



A Place of History

In operation since 1902, the hatchery has had a central role in maintaining the economic and cultural heritage of sportfishing in Nova Scotia.

The facility was run as part of the federal fish hatchery system until 1996, when operation was assumed by dedicated members of the local community—the Aquatic Development Association of Margaree (ADAM), who ran the hatchery until the province took it over in 2008.

Today the raceways and ponds of this provincial hatchery are home to 200,000 salmon and 100,000 trout. Every year, these fish are re-released into the Margaree-Lake Ainslie watershed during the fall and spring.



The **Margaree Hatchery** is one of three provincial facilities—along with Fraser’s Mills Fish Hatchery in Antigonish County, and McGowan Lake Fish Hatchery in Queens County—helping to maintain healthy waterways and abundant angling opportunities in Nova Scotia.



Margaree Fish Hatchery



Margaree Fish Hatchery

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Hatchery Operation

It all starts with Fall brood-stock collection. Using seine nets, wild salmon (females for eggs, and an equal number of males for milt) are gathered from the Margaree River.



By fall, the small fish are called **fingerlings**, or **parr**, and are reared in long raceways or circular tanks until they reach 15 cm, usually by October.

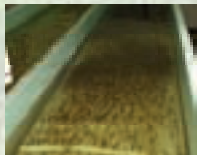
Fall fingerlings are ready to be released during the Fall Stocking program.



Eggs are fertilized in early November and incubated over the winter until they hatch in mid-March.



Alevins nourish themselves on their attached yolk sac for 4 to 6 weeks.



When the yolk sac is gone, the **fry** are kept in troughs and fed. At 4 cm in length, they are moved outdoors to grow in ponds and raceways over the summer.

By spring, salmon **smolts** can be as long as 25 cm, ready to head straight to the ocean after Spring Stocking—hopefully to return later as adults.

A selection of **adult** trout are kept at the hatchery for two years to supply eggs for the hatchery program. A female adult produces approximately 2,000 eggs for every kilogram of body weight!

A large male salmon. Note the “kype”, or hooked jaw.



*Did you know?
Angling is an important part of Nova Scotia's heritage: approximately 100,000 Nova Scotians enjoy sportfishing as a healthy outdoor recreational activity.*



The Hatchery Pool, Margaree

Visitors can watch wild Atlantic salmon holding in the Hatchery Pool of the Margaree River, as an underwater camera broadcasts live to the Visitors' Center!

