

Mysterious fish in Chippewa Lake

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Recently I have received calls and pictures of “mysterious fish” near the shore in Chippewa Lake. These fish are large (18-24”) and move in schools of 6-10 fish right up to the shoreline. These fish move fast and can make the water “boil”.

The fact is that these fish are not anything new in fact they are called Common Carp. Why the sightings are unusual is that in the spring and early summer they can be seen in unusual places during their spawning time. A female can travel miles depositing hundreds of thousands of eggs and usually is followed closely by numerous males that fertilize the eggs.

This activity should end soon and the Carp will return to their normal environment (probably the marshier areas) of the lake until next year.

Common carp are found in all contiguous 48 states and although it is considered a native it was in fact imported to the U.S. from Europe in the 1800’s as a food source however most American’s never developed a taste for these boney bottom feeders. Common Carp can live 20 years in the wild, grow to 36” long and thrive in almost all types of waters.

An average female carp can lay 300,000 eggs in a single spawn. However, most will die before they reach adulthood. Bluegills feed on Carp eggs and drastically cutdown on the survival rate.

Large numbers of Common Carp can do damage to a lake. They are notorious for uprooting plants, disturbing soil and disturbing nests of other species which make it harder for other species to survive.

Chippewa Lake doesn’t seem to have an overabundance of Carp which is why the recent sightings brought on so much attention.

Carp in Chippewa Lake

