

Alevin



When the salmon egg is ready to hatch, the baby salmon will break free of the egg's soft shell retaining the yolk as a nutrient-rich sac that hangs below its body. At this stage, they are called Alevin and are about one inch in length. During the next month, the alevin will remain hidden in the gravel nest and feed from the nutrient-rich yolk

sac until it is completely absorbed.

Fry

The tiny salmon leave their gravel nest and begin to swim and feed for themselves. At this stage they are called Fry and take the form of tiny fish. It's also at this time that they start their journey downstream. The first part of their journey is a difficult one as the small vulnerable fry must hide under rocks and among vegetation to avoid predators such as birds, insects, and other fish. At the same time, they must find feed to survive.



Parr



After several months, as the Fry feed and grow, they develop vertical markings on the flanks of their bodies. At this stage they are called Parr and are about six inches in length. Though a bit bigger they still must hide from predators and continue their journey towards the ocean. Parr will

continue to feed for 1 to 3 years before they are ready venture out into the ocean.

Smolt

At this point, the juvenile salmon loses its vertical markings on its body and turns silvery in color. Now considered Smolt, they will school together in large groups. It's at this time that the young salmon will adjust their bodies to saltwater, allowing them to swim out into the Pacific Ocean to feed and grow into adult salmon.



Adult



Adult salmon spend 1 to 4 years in the ocean swimming and feeding throughout the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea. They grow to their adult size and develop unique adult markings that are different for all five species of Alaska salmon. Their ocean journey is long and hazardous, as they are constantly hunted for by seals, orca

whales, and fishermen. After swimming more than 2000 miles throughout the northern Pacific Ocean they return to their original spawning grounds to spawn. In some cases, young adult salmon return early before they have fully grown. These particular salmon are called Jacks or Jennies.

Spawning Adult



Upon reaching their birth rivers and streams, the adult salmon re-adapt to the fresh water and begin their upstream journey to their natal stream where they were born. At this time, they cease to feed and live on the stores of fat within their bodies. Their upstream journey is a challenging one, swimming upstream against rugged rapids,

leaping over rocky waterfalls, traversing fish ladders, avoiding fishermen nets and hooks, and staying clear of hungry bears. When they finally reach their natal stream they have reached sexual maturation and are ready to spawn. The female adult clears a spot in the streambed by sweeping her tail back and forth creating a gravel nest that is referred to as a redd. She will then lay her eggs in this redd and the male adult salmon will fertilize and protect them until both salmon die within a couple of weeks and leave the embryos to fend for themselves.