

Pike Anglers Club of Great Britain



Fanciful Tales & Mythbusting

Such is the appearance of the pike that it has inspired the romantic story teller for generations. There have been many stories told about the pike making exaggerated claims for its voracity and longevity. This is a tradition which continues to this very day in some quarters!

Old writers tell of a pike taken from a lake near Mannheim in Wurttemberg in 1497. This 'Emperor's Pike' weighed 350lb and measured an incredible 19ft. When caught it was found to have an inscribed copper ring attached to one of its gill covers. The inscription indicated that Emperor Frederick II had planted this fish in the lake in the year 1230 - 267 years before its capture! This story was given credence for many years by the existence of a large pike skeleton in Mannheim cathedral. Eventually a naturalist found that the backbone of this skeleton had 'acquired' a considerable number of extra vertebrae and the great pike became yet another debunked myth.

While there is no doubting the ability of pike to swallow large or unusual food items (small ducks, other waterfowl and rats are well documented as having been ingested by pike) there is little credence to be given to tales of pike taking hold of a horse's muzzle as it drinks and dragging the unfortunate animal to a watery death! Small dogs being consumed, in whole or in part, are equally unlikely events which can almost certainly be discounted.

Mythbusting

The internet seems to be creating pike myths at a greater rate than ever before in history. Photographs of big pike appear with scanty details accompanying them resulting in wild speculation. Sometimes photographs of big pike are captioned incorrectly, sometimes accidentally, sometimes with the intention to deceive. The PAC has a number of piking sleuths within its ranks who have successfully exposed the truth of some of these myths.

The most widely spread myth concerns the two photos below which have appeared on many pike and musky forums around the world, frequently being passed off as the same fish and caught variously in Canada or the USA. In fact they even made it to the cover of the Angling Times - when most savvy pikers already knew the truth!

This fish (Right), has been variously claimed to have come from a lake in America and the Baltic. It has also been linked to a story of a large 40lbs-plus pike which was landed after it grabbed a smaller fish on the way in as shown in the left hand picture. It's even been posted on the Anglers Mail as a capture by an angler from a Scottish Loch with the captor's head photo-shopped onto it.



In fact the pike on the right was caught in Holland by Ewout Blom. The PAC secured Ewout's story for issue 117 of *Pikelines*. You can now read extracts from that story, and find out exactly how large the fish was on the PDF article *Monster Snoek* on the Tips & Articles page of this site!

An earlier myth that did the internet rounds concerned a pike reportedly caught through the ice in Manitoba, Canada. The myth in this instance was the length of the pike. A 70 inch pike would be an incredible fish! The pike is clearly being held well forward, making judgement of its true length all but impossible.

Posted Free by Hunting-Pictures.com

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They ate Manitoba's biggest pike

Fisherman caught food for family

NADIA MOHARIB
Staff Reporter

It was probably the biggest northern pike ever caught in Manitoba.

And they ate the evidence. The estimated 70-inch fish was caught in Cedar Lake by a resident of Easterville, a small aboriginal community about 100 kilometres southeast of The Pas.

News of the catch surfaced when a photo was dropped off at the office of Doug Leroux, Natural Resources regional fisheries manager in The Pas.

"This is the biggest one I've ever seen," Leroux said. "Anything over 40 inches is a good size. The current Manitoba angling record is 59 inches. This surpasses that by a good 10 inches."

He estimated the length of the fish by computer-scanning the image and using a 2X4 foot brace on a bookshelf in the photo's background for comparison.



■ The estimated 70-inch northern pike was caught in Cedar Lake by a resident of Easterville.

The size was later verified by co-workers who digitally enhanced the picture.

The impressive catch has led fishing enthusiasts from U.S. sports magazines and as far away as England to contact Leroux's office.

"They just want to know if the story is true. We've seen the picture and we believe it to be true."

But there's not much of a fish story to tell, at this point. Leroux has tried in vain to contact the fisherman for details of the capture. He doesn't even know if it was caught this past winter or the year before.

From what Leroux understands, the fisherman was simply out to stock the family fridge when he made the catch.

"He was fishing for food for his family and from what I understand, gave it to his grandmother. It would definitely feed a family for a while."

Landing a record-setter can command thousands of dollars from fishing lodges wanting it for their walls.

The Manitoba record for northern pike is 42.42 pounds, set in 1977. The Cedar Lake catch is estimated to have weighed more than 50 pounds.

