

A Summary of

Missouri Fishing Regulations

Effective March 1, 2026



Conservation Department Offices



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Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or disability. Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, 573-751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to Chief, Public Civil Rights, Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.



Central Region

3500 East Gans Road
Columbia, MO 65201
573-815-7900

Kansas City Region

12405 SE Ranson Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64082
816-622-0900

Northeast Region

3500 S. Baltimore
Kirksville, MO 63501
660-785-2420

Northwest Region

701 James McCarthy Drive
St. Joseph, MO 64507
816-271-3100

Ozark Region

551 Joe Jones Blvd.
West Plains, MO 65775
417-256-7161

Southeast Region

2302 County Park Drive
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
573-290-5730

Southwest Region

2630 N. Mayfair
Springfield, MO 65803
417-895-6880

St. Louis Region

2360 Highway D
St. Charles, MO 63304
636-441-4554



To report poaching or game-law violations, call

Operation Game Thief

800-392-1111

Rewards are available for information leading to the arrest of game-law violators. You can remain anonymous.

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Note: According to rule 3 CSR 10-5.216 of the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*, if you have been convicted of multiple or major violations of the *Code* in the past five years, the Conservation Commission may consider suspending or revoking your fishing, hunting, and/or trapping privileges regardless of any previous court action. The point system the Commission uses to assess *Code* violations is explained at short.mdc.mo.gov/Zg5.

Don't Trash Nature

Littering is illegal. It also harms wildlife and destroys the beauty of natural areas. Pack out empty bait containers, fishing line, and other trash, and dispose of it in a proper receptacle. Carry a plastic grocery sack when you go afield so you can pick up litter left behind by less-conscientious users. Let's all pitch in to keep our wild places looking wild.

Sport Fishing in Missouri

When it comes to fishing, Missouri has a lot to offer. More than 200 species of fish live in the Show-Me State, and more than four dozen species offer opportunities for anglers. Seasons are long, and daily limits are generous. Regulations exist to improve and maintain the quality of fishing, ensure that everyone has an equal chance of catching fish, and protect aquatic resources. A nationwide survey directed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimated that more than 1.3 million recreational anglers contributed \$2.1 billion to Missouri's economy.

The *Wildlife Code of Missouri* is a permissive code. This means that you may take or attempt to take only those species of fish and other aquatic wildlife permitted by the *Code*, only by permitted methods, and only at the times and under the circumstances mentioned.

A permissive code means that rather than giving you an endless list of "thou shalt nots," we tell you what you may do. The reason for this is to make access to Missouri fishing as fair and as uncomplicated as possible.

In Your Hands

The information in this booklet is only a summary of the fishing rules and contains only those rules that affect the ordinary sport angler. It is **NOT** a legal document and is subject to revision during the current year. Refer to the *Wildlife Code of Missouri* or the *Missouri Code of State Regulations* for complete rules at sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/3csr/3csr.asp.

What's New for 2026?

- Some permit prices have increased to keep up with the rising cost of goods and services. See Page 6.
- A new nonresident trout permit has been established. See Page 6.

Permits — General Information

Anyone who fishes must have the appropriate lifetime, annual, or daily fishing permit or qualify for an exemption.

Permit Exemptions

The following anglers qualify for a fishing permit exemption, but must purchase a daily trout fishing tag or trout permit when or where required:

- Any Missouri resident landowner and all members of their immediate households (see definition on Page 11) when fishing on the land they own.
- Any Missouri resident (whether or not meeting the definition of a landowner) who owns land that completely encloses a body of water, or any member of their immediate household, when fishing in those waters.
- Any Missouri resident 65 years of age or older.
- Any person (resident or nonresident) 15 years of age or younger.
- Any Missouri resident with a visual acuity not exceeding 20/200 in the better eye with maximum correction, or having 20 degrees or less field of visual concentric contraction. Must carry a certified statement of eligibility from a licensed ophthalmologist, optometrist, or physician.
- Any Missouri resident who is so severely and permanently disabled as to be unable to move freely without the aid of a wheelchair. Must carry a certified statement of eligibility from a licensed physician.
- Any Missouri resident with cerebral palsy or a mental disorder or illness as defined in *Missouri Revised Statutes*, section 630.005, and who is so severely disabled that they cannot fish alone. Must be accompanied by a licensed adult angler and must possess a certified statement of eligibility from a licensed physician qualified to evaluate and treat the developmentally disabled.
- Any resident or nonresident who is an honorably discharged veteran who has a service-related disability of 60 percent or greater, or who was a prisoner of war during military service. Must carry a certified statement of eligibility from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Any member of the U.S. military currently assigned as a patient to a Warrior Transition Brigade, Warrior Transition Unit, or a military medical center. Must carry orders showing such assignment.

Free Fishing Days

Any person — without permit or prescribed area daily fishing tag — may fish during Free Fishing Days, June 6 and 7, 2026. On private, licensed trout-fishing areas, customers and guests may fish for trout without a permit.

Permit Obligations

Accepting a permit means that you:

- Agree to observe all the rules of the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*.
- Will not loan your permit to another.
- Will allow inspection of your permit, picture identification, catch, and equipment by an agent of the Conservation Department.
- Will carry your permit in either paper, department-issued plastic, or electronic format while fishing. If you purchased your permit by telephone and have not yet received it, you must carry the permit authorization number and picture identification with you while fishing until your permit arrives.

Who may purchase resident permits?

- Any person who does not claim resident privileges in another state or country, and whose actual residence and legal permanent home address are both in Missouri, and have been for at least 30 days before applying for the permit. Owning real estate or attending a Missouri school does not in itself make you a legal resident.
- Missouri residents employed by the United States in the District of Columbia or serving in the U.S. armed forces. (Immediate family members who reside with them also may purchase resident permits.)
- All members of the U.S. armed forces stationed and residing in Missouri on permanent change-of-station status and immediate family members residing with them.
- Nonresidents who are registered students attending a public or private secondary, postsecondary, or vocational school in Missouri and who live in Missouri while attending school; must carry evidence of a Missouri residence and student status, such as a student ID, while fishing.
Note: Nonresident students who qualify for resident permits must purchase them in person, over the phone, or through the mail from Conservation Department offices.
- Immigrants who possess an I-551 Resident Alien Card from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and who do not claim resident privileges in another state or country, and whose actual residence and legal permanent home address are both in Missouri, and have been for at least 30 days before purchasing a permit.

Free Fishing Lessons for Kids and Families

Fishing is a great way for kids and families to have fun outdoors, learn about conservation, and make happy memories together. The Discover Nature — Fishing program helps Missourians gain the skills and confidence to go fishing on their own. To learn more about Discover Nature — Fishing, call your local Conservation Department office or visit short.mdc.mo.gov/ZkB.

Purchasing Permits

You may purchase fishing permits using any of these methods:

- Over the counter from any permit vendor. No surcharges will be assessed.
- Online at mdc.mo.gov/buypermits. Use your credit card to pay. No surcharges will be assessed. Print your permit at home and have it in hand immediately or use the free MO Fishing app (see box on this page). Your permit will appear on the app immediately after purchase.
- By telephone at 800-392-4115. Use your credit card and pay a \$1 surcharge. Allow 10 days for delivery.

Federal and state statutes require buyers of fishing, hunting, and trapping permits to provide their Social Security number. Individuals who do not have a Social Security number will be required to affirm that information. Falsifying a Social Security number may result in revocation of privileges or criminal charges. Social Security numbers are securely stored and used in support of the Missouri Department of Social Service's child support enforcement.

The Conservation Permit Card allows multiple permits to be carried on a single plastic card (except black bear, deer, elk, and turkey permits, the Federal Duck Stamp, Daily Trout Tags, the White River Border Lakes Permit, and reciprocal privileges with other states). As new permits are purchased, they will be loaded automatically onto the card.

Replacing Permits

If you lose your permit, simply download the MO Fishing app to your Android or Apple mobile device, log in with your date of birth and Conservation Number, and a valid, electronic version of your permit will appear on the app. Your Conservation Number is nine digits long and can be found on the Conservation Permit Card or any current or previous permit. Any active, valid permit can be reprinted at home for free at mdc.mo.gov/buypermits. Replacement permits can be purchased from any vendor for \$3.

