This field guide will help you to identify all species of salmon, whitefish, and sheefish present in Alaska. Species accounts include English and some Alaska Native names, descriptions, color photos, ranges, and more!

**CHUM SALMON**
*Dog*

**Description:** Metallic greenish-gray back; yellowish-silver sides; no distinct spots; fine black speckles in ocean bright phase; olive green and purple bars on sides with white edges on fins when spawning; hooked nose when spawning.

**Range:** Southeast Alaska to Point Hope; most abundant July through September in marine waters, and through October in fresh waters.

**Length:** 24 to 32 inches.

**COHO SALMON**
*Silver or hooknose*

**Description:** Greenish-blue back; silvery sides; small black spots along back, dorsal fin, and upper lobe of tail; broad tail base with silver radiating into tail; greenish-black heads and brown to maroon bodies; hooked nose when spawning.

**Range:** Southeast Alaska to Point Hope; most abundant July through September in marine waters, and through October in fresh waters.

**Length:** 24 to 38 inches.

**CHINOOK SALMON**
*King*

**Description:** Blue-grey back; silvery sides; small black spots along back, dorsal fin, and tail; maroon to olive brown when spawning.

**Range:** Southeast Alaska to the Yukon River; most abundant May through August in marine and fresh waters.

**Length:** 30 to 55 inches.

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“Out of all subsistence animals and everything that we take to eat, the one thing that is called ‘The Food’ is the fish. It’s the staple you know, the backbone of everything.”

Evelyn Thomas, Crooked Creek
HUMBACK WHITEFISH

**Description:** Small head; wide body from stomach to backbone; silver-colored with large scales.

**Range:** All drainages north of the Alaska Range; Copper and Susitna rivers; Bristol Bay drainages.

**Length:** Up to 22 inches.

LEAST CISCO

**Description:** Slender and herring-like; lower jaw projects beyond the upper; adults brown to olive green above and silvery below.

**Range:** North of the Alaska Range; south to the Bristol Bay drainage.

**Length:** Up to 14 inches.

SHEEFISH

**Inconnu**

**Description:** Strong extended lower jaw; streamlined silvery body; darker colored back; often displays a phosphorescent purple sheen when taken from the water.

**Range:** Wide distribution; most abundant in the Yukon and Kuskokwim river drainages and in Selawik and Kobuk drainages of Kotzebue Sound.

**Length:** 16 to 30 inches.

BERING CISCO

**Description:** Distinguishable from the least cisco by smaller eyes and scales, more silver color, white pectoral and pelvic fins, mouth at the tip of the body.

**Range:** Bering Sea drainages of the Seward Peninsula; Cook Inlet; Norton Sound; Yukon, Kuskokwim, and Susitna rivers.

**Length:** 17 inches.

PINK SALMON

**Humpback**

**Description:** Blue back; silvery sides; large spots on back; oval blotches on tail lobes; and small scales. Dull grey back, creamy white belly when spawning; males also develop large, humped backs.

**Range:** Throughout the North Pacific, returning to Alaska from late June through mid-August.

**Length:** 15 to 24 inches.

BROAD WHITEFISH

**Description:** Silver-colored with large scales; can be distinguished from humpback whitefish by its size, deeper head, shorter gillrakers, and short, blunt snout.

**Range:** Yukon and Kuskokwim drainages; nearshore waters of the Bering and Chukchi seas; Arctic Ocean drainages.

**Length:** 16 inches.

SOCKEYE SALMON

**Red**

**Description:** Dark blue-black; silvery sides; may have fine pepper-like speckling; relatively large eyes; brilliant dark red when spawning.

**Range:** Throughout the North Pacific and Arctic oceans; abundant from late June to early August, but timing may vary greatly in certain areas.

**Length:** 18 to 24 inches.

ROUND WHITEFISH

**Description:** Rounded cigar-shaped body with tiny, pointed snout and single nasal flap; upper jaw extends over the lower so the mouth is below.

**Range:** Throughout most of Alaska.

**Length:** Up to 16 inches.

BERING CISCO

**Description:** Taasiza, Aanaakliq, Qaurtuq, Ch’ootsik, Qaalgiq, Neeghan

**Range:** Bering Sea drainages of the Seward Peninsula; Cook Inlet; Norton Sound; Yukon, Kuskokwim, and Susitna rivers.

**Length:** 15 to 24 inches.

PINK SALMON

**Red**

**Description:** Terteq, Cuqpeq, Pikuktuuq, Amaqtuq, Neeghan, Holaahga

**Range:** Throughout the North Pacific, returning to Alaska from late June through mid-August.

**Length:** 15 to 24 inches.

SOCKEYE SALMON

**Red**

**Description:** Dark blue-black; silvery sides; may have fine pepper-like speckling; relatively large eyes; brilliant dark red when spawning.

**Range:** Throughout the North Pacific and Arctic oceans; abundant from late June to early August, but timing may vary greatly in certain areas.

**Length:** 18 to 24 inches.