

2023 Lake Ontario Creel Survey Summary Report: Another Great Year of Fishing on Lake Ontario!

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Lake Ontario Fisheries

The Lake Ontario creel survey recently wrapped up another lake season and preliminary results indicate:

- Excellent Chinook salmon fishing in 2023. Angler catch rates for Chinook during the 2023 fishing season were the second highest in the 37-year survey and 40% above the 10-year average.
- Relatively smaller kings compared to the long-term average but still running about 18.4 pounds for an age-3 fish.
- Higher catches of Atlantic salmon across all areas. Although still relatively rare, catches of this native species are on the rise with catch rates 82% above the 10-year average in 2023.
- Decent brown trout fishing. West area anglers targeting browns struggled a bit in the spring and larger browns were reportedly harder to come by across all areas, but the “cookie-cutter” 2 to 4 pound browns were plentiful in the east and east central areas, and lake-wide seasonal catch rates placed 8% above the 10-year average.
- Below average catch rates for steelhead and lake trout. Catch rates for these species may have been affected in 2023 because they are targeted less when Chinook fishing is good. Lake trout abundance may also be down due to the record high numbers of parasitic lamprey observed in 2022. Fortunately, lamprey numbers have come down in 2023.

More details can be found in the survey’s monthly reports posted on the [Lake Ontario Fisheries Management and Research page](#), and the full survey report will be available in early 2024. The Lake Ontario creel survey continues in the tributaries from now until next spring so be on the lookout for NYDEC creel agents and reports in the coming months.

