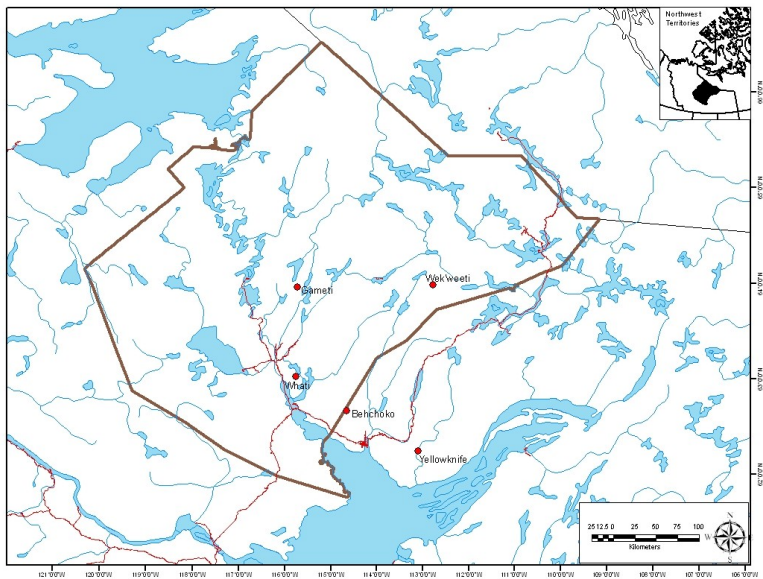


Common Fish in the Tłıchǫ Region



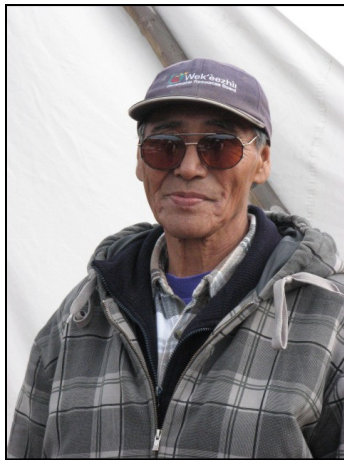


Tłıchǫ region

Cover photo: Lake Whitefish being made into split fish.

Dedication:

This Guide is dedicated to the memory of Harry Mantla, who wanted the stories and old ways to be remembered and used as a tool for living. Harry was a great trapper and harvester. He dedicated his time and shared his valuable knowledge of Tłıchǫ cultural traditions through stories and his experiences with all people. Harry was an outstanding individual that made a difference in the community by teaching the younger generations to keep Tłıchǫ traditions and values alive. The knowledge he shared will be used long into the future and we are thankful for that. We will miss his fun-loving way of being on the land and will always remember him in our prayers as a loving, kind, soft spoken person.



This Booklet is intended to list the fish species most commonly caught in the Tłıchq region of the Northwest Territories. It does not include all the species that could be encountered.

Thanks to Harry Apples, Adele Camille, Eddie Camille, Jonas Football, Nick Football, Robert Mackenzie, Harry Mantla, Elizabeth Michel, Dora Migwi , Bernadette Naskin, Elizabeth Rabesca, Celine Tatzia and Francis Williah, of Behchokò as well as Georgina Chocolate and Albertine Eyakfwo for their contributions to the Tłıchq names of fish. Thanks also to Rosa Mantla, Tammy Steinwand, Mary Seimens and Lucy Lafferty with Tłıchq Community Services Agency for their review and comment on this document.

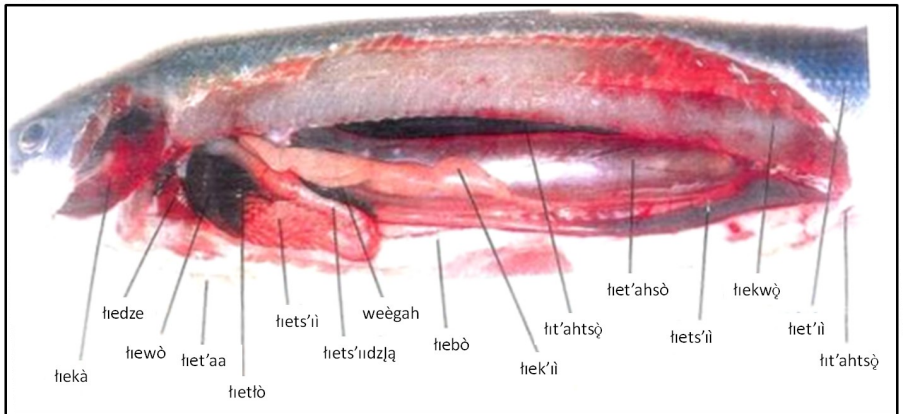
Thanks to Paul Vescei for his descriptions of the fish and his amazing photographs.

