

LARGEMOUTH BASS

(Micropterus salmoides)

**Oneida Lake Status:
Abundant**

- Largest member of the sunfish family
- Favorite Oneida Lake diet is yellow perch
- Rising populations in Oneida Lake

The largemouth bass is the largest member of the sunfish family. It can be identified by a wide black band running lengthwise down its side (see drawings), and by a body color that is darker green than that of the smallmouth bass. Additionally, the mouth of the largemouth bass extends beyond the rear edge of the eye, as seen below. In Oneida Lake, largemouth bass can grow to 26 inches in length and may weigh up to 7 pounds.

Largemouth bass prefer warm, shallow, well-vegetated areas, and can be found close to shore or around weedy shoals in Oneida Lake. They tend to live alone, and individuals may be found around submerged cover such as stumps, logs, or dock pilings.

Over the past 20 years, elevated water temperatures in Oneida Lake have allowed largemouth bass to produce more offspring and cause the young to grow faster. Additionally, clearer lake water caused by the influx of zebra mussels has led to an increase in the near-shore vegetation that provides vital nursery habitat for the young.

Largemouth bass are popular game fish in central New York, and angling tournaments are held on Oneida Lake each year. Though they will fight less than smallmouth bass, largemouth bass fishing can be just as exciting.



*Largemouth bass splashing around:
<http://www.duiops.net/seresvivos/galeria/peces/Largemouth%20Bass%20Splashing%20in%20the%20Reeds.jpg>*



The Cornell Field Station at Shackelton Point frequently conducts outreach programs throughout the community

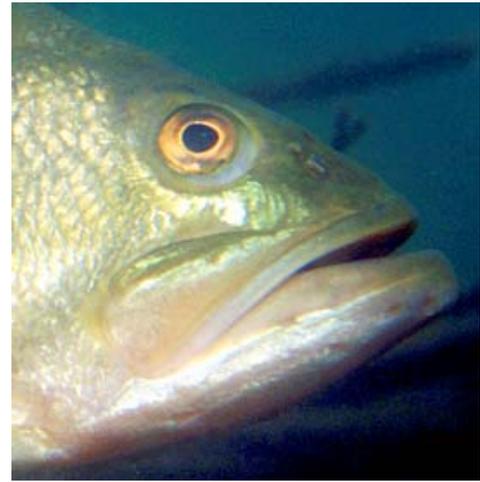


Line drawing of largemouth bass showing defining characteristics

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The mouth of the largemouth bass extends past the rear edge of the eye