

Fish species in Lake Wanaka

The deep glacial lake of Lake Wanaka is New Zealand's fourth largest lake and the source of the Clutha River, the second longest river in the country and longest in the South Island. The lake has two main inflowing tributaries, the Matukituki and Makarora Rivers, and is home to three New Zealand native fish species (Koaro, Common Bully and Long Fin Eel) and three self-sustaining introduced fish species (Land-locked Chinook Salmon, Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout).

0 Adult length (cm) 10



Koaro *

Juveniles are one of the five whitebait species, identifiable from the other four species as long, tube-shaped and surprisingly good at climbing up rocks and waterfalls. They are classified as being "at risk" for extinction, with their population declining.

Average adult size shown: 8-10 cm; 5-10 g



Common bully *

Present throughout New Zealand, adult males make a nest, attract females to it and guard the hatchlings. They are well camouflaged fish who feed on small insects.

Average adult size shown: 5-7cm; 4-6 g



Long fin eel or Tuna

Before the introduction of trout and salmon, long fin eels were the biggest predators in Lake Wanaka. They can live up to 100 years in freshwater and head out to sea to spawn before dying. Due to habitat modification, their numbers are declining.

Average size caught: 100 cm; over 20 kg

0 Adult length (cm) 50



Chinook or Quinnat Salmon #

First introduced to Lake Wanaka in 1918 from California, Chinook Salmon spend their entire life in the lake, rather than going out to sea soon after they hatch. Adults only spawn (lay eggs) once in their lives, then die.

Average size caught: 35-40cm; 0.4-0.8kg; adult shown



Rainbow Trout %

Native to California and introduced to Lake Wanaka in the 1900's, Rainbow Trout live in the deeper waters of the lake, feeding mostly on small fish. They only live 4-5 years and inhabit warmer waters than brown trout, so are spread throughout New Zealand.

Average caught: 45-50 cm; 1.2-1.5kg; adult shown



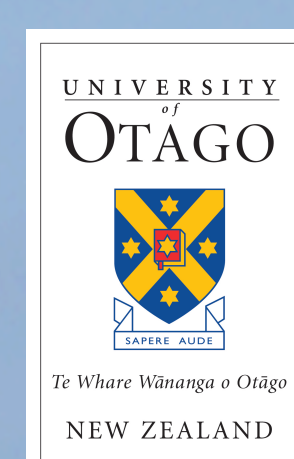
Brown Trout %

Native to Europe and introduced to Lake Wanaka in 1885, Brown Trout eat large insects and small fish. They are very shy, hiding if they see movement on the lakeside. Adults can live for 8-10 years and spawn (lay eggs) every year.

Average caught: 45-50cm; 1.2-1.5kg; adult shown



Catchments Otago



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* Photos courtesy of Stella McQueen
Photo courtesy of Fish and Game New Zealand
% Photos courtesy of Rachel Paterson
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