



64. BREAM / BRACHSE / BRASSEN (*Abramis brama*)

IDENTIFICATION: The body of the bream is strongly compressed and the head joins the back at a very obtuse angle. This shape enables the fish to move easily through extensive weed beds and other heavy underwater growth. The tail is forked deeply. The back is dark brown to black, sometimes with a green tinge, fading to a grayish-white belly. The dorsal, anal, and tail fins are dark gray; the pectoral and pelvic fins are light gray. It has an inferior mouth and eye diameter smaller than the length of its snout.

HABITAT: Bream belong to the cyprinid family and are abundant in still or sluggish fresh waters. The fish is so common in the sluggish regions of major streams that these areas are called the bream regions. They also inhabit canals and lakes with extensive muddy shallows.

FOOD:

Diet: Bream feed on insects, larvae, small mollusks, plankton, worms and snails.

Value: The meat of large specimens is tasty and can be compared to carp. Fishermen value bream greatly because they congregate in large schools and because unlimited numbers of permits are available for bream fishing waters.

SPAWNING: Bream spawn from May to July. The female produces 100.000 to 300.000 sticky eggs and drapes them on weeds. Bream mate by rolling and splashing in very shallow water, often barely deep enough to cover their backs.