

Cisco (*Coregonus artedii*)

Do they have any other names?

Other names for cisco are lake herring, northern cisco, and chub.

Why are they called cisco?

Cisco comes from a French name used for this fish. *Coregonus* is Greek for “angle eye” and *artedii* is named after a Swedish naturalist.

What do they look like?

The cisco is a slender, slab-sided fish. Cisco are grey-bluish on the top and silvery on the bottom with unpigmented fins. The lower jaw of the cisco protrudes slightly and the tail is forked.



Photo Credit: Ellen Edmonson and Hugh Chrisp,
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Where do they live in Indiana?

Cisco are found in the Great Lakes.

What kind of habitat do they need?

Cisco are usually found in cold, deep waters of lakes and even some rivers. However in the fall when the temperatures are cooler they will come to shallower waters.

How do they reproduce?

Spawning groups begin to gather in late fall and they spawn in shallow water over gravel or stony bottoms. No parental care is given to the eggs and the eggs hatch the next spring.

How long do they live?

Cisco can live up to 13 years but generally only live around 8 years.

How fast do they grow in Indiana?

Cisco can be up to 8 inches long within the first year and can reach lengths of 16 inches or more.

What do they eat?

Cisco are schooling fish that swim around searching for plankton and small crustaceans to eat. They will also occasionally eat small fish.

What eats them?

Cisco are eaten by many other types of fish like trout, salmon, pike, perch, and other large game fish. The introduction of non-native species like the sea lamprey and pacific salmon has also decreased the cisco populations in the Great Lakes.

Are they safe to eat?

Cisco are edible, however all fish have some risk associated when being consumed. To check the consumption advisory go to www.in.gov/isdh/23650.htm.

How do I fish for them?

Cisco are often caught in the fall by using flies and small minnows.

How is Indiana managing cisco?

Cisco are native to the Great Lakes and are not stocked by the state. However, they are a species of special concern and are monitored closely by the state to determine the health and success of the populations.