

COMMON CARP

(*Cyprinus carpio*)

Oneida Lake Status:
Common



Common carp drawing
Duane Raver, US Fish & Wildlife Service

- Present in Oneida Lake since the early 1900s
- Large, bottom-feeding fish
- Introduced from Asia as a food source

The largest members of the minnow family, carp can grow to 30 inches long and may weigh as much as 60 pounds. They may appear silvery or grey when young but darken with age to an olive, bronze, or brown color with a yellowish underside (photos top and middle left). Carp have two whiskers on each side of their downturned mouths. They are primarily bottom feeders and eat plants, snails, worms, insects, and algae.

Common carp were brought to New York as a food fish, and in 1831, escaped to the Hudson River from a private pond in Newburgh. Carp were probably stocked in Oneida Lake sometime after 1879.



Bill Byrne
MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

With its shallow embayments and abundant plants, the lake provides excellent habitat for these fish. They are currently the largest non-native fish by weight in the lake. Carp are a very popular sportfish in Europe, putting up a good fight when hooked.

Two more non-native species of carp are at risk of invading the Great Lakes. The bighead and silver carp (photos at left) present in the Mississippi drainage, are found below an electric barrier on a canal connected to Lake Michigan. These fish are voracious consumers of zooplankton and could have severe impacts in waters to which they gain access.



A large Oneida Lake carp

Bighead and Silver Carp WATCH



Bighead and silver carp

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