



Learn to Fish Program

Fish Identification and Basic Biology

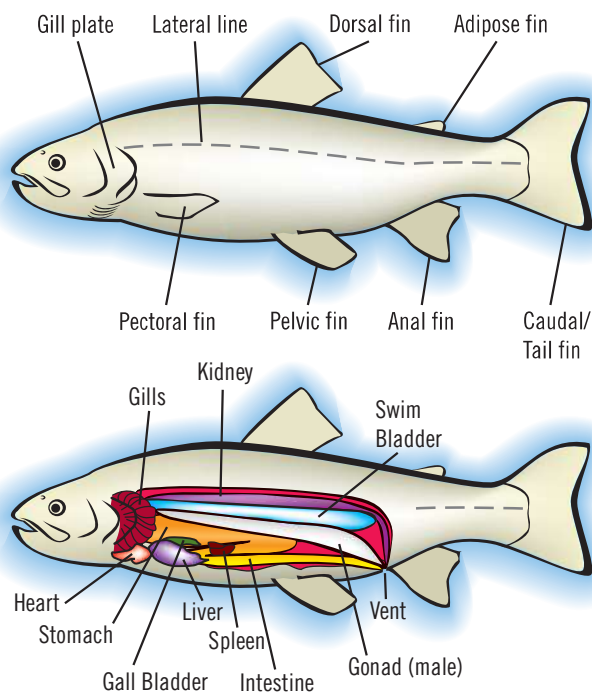
Get to know some of the most common species of fish that we stock in B.C.'s freshwater lakes and streams.

British Columbia's freshwaters are home to many species of fish that will provide you with hours of exciting sport as you explore our beautiful lakes, rivers and streams. Remember, we're home to some of the best freshwater fishing on the planet.



Use this guide to identify some of British Columbia's most common freshwater fish species. It's important that you're able to recognize these fish so that you can follow B.C.'s freshwater fishing regulations.

The Freshwater Fisheries Society of B.C. cultures all of the species pictured on this page. Over 1000 of B.C.'s lakes and streams are stocked to provide anglers with diverse and quality angling opportunities.



Rainbow Trout:

Kamloops Trout

This is our most common freshwater sport fish. Powerful and aggressive, most Rainbow Trout have a reputation for jumping clear of the water when hooked. Check our website at www.gofishbc.com to learn about the six strains of Rainbow trout that are stocked in our lakes and streams.



Westslope Cutthroat Trout:

Cutthroat Trout

A real fighter. You'll find magnificent specimens of this fish in some of B.C.'s southern eastern high elevation lakes and East Kootenay rivers and streams. These fish have a reputation for aggressively attacking lures and flies. For a real adventure why not take a hike to one of these lakes or wade a mountain stream to angle for these remarkable trout. Use our web site to locate the lakes that we stock with this fish.



Coastal Cutthroat Trout:

Cutthroat Trout,

Sea-run Trout

A fast and aggressive fish. The Coastal Cutthroat feeds on other fish as a large part of its diet. You'll likely find them in gravelly lowland streams and lakes but they like to roam wherever they can find food. Travelling in schools, they make for fast and furious fishing.



Kokanee:

Land-Locked Sockeye

A hard-fighting and delicious fish. The Kokanee is actually a sockeye salmon that spends its life in fresh water and does not migrate to the sea. This species (of salmon) feeds mainly on plankton, but will eagerly take flies and lures, especially during the summer months when the larger fish start to school.



Eastern Brook Trout:

Speckled Trout, Brookie, Speckled Char

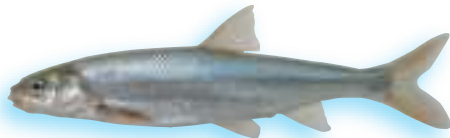
Powerful and determined. When hooked Brook Trout will dive deep, often heading for the bottom as they drag the line from your reel. These fish rarely jump but they always put up an exciting fight. Some of B.C.'s more productive Brook Trout waters can grow fish weighing over 2kg.



A day spent fishing is always great fun. A good way to practice your angling skills is by targeting species that are abundant and easily caught. Many species not traditionally recognized as sportfish provide that opportunity. Once basic techniques are learned, anglers can use their knowledge to target sportfish species. Here's a quick guide to some other species that you can catch and where to look for them.

Peamouth Chub

You can catch Peamouth Chub from the lake shore, river bank or piers. Look for rock piles, wood, bays, and any backwaters that may shelter them. During the summer months, Peamouth Chub can be found in the shallow weedy areas of rivers, streams and lakes. They are eager feeders and make great fishing!



Northern Pikeminnow

This species can be found in most of B.C.'s major river systems and many lakes throughout the Province. Although not generally identified as a sportfish these fish will eagerly take flies, lures and bait. Average size ranges between 30cm to 50cm and up to 2kg, while many large lakes in the Province will produce even larger specimens. These fish are great fighters and can be easily angled from shore, docks or piers.



Carp

Carp feed on or near the bottom, searching for their food by using their barbels. You'll find them in shallow, warm water sloughs, small lakes, shallow bays of larger lakes, also in larger slow-moving streams with abundant aquatic vegetation and sandy to muddy bottoms. These fish are common and can be easily caught using basic still fishing techniques and a worm as bait.



Suckers

Suckers are among Canada's most abundant and widespread fish. Many different species of suckers live in B.C. The largescale and common sucker are the most plentiful. The Salish sucker, which lives only in the lower Fraser Valley, is the smallest variety and is also protected because it is a species at risk. This is an example why knowing your fish is important. Suckers are characterized by round mouths surrounded by thick, fleshy, protruding lips which they use to suck up much of their food from the bottom of rivers and lakes.



Play your part in protecting B.C.'s native fish stocks

While you're fishing you might catch any of the following non-native species. Many waters containing these species have been stocked illegally in B.C. These fish compete with native fish species for resources and impact our resident fish stocks. These species can often be easily caught and harvesting them up to your limit can actually help the fishery by decreasing competition with native species. Remember – NEVER transport live fish.

Smallmouth Bass

The Smallmouth Bass is a robust fish that some consider to be one of the best "pound for pound fighters" around. Averaging from 20cm to 40cm long, these extremely aggressive fish put up a great battle when hooked. When fishing for Smallmouth, look for shallow waters that consist of structures such as reeds, logs, and rocks. Bass are most aggressive during spawning which occurs late May through July.



Yellow Perch

Yellow Perch are commonly targeted by anglers of all ages due to their willingness to take the bait. When fishing for Yellow Perch in lakes, look for well covered waters such as reeds and weeds. Fishing near artificial structures such as floating docks and piers can also be extremely productive. Their average size is 15cm to 20cm.



Pumpkinseed

The Pumpkinseed Sunfish is a native of southeastern Canada. An alien in B.C., the Pumpkinseed is found in small lakes, ponds, and the shallow weedy bays of larger lakes. The Pumpkinseed prefers clear water and the cover of submerged vegetation. It is common to find these fish in large schools.