Photo Credits: Paul Vescei

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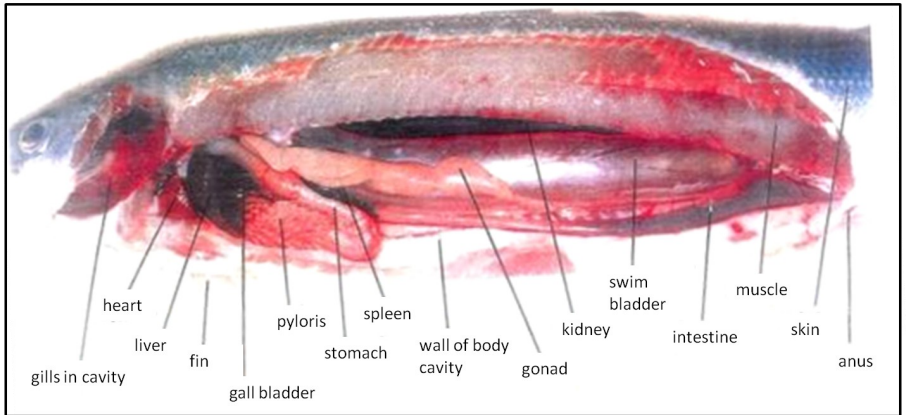
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Tłchq Fish Anatomy



NOTE: This figure shows generalized fish anatomy; there may be slight differences among species. The labels are Tłchq terms for Lake Whitefish anatomy.

English Fish Anatomy



NOTE: This figure shows generalized fish anatomy; there may be slight differences among species.



Nohkwèè - Burbot (Loche)

HABITAT: Deep, cold, clear waters with rock bottom. In winter, can be caught in shallow waters under the ice.

SIZE: 1-2 kg, rarely over 5 kg.

FOOD VALUE: A much appreciated food fish for most community members. Liver is consumed by Tł̨ch̨ people. The head of this fish is not eaten.



Wile - Inconnu (Coney)

HABITAT: Lives in shallow clear or turbid waters. Undertakes long spawning migrations into rivers in the fall .

SIZE: 3-8 kg common but may reach up to 20 kg.

FOOD VALUE: Generally much sought after as a food fish by Tłıchǫ people. It is often shared among communities.



Łiwezqò - Lake Trout

HABITAT: Lives in deep, cold waters over rock bottom but may be captured in shallow water in winter through the ice.

SIZE: 2-4 kg common but may reach 15-25 kg in the NWT.

FOOD VALUE: Valued as a food fish by the community. It can be made into split fish and smoked for future cooking over the fire, boiled or fried.



Jhdaa - Northern Pike (Jackfish)

HABITAT: Lives in shallow weedy waters. Avoids deeper cold parts of lakes.

SIZE: 2-4 kg common but often seen in the 7-12 kg range in the NWT.

FOOD VALUE: Tłıchǫ people enjoy the rib-belly flap section and some favour fillets of this fish as well.



Ehts'èè / Ehch'èè– Walleye (Pickerel)

HABITAT: Lives in shallow waters over rock bottom but often in association with weed-beds.

SIZE: 1-2 kg common, rarely over 3 kg in the NWT.

FOOD VALUE: Valued by the community and as a commercial species . Favored by many. The head of this fish is not eaten .



Łìh - Lake Whitefish

HABITAT: Lives in almost all aquatic habitats in the Great Slave Lake region. Most common in cold, clear deep waters with rock bottom.

SIZE: 1-2 kg common but may reach 5-6 kg.

FOOD VALUE: Lake Whitefish is the most important food fish for Tłıchǫ people. The eggs, “pipe”, and łiets’ìi or pyloris are delicacies. It can be cooked fresh or dried.



Łihtsoa - Lake Ciscoe

HABITAT: Deep, cold, clear waters with rock bottom. A small “dwarf” form is encountered in the North Arm and inland lakes of the Tłıchǫ region.

SIZE: Under 1 kg.

FOOD VALUE: If caught, sometimes used as bait for trap lines.



Dehdoo - Longnose Sucker

HABITAT: Prefers cold, clear deep waters with rock bottom.

SIZE: 1-2 kg, rarely 3 kg.

FOOD VALUE: Not targeted as a food fish but often cooked on an open fire if caught. The tail is not eaten.



Kwìezhìi - White Sucker

HABITAT: Common in shallow, warm bays .

SIZE: 1-2 kg, rarely 3 kg.

FOOD VALUE: Favoured by many Tłıchǫ people. The body and head is split open and cooked over an open fire. The tail is not eaten.



Dahts'a - Ninespine Stickleback

HABITAT: Shallow weedy bays and shoreline areas.

SIZE: Very small (5 cm).

FOOD VALUE: Typically not eaten.



Dahts'a - Spottail Shiner

HABITAT: Shallow weedy bays and shoreline areas.

SIZE: Very small (5 cm).

FOOD VALUE: Typically not eaten.

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