Enjoy "MO Fishing" With Free Mobile App

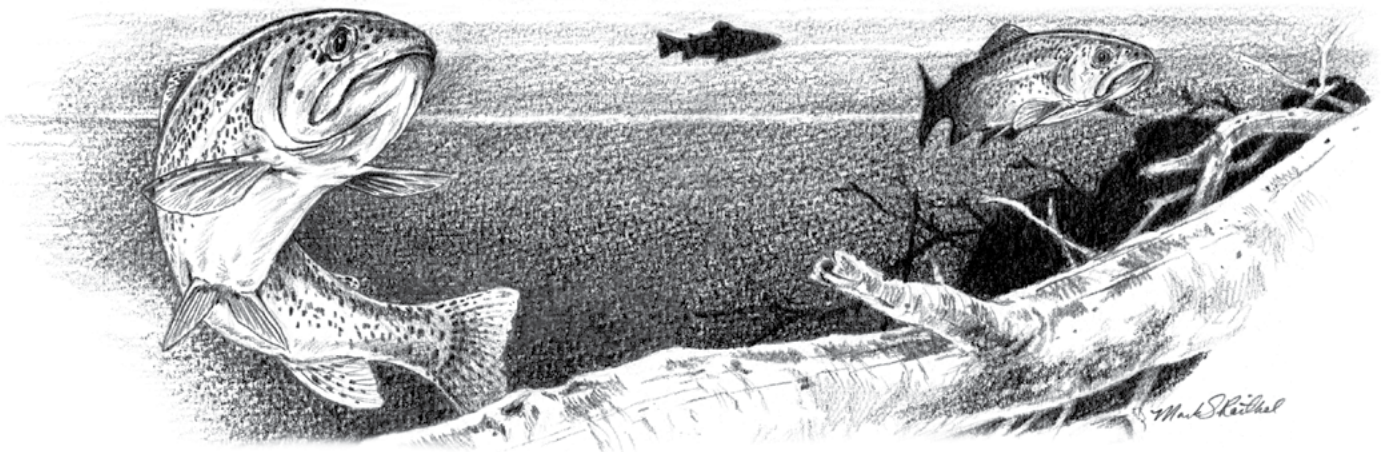
The Conservation Department's free MO Fishing app can help anglers find a place to wet a line. MO Fishing allows you to:

- Carry valid, electronic permits afield.
- Find nearby lakes, rivers, and streams.
- Easily see whether a body of water has boat ramps, parking lots, and restrooms.
- See where fish attractors, such as sunken brush piles, are located on various bodies of water. With the app's geolocation feature, you can guide your boat right up to your favorite fish attractor and start fishing.
- Review statewide fishing seasons and regulations.
- Check up on fishing reports for certain bodies of water.
- Identify your catch using a searchable electronic field guide.

To log in to MO Fishing, you'll need your date of birth and Conservation Number. This nine-digit number can be found on your Conservation Permit Card or any current or previous permit. For help locating your Conservation Number, call 573-522-0107 during regular business hours or go to short.mdc.mo.gov/ZkH.

MO Fishing is available in the Google Play and Apple App stores. You can also get MO Fishing and learn more about the app at short.mdc.mo.gov/Zi2.

Important! Make sure you update MO Fishing before wetting a line to ensure you are using the most recent version of the app and that all of your permits are visible while fishing.



Missouri Fishing Permits

Anglers have a variety of permits from which to choose. **The permits, unless noted otherwise on the permit itself, are valid from the date of purchase through the last day of February 2027.** To pursue, take, possess, and transport fish, live bait, mussels, clams, crayfish, frogs, and turtles, you will need, unless otherwise exempted, one or more of the following:

Daily Fishing Permit\$9

For fish, frogs, mussels, clams, turtles, crayfish, and live bait. May be purchased by residents and nonresidents for multiple days.

Resident Fishing Permit..... \$14

For fish, frogs, mussels, clams, turtles, crayfish, and live bait.

Resident Small Game Hunting and Fishing Permit . . \$22.50

For fish, frogs, mussels, clams, turtles, crayfish, live bait, birds (except turkeys), mammals (except black bears, deer, and elk), and to sell furbearers taken by hunting. See hunting regulations booklets for additional permits needed to hunt migratory birds.

Resident National Guard and Reserve Service Small Game Hunting and Fishing Permit\$5.50

Allows Missouri residents who are currently, or have in the previous 12 months, been mobilized and served on full-time active military duty in the National Guard (federal status) or reserve forces of the United States to take fish, frogs, mussels, clams, turtles, crayfish, live bait, birds (except turkeys), mammals (except black bears, deer, and elk), and to sell furbearers taken by hunting. See hunting regulations booklets for additional permits needed to hunt migratory birds.

To apply, fill out an application, which is available:

- Online at short.mdc.mo.gov/ZJ9.
- By calling 573-522-0107.
- By writing to National Guard Permits, Missouri Department of Conservation, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180.

Please allow 10 days after sending in your application for your permit to be delivered. This permit cannot be purchased at vendors, by telephone, or online.

Nonresident Fishing Permit \$57

For fish, frogs, mussels, clams, turtles, crayfish, and live bait.

Trout Permit

Resident Trout Permit

Age 16 or older \$12
 Age 15 or younger\$6

Nonresident Trout Permit

Age 16 or older \$24
 Age 15 or younger\$6

To possess trout, except in trout parks where a daily trout fishing tag is required. A Trout Permit is required for all winter fishing in trout parks and for all fishing year-round in Lake

Lifetime Permits

Lifetime permits are available to Missouri residents only. Proof of residency, such as a valid Missouri driver's license, is required. For children younger than 18, the parents' residency will be used.

Lifetime permits cannot be purchased at permit vendors, by telephone, or online. You must apply for lifetime permits by filling out a lifetime permit form. Get the form:

- Online at short.mdc.mo.gov/ZJ4.
- By calling 573-522-0107.
- By writing to Lifetime Permits, Missouri Department of Conservation, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180.
- By email at Lifetime.Permit@mdc.mo.gov.

Please allow 10 days for your permit to be delivered.

Resident Lifetime Fishing Permit — This permit carries the same privileges as the Resident Fishing Permit and the Trout Permit.

Age 15 or younger \$320
 Age 16–29\$465.50
 Age 30–39 \$407
 Age 40–59 \$349
 Age 60 or older.....\$40.50

Resident Lifetime Conservation Partner Permit —

This permit carries the same privileges as the Resident Hunting and Fishing Permit, Trout Permit, Migratory Bird Hunting Permit, and Conservation Order Permit. Black bear, deer, elk, and turkey hunting are not included. A Federal Duck Stamp is required to hunt waterfowl.

Age 15 or younger \$640
 Age 16–29\$930.50
 Age 30–39\$814.50
 Age 40–59 \$698
 Age 60 or older.....\$81.50

Taneycomo upstream from the U.S. Highway 65 bridge. Must also have a fishing permit or qualify for an exemption.

White River Border Lakes Permit \$10

Allows Missouri and Arkansas residents to pursue, take, possess (except trout), and transport fish, frogs, mussels, clams, turtles, crayfish, and live bait from the other state's portion of the impounded waters of Bull Shoals, Norfolk, and Table Rock lakes without purchasing a Nonresident Fishing Permit, except this permit is not valid on Table Rock Lake upstream from Houseman Access (Beaver Tailwater) in Arkansas. Must also have a fishing permit or qualify for an exemption issued by the state of residence. For information on using this permit in Arkansas, consult Arkansas Game and Fish Commission fishing regulations.



General Information

Allowed Methods

You may take fish by pole and line, trotline, throwline, limb line, bank line, and jug line. Ice fishing tip-ups are considered a pole-and-line method.

Certain species in designated waters may be taken by the use of bow, crossbow, gig, atlatl, snare, underwater spearfishing, snagging, or grabbing. (See Page 21 for nongame fish regulations.) Game fish not hooked in the mouth or jaw must be returned to the water unharmed immediately, except paddlefish legally taken during the paddlefish snagging season. All of the above methods for taking fish are considered sport fishing methods. See Page 11 for method definitions.

Prohibited Methods

No one may use any explosive, poison, chemical, or electrical equipment to kill or stupefy fish. Such materials or equipment may not be possessed on waters of the state or adjacent banks. Spearguns may not be possessed on unimpounded waters or adjacent banks, and spears may not be propelled by explosives. It is illegal to attempt to take fish by hand, with or without a hook.

Fish traps, including slat and wire ones, may not be possessed on waters in Missouri or on adjacent banks. However, live-bait traps are allowed. See the live-bait section on Page 22.

Poles and Hooks

If you use more than three poles (or two poles on the Mississippi River) at any one time, the additional poles must be labeled with your full name and address, or Conservation Number. Regardless of the method or number of poles, you may not use more than a total of 33 hooks at any one time; except on the Mississippi River the maximum is 50 hooks at one time (see hook, and pole and line definitions on Page 11). If fishing on the Mississippi River and on other Missouri waters at the same time, no more than 50 hooks in total may be used and not more than 33 of those hooks may be used on waters other than the Mississippi River. Hooks on trotlines must be staged at least 2 feet apart. Hooks on any type of line, as well as the line itself, must be attended every 24 hours or removed.

Labels Required

You must place a tag of a durable material with your full name and address, or Conservation Number on live-bait traps, trotlines, throwlines, limb lines, bank lines, jug lines, and live boxes.

