

Fish Habitat Factsheet #7

Habitat Comparison of Walleye, Northern Pike & Musky

A side-by-side comparison of the habitats of three key sportfish follows.

	WALLEYE HABITAT	NORTHERN PIKE HABITAT	MUSKY HABITAT
Adults/ Juveniles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near bottom w/hard substrate, suspended off-bottom near drop-offs <30 ft deep Prefers yearly water temp range of low 30s-high 60s°F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near vegetation in slow flowing weedy edges in bays & channels; off-bottom areas of lake/river shorelines <30 ft deep substrate Prefers yearly water temp range of 40-low70s°F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weedy edges of shoals & drop-offs w/moderate currents >30 ft deep Prefers yearly water temp range of 40-70°F
Spawning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cobble and gravel areas of streams and river mouths, windswept reef & shoal areas in lakes <4 ft deep Temp 42-52°F Low water currents, protected from high stream flows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearshore zones of flooded weedy areas of wetlands marshes & meadows, weedy areas of shoals & backwaters <3 ft deep Temp 44-56°F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submerged nearshore weedy areas or on woody debris on sandy bottom areas of bays <5 ft deep Temp 47-66°F
Eggs/ Larvae	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spaces between rocks/gravel Temp 40-low 50s°F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Along vegetated edges of creeks on dead/growing vegetation in spawning areas above sediments Temp high 40s-high 60s°F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On vegetation beds in spawning areas above bottom Temp mid-50s-high 60s°F
Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downstream from spawning sites w/vegetation or cover in large bays & tributaries <16 ft deep Temp low-high 70°F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Densely vegetated shallow areas downstream or in bays adjacent to spawning habitat <16 ft Temp 74-84°F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas adjacent to spawning habitats w/submerged weed beds, shallow bays <4 ft Temp 74-84°F

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