



### **77. PERCH / FLUSSBARSCH (*Perca fluviatilis*)**

**IDENTIFICATION:** The European perch is similar to the yellow perch. The body is somewhat compressed and moderately elongated; the posterior section is tapered, and the back slightly humped between the head and the dorsal fin. The gill covers point toward the rear. The upper part of the head is smooth and scaleless; the rest of the body is covered with small, tough scales. The perch has two dorsal fins a long anterior and a short posterior fin. The first dorsal fin has a black blotch on the rear edge. The back is greenish-yellow; the belly white. The flanks have six to nine dark vertical streaks. The dorsal fins are grayish-black and the ventral fins are reddish.

**HABITAT:** Perch are common to most bodies of water. They inhabit streams and ponds, are found in cold and warm waters, and often live in brackish waters, where they thrive and grow quite large. Slow flowing rivers, deep lakes, and ponds suit them best.

**FOOD:**

- (1) **Diet:** Young perch feed on small aquatic animals and become more predatory with age.
- (2) **Value:** Perch flesh is sweet and delicious, but difficult to clean because of the spiny fins and gill covers.

**SPAWNING:** Perch spawn from March to June. The female releases 10,000 to 300,000 eggs in a ribbon like string over water plants. One or more males accompanying the female fertilize the eggs.

**GENERAL:** The perch is one of the easiest fish to catch. Minnows and worms are considered the best bait. Perch feed all winter and are often the most sought after fish during the time.