Use of Lights

As an aid to fishing methods, an artificial light may be used only above the water surface. However, while fishing by pole and line, underwater lights may be used to attract fish. Underwater lights also may be used when bowfishing on lakes, ponds, and other impoundments.

Jug Line Fishing

Anchored jug lines may not be left unattended for more than 24 hours. The anchor must be sufficient to render a jug immobile so that wind, current, or a large fish will not move the jug. A line that does not meet this standard is considered unanchored. Under normal fishing conditions, a 2-pound weight for a 2-liter soda bottle would be an appropriate anchor. Use a heavier weight to anchor larger floats or during times of high wind and current.

Keeping track of your unanchored jug lines reduces catfish waste and jug-line litter. Unanchored jug lines in streams must be personally attended at all times. Unanchored jug lines in lakes must be personally attended at least once per hour. Anglers who cannot personally attend their jug lines can still enjoy jug fishing by using anchors. "Personally attended" means that the angler whose name is labeled on the jug line:

- Is in visual sight of and in close proximity to the jug line.
- Can see the jug line move when a fish is hooked.
- Can talk to a conservation agent checking the line.
- Can deter anyone who is tampering with the line.

Daily and Possession Limits

You may possess no more than the daily limit of any given species while you are on waters, or on the banks of waters, where daily limits for those species apply. Where only catch-and-release fishing is allowed, fish must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught. See culling regulations below.

The possession limit is twice the statewide daily limit. Fish you take and possess must be kept separate or distinctly identifiable from fish taken by another person. If you are away from your catch, the device holding the fish must be plainly labeled with your full name and address, or Conservation Number.

Culling

Any fish you catch is included in your daily limit unless you release it unharmed immediately. You may not replace smaller fish in your possession with larger ones caught later. You need to make a keep-or-release decision as soon as the fish is caught.

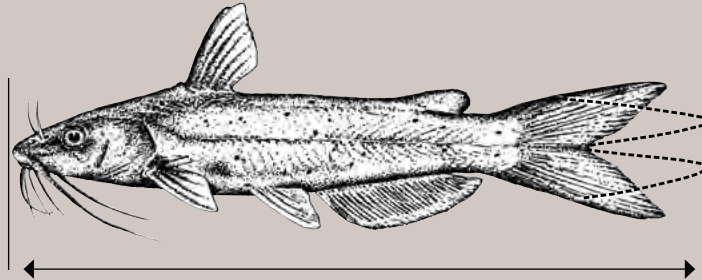
One exception: If, from September through June, you are a participant in a bona fide catch-and-release black bass tournament (one after which all bass are released alive) that requires entrants to have a boat livewell with adequate capacity and a pump constantly adding fresh or recirculating water, the black bass you release unharmed from the livewell need not be included in your daily limit. **Note:** From July through August, if you participate in the type of black bass tournament described above, the black bass you release unharmed from the livewell **must** be included in your daily limit. At no time may the daily limit be exceeded.

Length Limits

- A minimum length limit means that fish below a designated length must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught.
- A slot length limit or protected length range means that fish within a designated length range must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught.
- A maximum length limit means that fish above a designated length must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught.

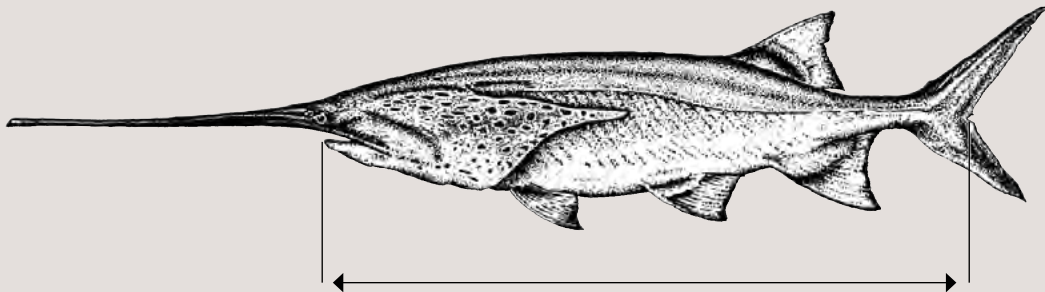
Regardless of where taken, fish that are not of a legal length cannot be possessed on the waters or banks where length limits apply. The head, tail, and skin must remain attached to the fish while on waters where length limits apply.

How to Measure a Fish (Total Length)



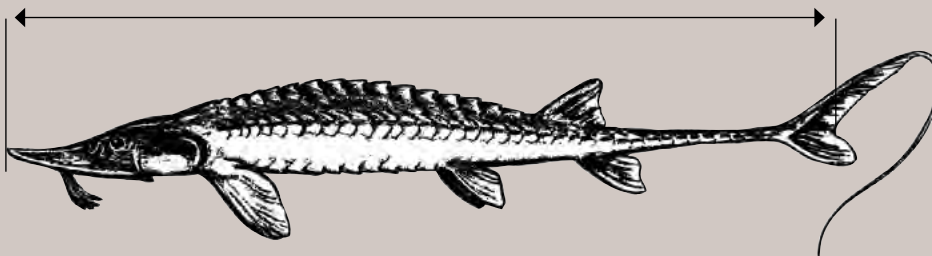
Total length is measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail, with the fish laid flat on a ruler, its mouth closed, and its tail lobes pressed together.

How to Measure a Paddlefish



Paddlefish are measured from the eye to the fork of the tail.

How to Measure a Shovelnose Sturgeon



Sturgeon are measured from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail. Only shovelnose sturgeon are legal to keep. See Page 18 for identification tips.

General Information

Transportation

The fish you legally catch in Missouri, or elsewhere, may be possessed and transported as your personal baggage if you have the required permit. Fish may be stored, preserved, or refrigerated only at your home, camp, place of lodging, or in a commercial establishment. Stored fish must be labeled with your full name and address, or Conservation Number; permit number; species of fish; and the date placed in storage. Fish taken in another state by methods not permitted in Missouri may not be possessed on waters of the state.

Wanton Waste

It is illegal to intentionally leave or abandon any portion of any wildlife that is commonly used as human food.

Reciprocal Fishing Privileges with Other States

Fishing privileges on boundary waters common to Missouri and an adjoining state are mutually agreed upon by the two states. Any person possessing a valid sport fishing permit issued by the state of Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska, or Tennessee, or who is legally exempted from those license requirements, may fish in the Des Moines, Mississippi, Missouri, and St. Francis Rivers adjacent to the state where they are licensed as indicated in the following table. It is your responsibility to know which state you are fishing in and the regulations that apply to the waters that you are fishing. You must be licensed in Missouri to fish in Missouri tributaries of the Mississippi, Missouri, and St. Francis rivers. You may not fish in the tributaries of these rivers in a state where you are not licensed.

Properly licensed or exempted anglers from Missouri or the adjoining state:	Missouri River (Kansas, Nebraska)	Mississippi River (Illinois, Tennessee)	Mississippi River (Kentucky)	St. Francis River (Arkansas ²)	Des Moines River (Iowa)
May fish in the flowing waters of either state.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
May fish in either state's adjacent backwaters and shared oxbow lakes.	✓	✓			✓
May fish in either state's waters as indicated in the footnotes.			✓ ¹	✓ ²	
May fish from the bank or attach to the bank of either state.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Must abide by the regulations of the state in which you are fishing, regardless of where you are licensed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Must abide by the most restrictive of the two states' regulations when fishing the other state's waters.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

¹ For the purposes of these reciprocal fishing privileges with Kentucky, the Mississippi River is defined as the main channel and immediate side or secondary channels or chutes. It does not include oxbow or floodplain lakes, or backwaters that extend onto the floodplain or up tributaries when the river level exceeds 33 feet at the Cairo, Illinois, gauging station.

² For the purposes of reciprocal fishing privileges with Arkansas on the St. Francis River, reciprocal fishing privileges apply to that portion of the St. Francis River forming a boundary between Missouri and Arkansas. Anglers north of U.S. Highway 62 may also fish in any oxbow lake through which the state boundary passes. South of U.S. Highway 62, anglers may also fish all waters between the main levees of the St. Francis River within the boundary of Missouri.

