

*Salvelinus fontinalis*. In the report of the Pennsylvania State Commissioners of Fisheries (1895, p. 221,) reference is made to this instance of mis-naming, and the following remarks put the matter so appropriately that I quote the paragraph verbatim:—As recently determined the beautiful brook-trout of our waters is not a true salmon but a charr, a circumstance which need not cause the angler or the lover of this attractive fish any sorrow, since all the members of this group of salmonoids are noted not only for their beauty and grace but their game qualities. No truer words were ever spoken than those uttered by an eminent ichthyologist when he declared that 'no higher praise can be given to a salmonoid than to call it a charr.' It came by the name of trout through the Pilgrim fathers who, when they first saw it in New England, mistook it for the same fish they knew in their own Devonshire streams. Had they come from the north of England or from Scotland and been more observing, the error in all likelihood would have never been made. But brook trout or speckled trout or charr, or whatever name may be applied to the fish, it needs no description. There are few anglers who are not well acquainted with this most beautiful and graceful of fishes. It is more eagerly sought for and by the majority of fresh water sportsmen in the east prized more than any other member of the finny tribe, while epicures regard its flesh as unsurpassed for delicacy and richness of flavour. Unquestionably, the pure cold water and the usually picturesque character of the streams in which the brook trout live has something to do with making this fish a general favourite among sportsmen.

Amongst many evils, which result from a lack of uniformity in the use of popular names, are the errors which inevitably appear in statistical records and comparative tables. Unless the precise application of any particular name frequently used indifferently for several fishes, be first ascertained, the information afforded by official reports may be most misleading. Familiar names like trout, salmon, smelt, herring, and pike, are used with utter carelessness, and so grossly misapplied that it is difficult to understand how any intelligent community can continue, year after year, to keep in circulation names so utterly inappropriate to many of the fishes upon which they have been imposed.

As an example of the erratic use of popular names even in official publications, I may instance the case of a very valuable, and sumptuously illustrated report of a Game and Fish Association on this continent, in which I find that the pike-perch, doré, or wall-eyed pike, is repeatedly called 'Susquehanna Salmon.' It is so called in the table of spawning seasons given in the book; but in the text, only a few lines lower down on the same page, the fish is referred to as the wall-eyed pike, whereas in the body of the report the same fish is several times mentioned as the pike-perch. This last named term is the most appropriate and most descriptive, and has been in common use for a century or two at least in European countries. This instance will illustrate the confused state of mind—not to say of nomenclature, which leads to the use of three almost contradictory terms for one fish in the pages of the same report.

Similarly the weakfish or squeteague (*Cynoscion regalis*) in the southern states is called 'trout'. Indeed all the various species are thus erroneously named, as Professor Jordan says:—'All . . . are absurdly called "trout" in the southern States—a name also applied in the same regions to the black bass.'

The misnomers, innocently applied for old association's sake, are responsible for much confusion; but this has been enormously increased by the less defensible and erratic method, adopted by men who have applied names which, through ignorance, they imagine to be rightly applied. Numerous examples of this occur amongst fishes, but perhaps the most glaring instance is the case familiar to the hunter of the magnificent stag of the western hills and plains—the *Cercus canadensis* which was called elk by men who no doubt imagined, in pure ignorance, that it bore some resemblance of its size, and other features, to the elk of Europe. The European elk is really almost identical with the moose of North America. The late Professor Spencer Baird once wrote: 'It is somewhat unfortunate that the European name of this animal, the elk, should be applied here in America to an entirely different animal or deer. Much confusion has been produced in this way, and it becomes necessary to ascertain the nationality of an author before it is possible to know exactly what the word elk is intended to convey.' Nor is the name wapiti, generally supposed to be the Indian name for the great Canada stag, more accurate, for Mr. J. B. Tyrrell has recorded that the Indian