Found Externally

1. Fish popeyeed; scales puffed with fluid (dropsy). Bloody wounds; blood under scales.

2. Red pustule on or near base of fins; thread-like body may protrude from the wound.

3. Bloody area on body under the scales.

4. Tiny mobile white spots on the skin.

5. White or yellow cysts or sacs on gills or in mouth.

6. White pustules under skin or scales.

7. Patches of fuzzy grey-white mat on body and gills.

8. Grey-white slime on the skin.

9. Black spots under the skin or in the flesh.

10. Eye deformed; fish apparently blind.

Various Bacteria (such as Aeromonas sp.*). Commonly found in water, Aeromonas normally does not infect fish; unless they have undergone some stress. Fish with severe popeye or dropsy probably will not bite, but can be seen dead or distressed along the shore. In some cases, open bloody wounds can result from the bacterial infection. Edible, if wound is superficial; remove infected tissues and cook well. If popeye is indicated, destroy fish.

Anchor Worm (Lernaea sp.). This copepod buries only its anchor-shaped head into a fish's flesh. The remaining portion will hang free from the wound, where a red inflamed pustule may form. This parasite may drop off, leaving only the inflamed area. Edible. Removed inflamed area; clean and prepare as usual.

Fish Louse (Argulus sp.). This rarely seen copepod leaves a fish soon after it's removed from the water. It feeds on the blood by piercing the skin, destroying the protective mucous coat in the process. Thus, secondary infection from bacteria or fungus can result. Edible. Clean and prepare as usual.

Ich (Ichthyophthirius sp.). The most common protozoan encountered by fishermen. Ich appear as mobile white spots or clusters on the skin or gills. It burrows under the skin and may cause surface lesions. Individuals can be seen with a magnifying glass. Edible. Clean and prepare as usual.

A. (Ergasilus sp.). When numerous, these copepods can kill young fish. Their presence is indicated by V-shaped white egg sacs on the inner edges of the gills. Edible. Clean and prepare as usual.

B. (Achtheres sp.). Larger than Ergasilus, this copepod attaches itself in the mouth or to the inner surface of the gills. Achtheres has a short plump body with amniotic appendages that cling to the fish. Edible. Clean and prepare as usual.

C. Yellow Grub (Clinostomum sp.). This larval fluke forms cream-colored cysts on the gills and under the skin in the mouth. It can easily be seen with a magnifying glass if cyst is broken. Edible. Clean and prepare as usual.

(Myxospordia). The white cysts created by Myxospordia hold thousands of the microscopic protozoa. While certain species cause some important diseases in fish, none have been found in Nebraska. Edible. Clean and prepare.

Water Fungus (Saprolegnia sp.). Usually found on fish injured by improper handling or other cause. When established, Water Fungus can kill a fish by completely covering it. Edible. Skin fish; remove infected area and adjacent flesh; prepare as usual.

Columnaris Disease (Columnaris pseudofaciatus). This bacterial infection may be found on catfish, trout, and possibly other species. Frayed fins and bloody wounds are other indicators. Edible. Clean and prepare as usual.

Black Spot (Neascus sp.). The easiest disease to recognize. Black Spot is caused by larval flukes burrowing under the skin. Appearing as small round black spots, the cysts may also be found in the flesh. Edible. Skin and prepare as usual.

Eye Fluke (Diplostomum sp.). These tiny larval flukes will not be seen. They live in the fluid of the eye and eventually cause blindness. Eye may be opaque or shrunken. Edible. Clean and prepare as usual.

* sp. = species