For more information on adjacent states' regulations and permits, contact:

- Arkansas Game and Fish Commission: 833-345-0325
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources: 217-782-6302
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources: 515-725-8200
- Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks: 620-672-5911
- Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources: 800-858-1549
- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission: 402-471-0641
- Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency: 615-781-6500

Definitions

- **Atlatl:** A rod or narrow board-like device used to launch, through a throwing motion of the arm, a dart 5 to 8 feet in length.
- **Backwater:** Any flowing or nonflowing water lying exclusively within the floodplain of a river and connected to that river at any water level below official flood stage for the portion of river where the backwater occurs. Backwater does not include tributary streams and ditches, but may include side channels, chutes, sloughs, bayous, oxbows, and blew holes.
- **Bow:** A device drawn and held by hand and not fastened to a stock nor to any other mechanism that maintains the device in a drawn position. This definition includes longbows, recurve bows, and compound bows.
- **Days or Dates:** All days and dates are inclusive. A day begins or ends at midnight, unless otherwise specified.
- **Endangered Fish:** Lake sturgeon, pallid sturgeon, taillight shiner, Neosho madtom, Shawnee Hills cavefish, harlequin darter, goldstripe darter, cypress minnow, central mudminnow, crystal darter, swamp darter, Ozark cavefish, Niangua darter, Sabine shiner, mountain madtom, redbfin darter, longnose darter, flathead chub, Topeka shiner, and grotto sculpin. **You may not take or attempt to take these fish.**
- **Flies, Lures, and Baits:** The following classes of lures are authorized for use, except where restricted. See pages 24–35.
 - **Natural and scented baits:** A natural fish food such as bait fish, crayfish, frogs permitted as bait, grubs, insects, larvae, worms, salmon eggs, cheese, corn, and other food substances not containing any ingredient to stupefy, injure, or kill fish. Does not include flies or artificial lures. Includes dough bait, putty or paste-type bait, any substance designed to attract fish by taste or smell, and any fly, lure, or bait containing or used with such substances.
 - **Soft plastic bait (unscented):** Synthetic eggs, synthetic worms, synthetic grubs, and soft plastic lures.
 - **Artificial Lure:** A lure constructed of any material excluding soft plastic bait and natural and scented bait defined above.
 - **Fly:** An artificial lure constructed on a single-point hook, using any material except soft plastic bait and natural and scented bait as defined above, that is tied, glued, or otherwise permanently attached.
- **Game Fish:** Goggle-eye (commonly known as Ozark bass, rock bass, and shadow bass), warmouth, northern pike, muskellunge, tiger muskie, muskie-pike hybrid, chain pickerel, grass pickerel, all species of catfish except bullheads, all species of black bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted), paddlefish (spoonbill), all species of crappie, white bass, yellow bass, and striped bass, trout, walleye, sauger, and shovelnose sturgeon.
- **Grabbing:** Snagging or attempting to snag a fish by means of a pole, line, and hook manipulated by hand.

Catch on to Catch-and-Release Fishing

Fishing is often for pleasure rather than for food. Catch-and-release, or releasing fish immediately after they are caught, is a conservation measure that helps maintain a fishery for the future. Follow these guidelines to increase the chance of a fish's survival:

- Whenever possible, do not take the fish out of the water.
 - Filing the barbs off of hooks makes removing them easier.
 - Never pull a hook from the fish's throat or stomach; it is better to cut the line. Many hooks will rust away or be expelled by the fish.
 - Avoid excessive handling of fish.
 - If handling is necessary, make certain not to squeeze or drop the fish.
 - Never put your fingers in the fish's gills or eye sockets.
- **Hook:** Single- or multiple-pronged hooks and ordinary artificial lures with attached single- or multiple-pronged hooks and dropper flies. A multiple-pronged hook, or two or more hooks used to hold a single bait are considered a single hook.
 - **Nongame Fish:** All species other than alligator gar, those listed as endangered, or those defined as game fish. Nongame fish are referred to as "other fish" in the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*.
 - **Pole and Line:** Fishing methods using tackle normally held in the hand, such as a cane pole, casting rod, spinning rod, or fly rod, or ice fishing tackle commonly known as a tip-up, to which not more than three hooks with bait or lures are attached. Does not include snagging, snaring, grabbing, trotlines, juglines, or other tackle normally attached in a fixed position.
 - **Resident Landowner:** Any Missouri resident who owns at least 5 contiguous acres, and their immediate household members whose legal residence is the same as the landowner's for at least the past 30 days. See Chapter 20 of the *Wildlife Code of Missouri* for a more detailed definition.
 - **Snagging:** The act of hooking or attempting to hook a fish in a part of the body other than the mouth or jaw by means of a pole, line, and hook. Snagging is characterized by a repeated drawing or jerking motion of the pole, line, and hook or by trolling with an unbaited hook rather than enticement by bait or lure.
 - **Take or Taking:** Killing, trapping, snaring, netting, or capturing in any manner any wildlife, and also refers to pursuing, molesting, hunting, wounding; or the placing, setting, or use of any net, trap, device, contrivance, or substance, in an attempt to take wildlife; and every act of assistance to every other person in taking or attempting to take any wildlife.

Fish Consumption Advisory

Fish is a good source of high-quality protein and essential nutrients that contribute to a healthy diet. It is low in cholesterol, and some types of fish have omega-3 fatty acids that are essential for the development of the nervous system and may be beneficial in reducing heart disease. However, there are occasions when limited or even no consumption of fish is appropriate.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) evaluates the amount of contaminants in sport-caught fish and determines whether or not there are health risks associated with eating fish from Missouri water bodies. All fish contain some small amount of chemical contaminants. In most instances and for most people, the health benefits of eating fish outweigh the potential health risks from contaminants.

In general, eat smaller, legal-sized, younger fish because they tend to have lower levels of contamination than larger fish of the same species. To minimize the amount of contaminants in the fish you eat, fillet your fish, remove the skin, and trim away fatty portions. The meal advice in the advisory table on Page 13 is based on this preparation technique.

Because children are particularly sensitive to some contaminants, DHSS makes special recommendations for pregnant women, women of childbearing age, nursing mothers, and children under 13 years old. Other recommendations are for everyone.

The fish advisory may be revised throughout the year. For updates and for the complete fish advisory, which provides further details on contaminants and preparation techniques to minimize contaminants, go to health.mo.gov/living/environment/fishadvisory/index.php or contact the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology, PO Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65102; 573-751-6102.



Blue catfish

NOBPADOL PAOTHONG

GENERAL INFORMATION

Help Stop Zebra Mussels

Zebra mussels have been found in lakes and rivers in Missouri. These invasive mussels:

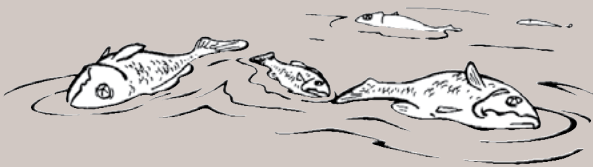


- Disrupt native aquatic animals and communities.
- Clog the cooling systems of boat motors, causing them to overheat.
- Plug intake pipes, cutting off water supplies to cities and power plants.
- Ruin beaches with their sharp shells and rotting carcasses.
- Spread quickly — a single female can produce 1 million eggs a year.

When moving from one water body to another:

- **Clean** all plants, animals, and mud from your boat, putting plants and other debris in the trash. Thoroughly wash your boat and gear in hot water, especially crevices and other hidden areas.
- **Drain** all water from your boat before leaving the area, including wells, ballast, and engine cooling water.
- **Dry** your boat completely before launching it in other waters.
- **Dispose** of unused bait in a trash can.

Report sightings by calling 573-815-7900, ext. 2925 or by emailing a photo of the mussel shells along with location information to Stephen.McMurray@mdc.mo.gov.



Report Stream Pollution

If you find dead fish, leaking barrels of chemicals, municipal or livestock lagoons discharging poorly treated effluent, broken pipelines, or unauthorized dredging or bulldozing polluting a stream, report it as soon as possible to the Department of Natural Resource's 24-hour environmental emergency response number: 573-634-2436.

