Young Atlantic salmon were recently found in Thurston County’s Scatter Creek. Biologists worry that Atlantics could hurt native Pacific salmon and cutthroat trout by pushing them off prime spawning and feeding areas. Atlantics also could eat young native fish or spread disease. The Atlantic salmon escaped into the creek from a nearby hatchery that produces 7 million young Atlantic salmon each year for Puget Sound net pens. Adult salmon also escape from those pens, and state biologists want anglers to know how to identify Atlantic salmon.

Anglers who catch Atlantics in Washington should keep the fish and call the state Department of Fish and Wildlife at 360-902-2700. Anglers fishing in British Columbia should call 1-800-811-6010.

Sources: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Image Library; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; State of Alaska

Graphic by Mark Brunton/The Olympian; Illustrations provided by The National Image Library and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Fish not drawn to scale.