

## ARCTIC GRAYLING *THYMALLUS ARCTICUS*

BY: TOM EITNIEAR



### Taxonomy

Class: Actinopterygii

Order: Salmoniformes (Salmon, Char, Trout, Whitefish and Graylings)

Family: Salmonidae: (Salmon, Char, Trout, Whitefish and Graylings)

Sub-Family: Thymallinae (Grayling)

Genus: Thymallus (Grayling)

Species: *T. arcticus* (Arctic Grayling)

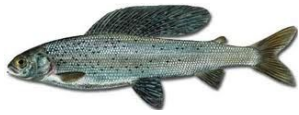
### Identification

- Forked tail.
- 0 Dorsal spines, 17-25 soft dorsal rays on a flag like dorsal fin
- 0 Anal spines, 11-15 soft anal rays.
- Small mouth with small teeth on maxillae, premaxillae and dentaries.
- Pelvic fins long, reach adipose fin when depressed in males.
- The dorsal surface is dark purple, or blue black to blue gray, the sides gray to dark blue with pinkish iridescence, the ventral surface gray to white
- Scattered dark spots on sides, mostly on young, a dark stripe along lower sides between pectoral and pelvic fins, dorsal fin dark with narrow purple edge.



### Similar fish

*Thymallus thymallus*: Grayling- Has 5-8 dorsal spines, 12-17 soft dorsal rays, 3-4 anal spines, 9-10 soft anal rays. Caudle fin has 19-21 rays.



*Arctic Grayling*



*Grayling*

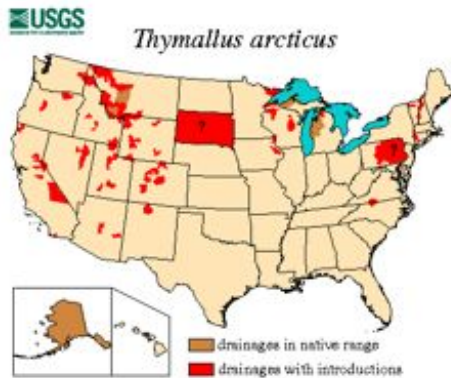
#### Habitat and Diet

- Freshwater.
- Open water, cold rivers and lakes.
- Requires high oxygen concentrations.
- Schools.
- Enters rocky streams to spawn.
- Young feed on zooplankton, adults feed on surface insects, as well as fish, fish eggs, lemmings, and planktonic crustaceans.

#### Breeding

- Spawn at age 4-5.
- Spawns in rocky streams.
- Spawns in montane streams with heavy current on shallows with rock-gravel bottom .

#### Distribution



Native to drainages of the Arctic Ocean, Hudson Bay and Northern Pacific Ocean in North America and Asia.

#### Status

- Game fish that is also used for food.
- Two distinct native populations in United States, in Michigan and Montana.
- Michigan population now extinct due to warming waters, logging industry and overfishing.
- Is on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List for its endangerment as a species.
- Possibly re-introduced in Michigan?
- Michigan Technological University and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians are working towards the re-introduce Arctic Grayling into the Big Manistee River.