Advisory Population	Location ¹ — Contaminant	Species	Length	Serving Advice
Sensitive populations: Pregnant women, women of childbearing age, nursing mothers, and children under age 13	All U.S. water bodies — mercury	All fish	All sizes	1 per week
	Because all fish have various levels of mercury, the Environmental Protection Agency recommends sensitive populations consume no more than one fish meal per week when no other advisory is present.			
	Statewide — mercury	Largemouth, spotted, smallmouth bass, and walleye	Greater than 12"	1 per month
		Blue, channel, flathead catfish	Greater than 30"	1 per month
	Clearwater Lake in Reynolds County — mercury	White bass	Greater than 15"	1 per month
		Crappie	Greater than 9"	1 per month
All consumers	Mississippi and Missouri rivers — PCBs, chlordane, mercury	Sturgeon eggs		Do not eat.
		Shovelnose sturgeon (excluding eggs)	All sizes	1 per month
		Buffalo	All sizes	1 per month
		Flathead, channel, blue catfish	Greater than 17"	1 per week
		Common carp	Greater than 21"	1 per week
	Blue River from Minor Park to the Missouri River in Jackson County including Indian Creek up to Holmes Road — PCBs, chlordane	Common carp and catfish	All sizes	1 per month
	Big River in St. Francois and Jefferson counties — lead	Sunfish ² , carp, redhorse and other suckers	All sizes	Do not eat.
	Flat River in St. Francois County from Hwy. B, 6 miles downstream to where it enters Big River — lead	Sunfish ² , carp, redhorse and other suckers	All sizes	Do not eat.
	Big Creek near Glover in Iron County — lead	Sunfish ²	All sizes	Do not eat.
	Adair Creek, Sweetwater Creek, and Logan Creek from Adair Creek to Susie Creek in Reynolds County — lead	Suckers and other bottom-feeding species	All sizes	Do not eat.
	St. Francis River, Little St. Francis River, and Fredericktown City Lake in Madison County — lead	Sucker and carp species	All sizes	See footnote 3 below.
	Simpson Park Lake at Simpson Park in St. Louis County — mercury, chlordane, PCBs	Buffalo	Greater than 16"	1 per month
	Lake Buteo in Johnson County — mercury	Largemouth and smallmouth bass	All sizes	Do not eat.
		All other fish	All sizes	1 per month
	Montrose Lake in Henry County — PCBs	Flathead catfish	Greater than 24"	1 per week
	Lake Springfield in Greene County — PCBs	Catfish and carp	All sizes	1 per month

¹ If you fish at a location with warning signs posted, follow those specific local guidelines. The locations in this summary table do not include local warnings.

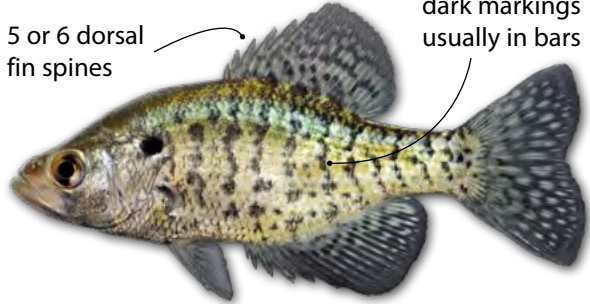
² Sunfish included in this advisory are bluegill, green sunfish, longear sunfish, warmouth, and rock bass.

³ The skeletons, particularly vertebrae and ribs, of fish in these water bodies contain elevated levels of lead. Remove the vertebrae and ribs for all preparations, including pickling, grinding, and canning. Fillets of these fish, even with small "Y" bones intact, are safe to eat. For fillets, statewide mercury advisories apply for sensitive populations.

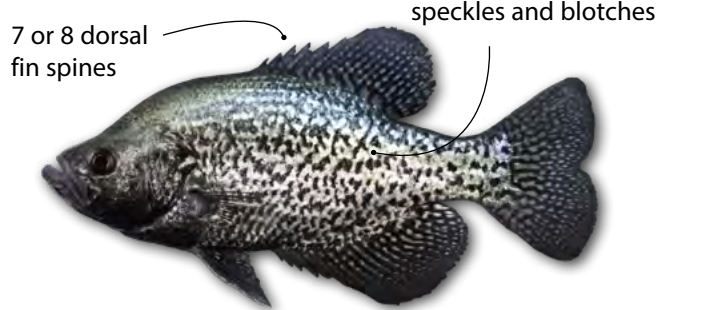
Fishes of Missouri

It is important to correctly identify the fish you catch so you can abide by seasons, daily limits, length limits, and other regulations. When in doubt about the identity or legal length, play it safe and return the fish to the water unharmed immediately.

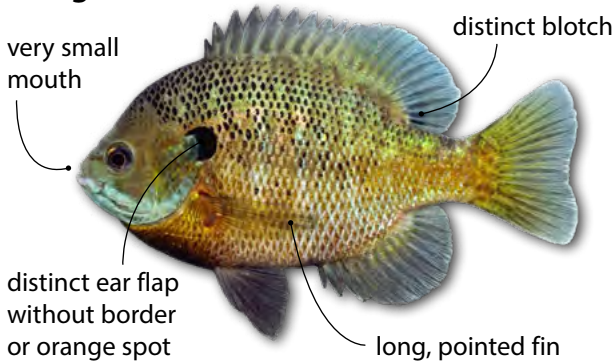
White crappie



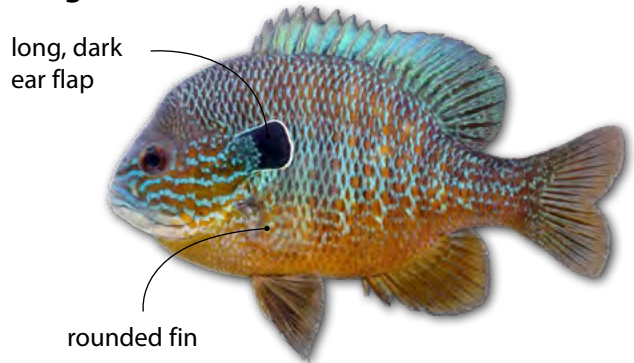
Black crappie



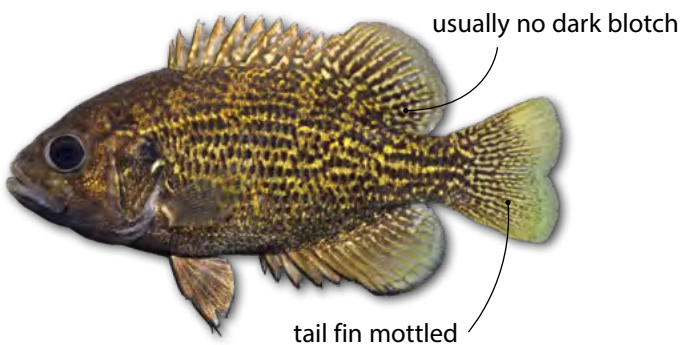
Bluegill



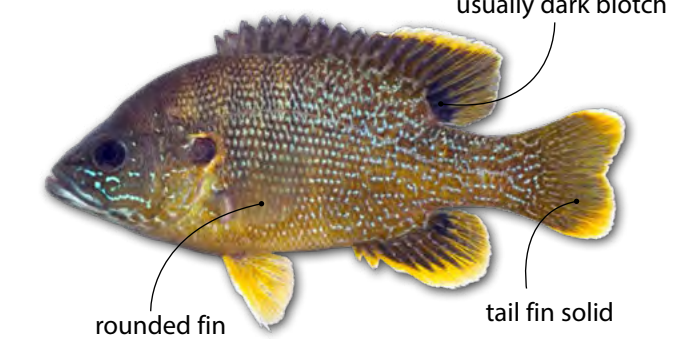
Longear sunfish



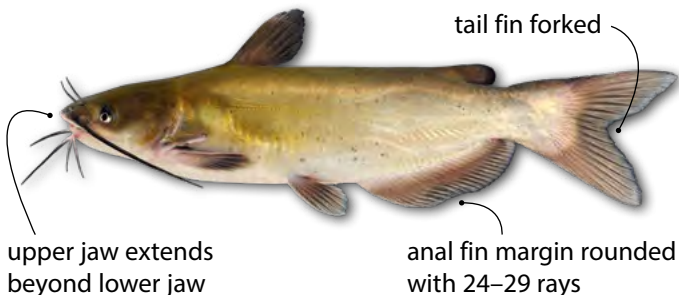
Goggle-eye (rock bass)



