
- Possession or use of chemical attractants is not permitted
- Possession or use of lead jigs, sinkers, or weights is not permitted
- Electronic fish finders are prohibited in all national parks
- Fishing is prohibited during the period from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise
- Outboard motors are not allowed on Kejimikujik waterways other than Kejimikujik Lake and downstream of Kejimikujik Lake to the park boundary

For the complete National Park Fishing Regulations, scan the QR code to the right; For Kejimikujik-specific rules see the Warden Office board (17 Warden Housing Rd.)



# Native Fish of Kejimikujik

## Catch and Release



**Brook trout** (*Salvelinus fontinalis*)



**American eel** (*Anguilla rostrata*)



**Golden shiner** (*Notemigonus crysoleucas*)



**Banded killifish** (*Fundulus diaphanus*)



**Ninespine stickleback** (*Pungitius pungitius*)



**Lake whitefish** (*Coregonus clupeaformis*)  
Historically stocked



**Yellow perch** (*Perca flavescens*)



**White perch** (*Morone americana*)



**Creek chub** (*Semotilus atromaculatus*)



**White sucker** (*Catostomus commersoni*)



**Brown bullhead** (*Ameiurus nebulosus*)



**Brown trout** (*Salmo trutta*)  
Historically stocked

### Tagged Brook Trout

For over 30 years volunteers and staff have been tagging Brook trout within Kejimikujik. This work allows researchers to track trout movements, investigate growth and monitor critical seasonal habitat use. If you catch a tagged trout please record the tag number, location, date and an estimate of fork length.



# Invasive Fish

## Mandatory Retention



Chain pickerel (*Esox niger*)



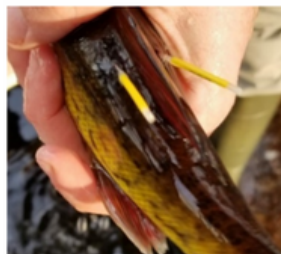
Smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*)

## Aquatic Invasive Species Management in Kejimikujik

Smallmouth bass threaten the park boundary and Chain pickerel have now invaded Kejimikujik. Work is ongoing to mitigate impacts to watersheds in the park. In addition to our management efforts we updated Kejimikujik fishing rules beginning in 2019 to help protect native fish, including the retention of invasive species.

## Acoustic Tagged Chain Pickerel in George Lake

In order to better understand Chain pickerel habitat use and movement patterns 18 acoustic receivers were deployed in George Lake and 60 Chain pickerel were caught, tagged, and released back to the water. This may seem counterproductive, but these 60 fish provide valuable information that we will use to better mitigate and manage their impacts. If caught, please return these fish where they were captured so they can continue to provide data for these projects.



## What to do With a Chain Pickerel



Chain pickerel are under **mandatory** retention within the park. Please humanely euthanize your Chain pickerel as soon as you catch it. This entails a swift singular blow to the top of the head just behind the eyes and a subsequent cut to the gills. We ask that you bring your Chain pickerel to our 'Pickerel Drop Off' at **21 Warden Housing Road**. There is a freezer along the side of this building with instructions on how to properly store your pickerel. In coordination with Acadia University, pickerel that are dropped off will be studied, including gut contents, size, and stage of sexual maturity. This is valuable information for helping understand the impacts of this invasive species to the aquatic ecosystems in the park. **If you are unable to submit a Chain pickerel, please euthanize it and return it into the waterway or into the woods away from campsites, trails or portage routes.**

# Techniques for Proper Catch and Release

**By following these guidelines, you can greatly increase your fish's chance of survival after release!**

## 5 SECOND RULE

Ensure that you strictly limit the time your fish spends out of water. Time out of water is extremely stressful on fish and keeping that time to a minimum is the primary way you can increase their survival. This doesn't mean you can't take a picture, just prepare for your photo with your fish safely under the surface. When you lift the fish out of water, do it for 5 seconds or less.

## USE BARBLESS HOOKS

Using barbless hooks is **MANDATORY** in Kejimikujik. Barbless hooks can be purchased, or you can use pliers to press down the barb on your hook. Barbed hooks can cause serious damage to the fish and are harder to remove increasing fish handling time.

## LEAVE DEEP SET HOOKS

If your fish takes a hook deep and it can't easily be removed, cut the leader/tippet as close as you safely can and leave the hook in. The fish will eventually shed the hook on its own, the hook will corrode, or new tissue will surround the hook. Attempting to dig out a deep hook often results in a mortally wounded fish. One study has shown that more than 67% of fish survive with the hook left in place, whereas only 11% of fish survived after having a deep set hook removed.

## DON'T EXHAUST THE FISH

Fight your fish in with authority. Playing a fish for several minutes on a leader/tippet that's too light for the fight is likely to exhaust a fish past a point from which it can recover.

## WET YOUR HANDS

When it comes time to handle the fish, always get your hands wet. Dry hands are much more likely to remove a fish's layer of mucus or slime which protects the fish from infections caused by fungus, bacteria, and parasites.

## USE A NET

Landing nets provide one of the few reliable ways to release a fish without extensively handling and also allow you to land a fish more quickly. Try to use a dip net whenever possible, particularly a good quality catch and release net made of rubber mesh are less damaging to the fish.

## WATCH ITS HEAD

The fish at the end of your line relies on its eyes and gills to survive. A fish's head is fragile and needs to be protected. Head injuries are one of the leading cause of fish mortality after release.

## AVOID THE SHORE

Never land your catch by dragging it onto the rocks, beach or even grass along the shoreline. These environments are no place for a fish. Putting a fish on the shore virtually guarantees you're harming the fish in some way (e.g., disturbing the fish's protective mucus, keeping the fish out of the water too long, increasing risk of head and eye injuries). Keeping your catch wet increases the chances of survival.

## REVIVE IT PROPERLY

Face your fish upstream or into the current, and let it breathe normally. Do not try to drag your catch back and forth in the water in order to help it revive. This sort of action actually impedes the fish's ability to move water through the mouth and across the gills to obtain oxygen. Also, take care not to revive your fish in sediment-filled water. If you've disturbed the bottom, move into clean, clear water with a moderate flow and revive the fish there. Be patient and let the fishes behavior tell you when it is ready to swim away.

## WATCH THE TEMP

Many fish, Brook trout in particular, prefer cool to cold water and are in increased danger of stress and exhaustion as water temperatures increase and oxygen levels decrease. Pay attention as stream and air temperatures increase later in the season. Know your target species and how hot is too hot for the fish you're pursuing. Park biologists stop working on Brook trout when water temperatures reach 20°C.

# Fishing Zones Map



Cover photo by Eric Le Bel; Parks Canada

## Fish Consumption Advisory

Mercury has been detected in certain species of freshwater fish, prompting advisories to restrict consumption. Predatory fish such as Chain pickerel tend to accumulate higher levels of mercury. Scan the QR code to the right for the full advisory.



## Fishing at Kejimikujik

For more information about the fishing season at Kejimikujik, how and where to get a permit, park-specific fishing regulations, and all other fishing-related information, scan the QR code to the right!

