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|  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Columbia Lake Stewardship Society** | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **https://gallery.mailchimp.com/3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0/images/a375e234-c84d-4cda-b2f3-e93b160eeb99.jpg** | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Questions about Pikeminnows in Columbia Lake**  A Columbia Lake resident recently asked the Columbia Lake Stewardship Society (CLSS) about pikeminnows and the perceived threat to sportsfish such as trout, from the pikeminow. Internet research (Wikipedia), as well as discussions with local groups revealed the following:   The **northern pikeminnow** is a large member of the [minnow](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=8cbda43f6c&e=f238898723) family, and until recently were commonly known as squawfish. They can live longer than 15 years, reaching over 24  inches and eight pounds. A mature female can lay 30,000 eggs annually. Pikeminnow are voracious predators, and in the [Columbia](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=917044bd18&e=f238898723) and [Snake Rivers](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=fd524bde44&e=f238898723), [salmon](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=c5c4f6ed84&e=f238898723) [smolts](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=fc010b6560&e=f238898723) comprise a large part of their diets. Their populations have flourished with the development of the Columbia River hydropower system. The reservoirs have provided excellent habitat for pikeminnow and given them an advantage over depressed [salmon](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=20c354f64f&e=f238898723) and [steelhead](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=c9a3704270&e=f238898723) populations. While historically pikeminnow have not been of interest commercially nor to sport anglers, Washington and Oregon state fisheries agencies and the [Bonneville Power Administration](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=30fa298470&e=f238898723) have placed a [bounty](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=9ef12aa0c9&e=f238898723) on them to reduce predation on scarce salmon stocks.  The CLSS contacted the Canal Flats Wilderness club, the Windermere Rod and Gun Club and the BC Government, Fish and Wildlife department to gain more information. Input from these sources confirmed that the northern pikeminnow is native to Columbia Lake and as such has a place in the natural system. One source cited poor decisions and management of traditional game fish as the reason for apparent game fish decline. A Fisheries Biologist also confirmed that the Province does not control native species, and has not for over thirty years.  It is interesting to note the difference in management practices related to the pikeminnow on either side of the border!   Please continue to contact us with any concerns or questions related to Columbia Lake. If we don’t have the answer, we’ll try to help you find it. Our email is ColumbiaLakeSS@shaw.ca  You can learn more about Columbia Lake and the work of Columbia Lake Stewardship Society at our website: [www.ColumbiaLakeSS.com](https://website.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3c4938ac72120df11b59d2db0&id=9aac0a0d32&e=f238898723) | | | |