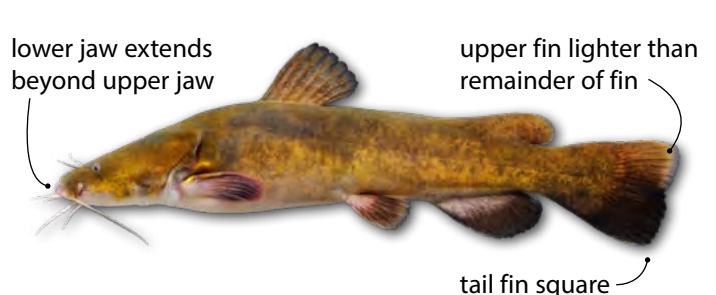
Green sunfish



Channel catfish

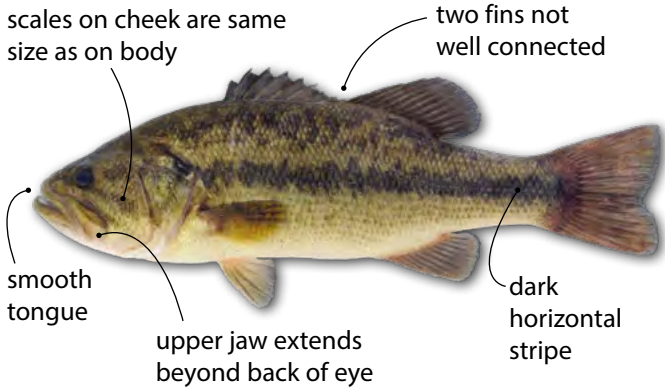


Flathead catfish

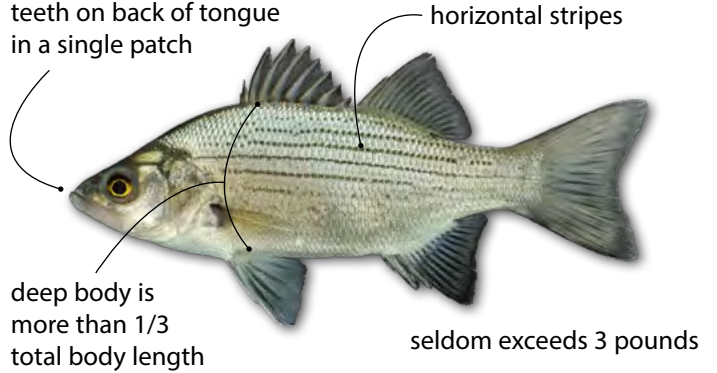


GENERAL INFORMATION

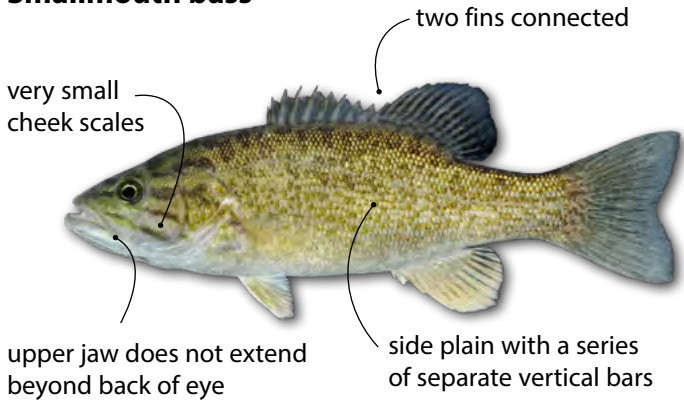
Largemouth bass



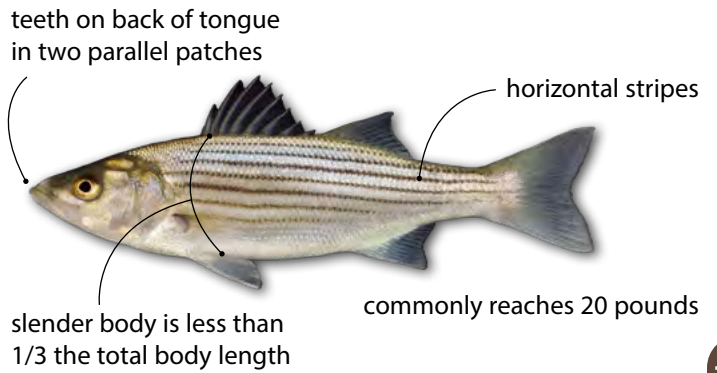
White bass



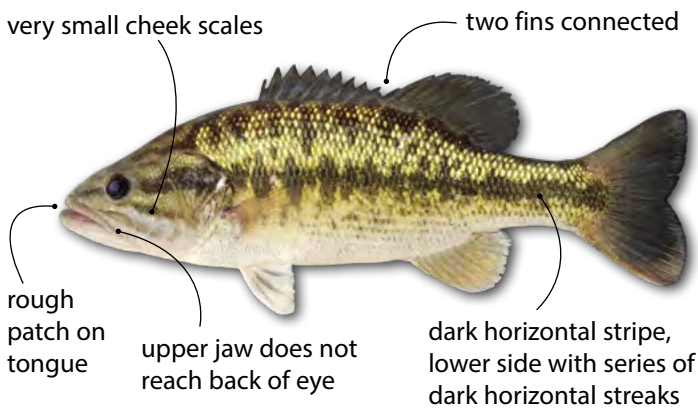
Smallmouth bass



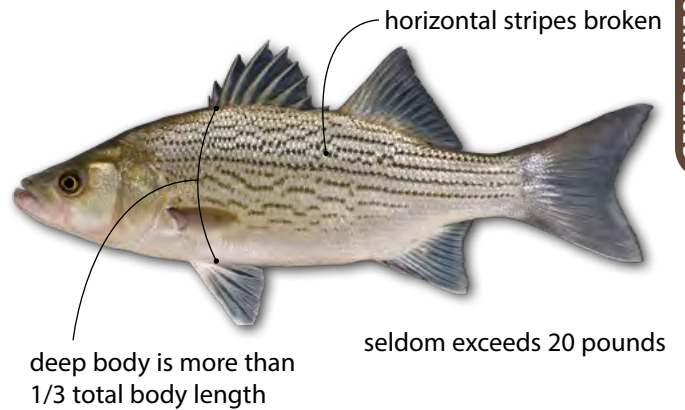
Striped bass



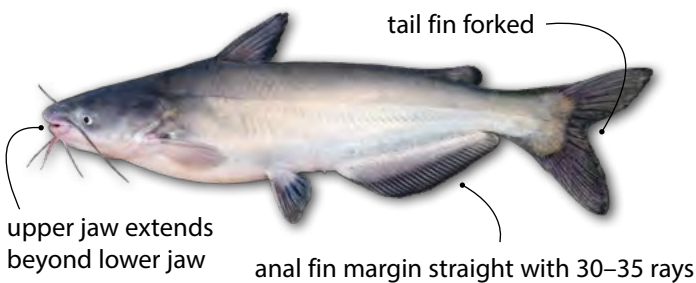
Spotted bass



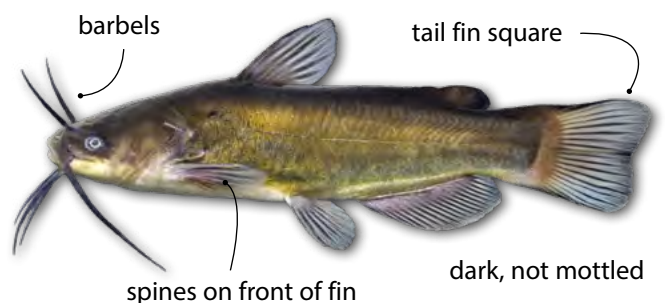
White bass-striped bass hybrid



Blue catfish



Black bullhead



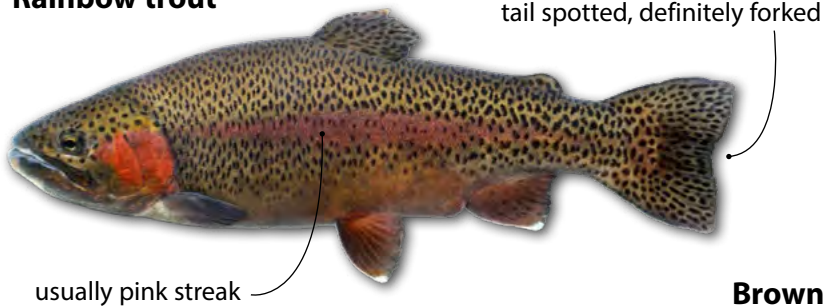
GENERAL INFORMATION

LANCE MERRY PHOTOS

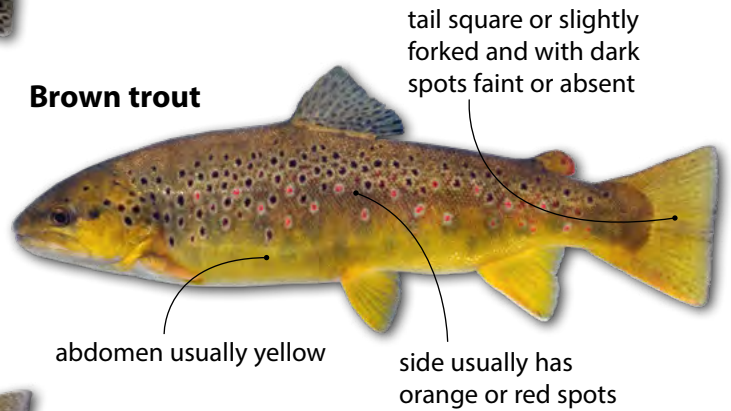
Fishes of Missouri

It is important to correctly identify the fish you catch so you can abide by seasons, daily limits, length limits, and other regulations. When in doubt about the identity or legal length, play it safe and return the fish to the water unharmed immediately.

