

Hucho perryi (Brevoort)

"itô"

D 10-12; A 9-13; P₁ 14-15; LL 109-121; GR 15-19;
V about 57

The genus *Hucho* has morphologically primitive characters in the family Salmonidae and is closely related to the genus *Salvelinus*, but differs from the latter by the flat dorsal surface of its head, the extremely large mouth, and the coloration. *H. perryi* is the biggest species of the Japanese trout; a fish more than 2 m TL has been recorded, but recently even fishes over 1 m are rare. Usually inhabits lower and middle reaches of rivers or lakes. Sea-run form is found in the eastern coast of Hokkaido where considerable numbers of this fish are caught from brackish or coastal areas. Completely carnivorous; young feed mainly on aquatic insects, while fishes more than 30 cm are piscivorous and sometimes attack frogs or rats. Spawn in spring. Mature fish with pinkish nuptial color on side of body (deeper pink in male) go upstream in pairs to a river branch, where the female lays 2000 to 10000 eggs on sandy and gravelly bottom. Eggs hatch out in 37 to 40 days at 8°C. Six or 7 parr-marks are distinct in the juvenile, but disappear after the young attains 15 cm SL. Grows slowly; attains 13 cm in 2 years, 30 cm in 5 years, and 50 cm in 8 years. The minimum mature size recorded in the Kushiro River is 45 cm SL (6 to 7 years old) in males and 55 cm SL (8 to 9 years old) in females. Not so important commercially, but very important species zoogeographically. Appreciated highly by anglers for size. Meat tasty. Artificial propagation of this trout has been successful experimentally. Distributed from Hokkaido northward to Sakhalin, the southern part of the Kuril Islands and Primorskii Krai. (C. Araga)

Photo by H. Masuda