

Rainbow Smelt

Osmerus mordax



**Cleveland
Metroparks®**



ADULT SIZE

Typically 4-8 inches, but occasionally can grow to 12 inches.

TYPICAL FOODS

Rainbow smelt prey on small fish, zooplankton and insect larvae.

FISHING TIP

Smelt can occasionally be found in nearshore Lake Erie harbors in winter where they can be caught on a small hook and single maggot, and are also occasionally caught on small minnows by perch anglers in fall and spring, but most smelt stay in the deeper waters of eastern Lake Erie. Smelt are an important prey fish in the lake, and can be eaten by humans as well.

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