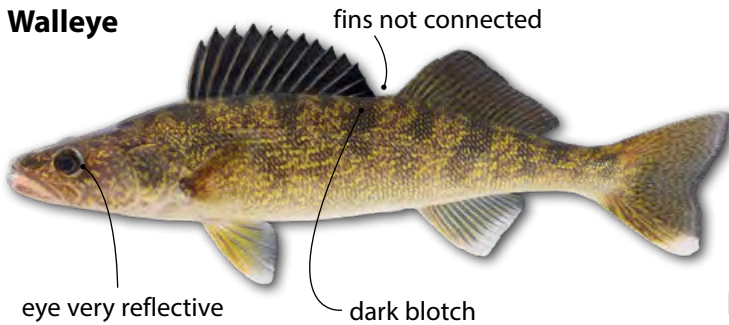
Rainbow trout



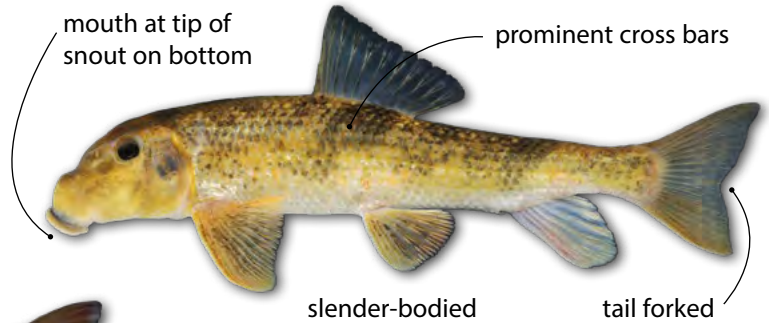
Brown trout



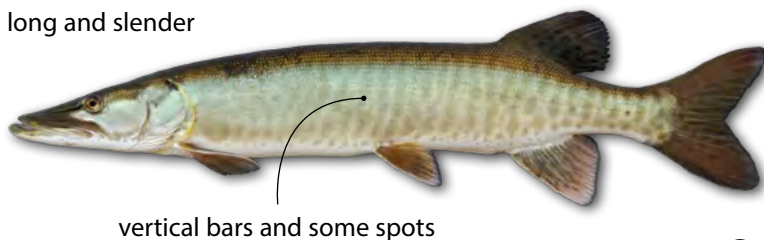
Walleye



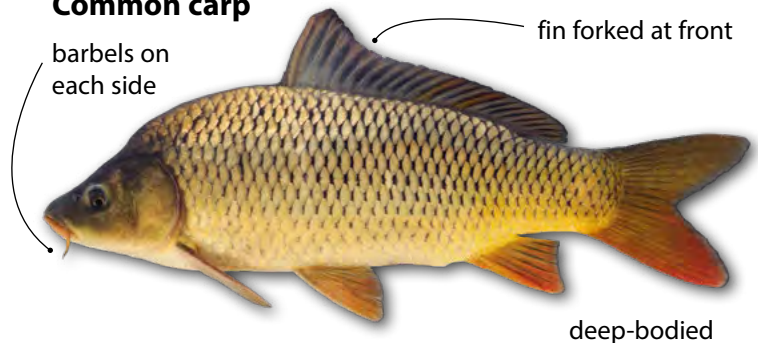
Northern hog sucker



Muskellunge



Common carp

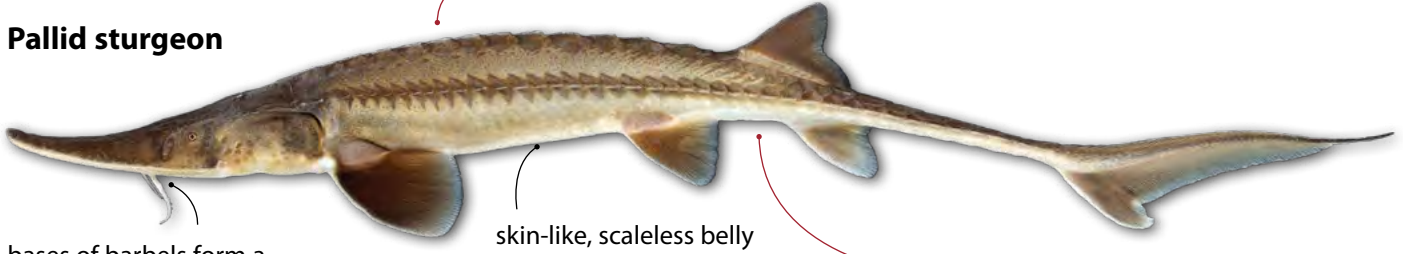


Shovelnose sturgeon



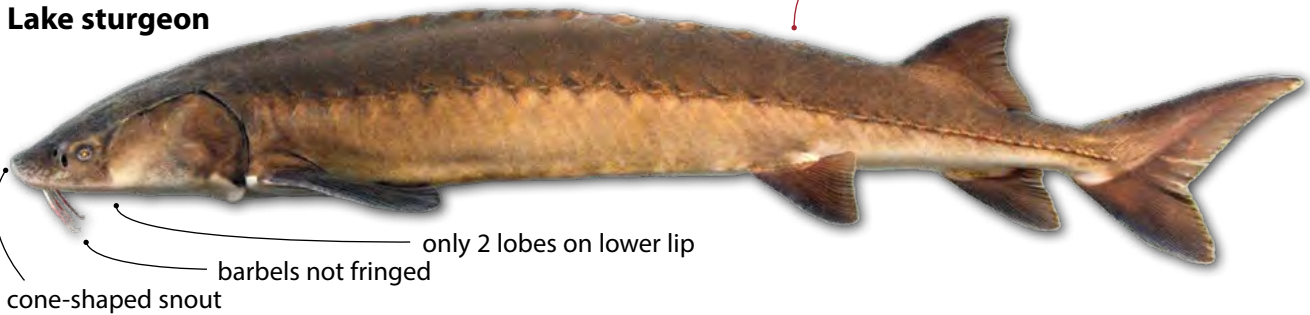
Shovelnose sturgeon and endangered pallid sturgeon are similar. See identification tips on Page 18.

Pallid sturgeon

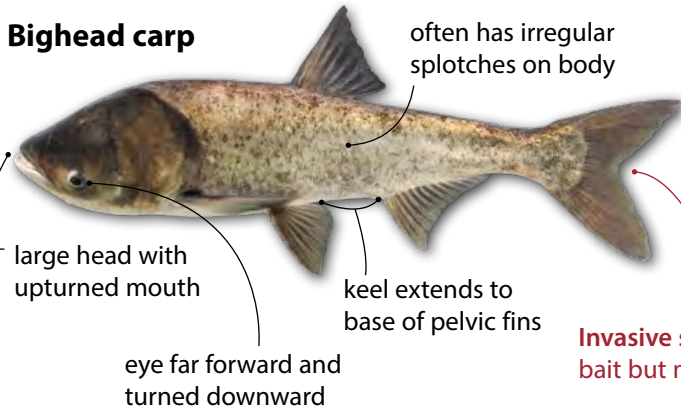


Endangered species: If caught, return unharmed to water immediately.

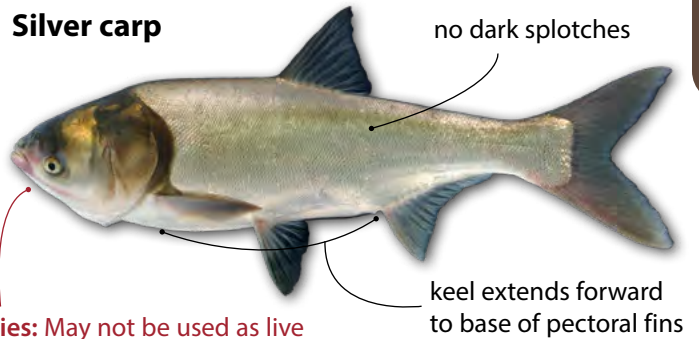
Lake sturgeon



Bighead carp

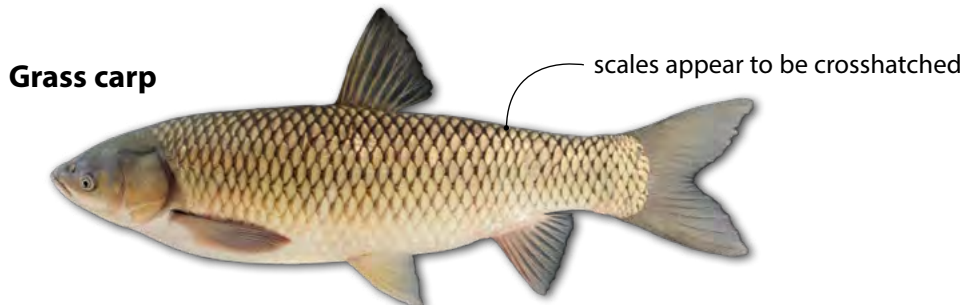


Silver carp



Invasive species: May not be used as live bait but may be used as dead or cut bait.

Grass carp



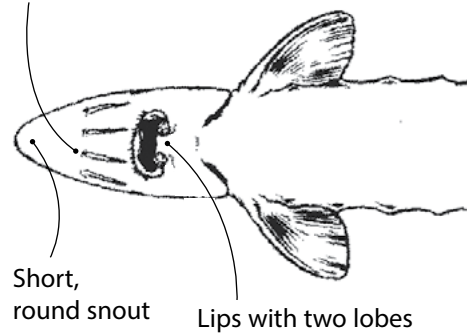
How to Identify Sturgeon

There are three species of sturgeon in Missouri. Pallid and lake sturgeon are endangered and must be protected. Use the information listed below to learn the key differences so you can always return pallid and lake sturgeon unharmed to the water immediately.

Endangered lake sturgeon

- Sides and back range from dark slate to light brown or yellowish-olive; white belly
- Found throughout Missouri and Mississippi rivers
- May reach 8 feet in length and more than 300 pounds

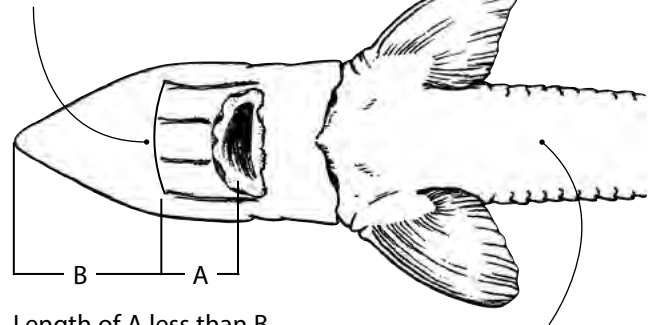
Barbels near mouth are smooth, not fringed



Endangered pallid sturgeon

- Grayish-white color
- Found in the Missouri River and in the Mississippi downstream from the mouth of the Illinois River
- May exceed 30 inches in length and reach 10 pounds or more

Bases of barbels form a crescent; inner two barbels are short and thin

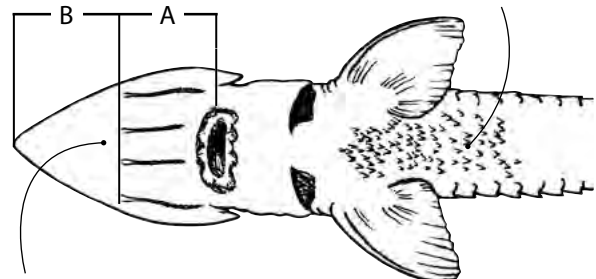


Shovelnose sturgeon

- Reddish-brown or buff color
- Found throughout Missouri and Mississippi rivers
- Rarely exceeds 30 inches in length or 5 pounds

Length of A similar to B

Belly with scale-like plates





Game Fish Seasons and Limits

The fish species listed below may be pursued and taken by pole and line, trotline, throwline, limb line, bank line, and jug line. Paddlefish may be taken by snagging and grabbing. Game fish are defined on Page 11. Seasons and limits apply statewide unless the body of water has special regulations as listed on pages 24–35 or if the area is posted with special regulations.

Species		Open Season	Daily Limit	Length Limit
Black bass (<i>largemouth, smallmouth, spotted/ Kentucky</i>)	From impoundments	All year	6 ¹	None ¹
	From most streams south of the Missouri River ²	May 23, 2026–Feb. 28, 2027		12" minimum
	From other streams ²	All year		12" minimum
Catfish	Channel	All year	10 ¹	None ¹
	Blue	All year	5 ¹	None ¹
	Flathead	All year	5 ¹	None ¹
Crappie (<i>black and white</i>)		All year	30 ¹	None ¹
Goggle-eye (<i>Ozark, rock, and shadow bass</i>) and warmouth		All year	15	7" minimum ¹
Muskellunge		All year	1 ³	36" minimum ¹
Northern pike		All year	1 ³	None
Paddlefish (<i>spoonbill</i>) ⁴	Statewide	March 15–April 30	2 ¹	32" minimum ¹
	Mississippi River	March 15–May 15 and Sept. 15–Dec. 15	2 ¹	32" minimum ¹
Pickerel (<i>chain and grass</i>)		All year	6	None
Shovelnose sturgeon ^{4,5}		All year ¹	10 ¹	30" maximum
Trout		All year	4 ¹	Rainbow: none ¹ Brown: 15" minimum in streams
Walleye and sauger		All year ⁶	4 ¹	15" minimum ¹
White, yellow, and striped bass and their hybrids		All year	15 ¹	No more than 4 longer than 18" ¹

¹ Applies on all waters, with the exception of those with more specific regulations found on pages 24–35 and on areas that are posted with special regulations.

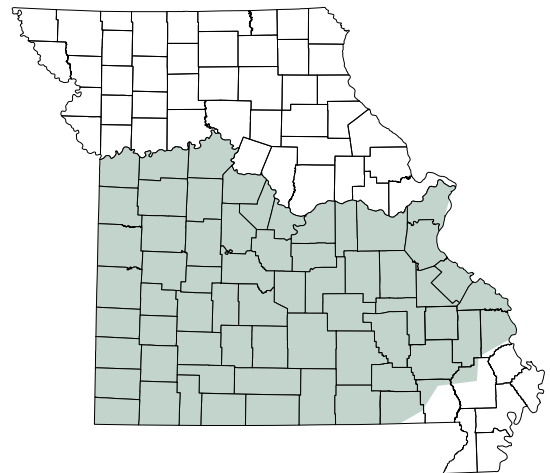
² Black bass fishing and possession is open year-round on the Mississippi River, all waters north of the south bank of the Missouri River, the St. Francis River downstream from Wappapello Dam, and on streams in that portion of southeast Missouri bounded by a line from Cape Girardeau following Missouri highways 74 and 25, U.S. highways 60, 67, and 160, and the west bank of the Little Black River to the Arkansas state line. In the rest of the state, black bass from streams may not be possessed from March 1–May 22, 2026. Only catch-and-release fishing for black bass is allowed during this time in this area of the state.

³ Daily limit is 1 muskellunge or 1 northern pike.

⁴ Extracted paddlefish and shovelnose sturgeon eggs may not be possessed while on waters of the state or adjacent banks, and may not be transported. They also may not be bought, sold, or offered for sale.

⁵ Shovelnose sturgeon must remain intact while on waters of the state or adjacent banks.

⁶ From Feb. 20 through April 14, walleye and sauger can be taken and possessed only between 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset in the unimpounded portions of all streams, except the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. Changes to this rule for walleye and sauger were pending at the time of this booklet's publication. Please check current regulations in Chapter 6 at sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/3csr/3csr.asp.



Area where black bass can be taken from streams only from May 23, 2026–Feb. 28, 2027. Also see Footnote 2.

Nongame Fish Seasons and Limits

Nongame fish include bluegill, green sunfish, carp, carpsuckers, suckers, buffalo, drum, and all species other than alligator gar, those defined as game fish, or species listed as endangered. Nongame fish may be taken as described in the chart. See special regulations on pages 28–35 for restrictions on certain waters.

- There is no limit on goldfish and bighead, common, grass, and silver carp.
- Bighead carp, common carp, grass carp, and silver carp can be taken by hand net. Those that jump from the water into a boat or onto land may also be taken and possessed in any number.
- Live bighead carp and silver carp may not be transported unconfined or in water from the location where they were caught.
- Bowfin must remain whole and intact while on state waters or adjacent banks.

Method	Season	Time ¹	Location	Daily limit ²
Pole and line, trotline, throwline, limb line, bank line, jug line	All year	24 hours	Streams and impounded waters	50 ^{2,3}
Bow	April 1–Jan. 31	24 hours	Impounded waters	20 ^{2,3}
	Feb. 1–March 31	Sunrise to midnight	Impounded waters	
	All year	Sunrise to midnight	Most streams	
		24 hours	Portions of the Mississippi, Missouri, and St. Francis rivers; certain other streams (see pages 30–35)	
		Sunrise to sunset	Temporary overflow of a river or ditch	
Crossbow	All year	Sunrise to sunset	Impounded waters and temporary overflow of a river or ditch	
Gig, atlatl	Sept. 15–Feb. 15	Sunrise to midnight	Streams and impounded waters	
	Feb. 16–Sept. 14	Sunrise to sunset	Impounded waters	
	All year	Sunrise to sunset	Temporary overflow of a river or ditch	
Snagging, grabbing ⁴	March 15–May 15 Sept. 15–Feb. 15 ^{5,6}	24 hours	Streams and impounded waters	
	All year	Sunrise to sunset	Temporary overflow of a river or ditch	
Snaring ⁴	March 15–May 15 Sept. 15–Feb. 15 ^{5,6}	24 hours	Streams and impounded waters	
Underwater spear	All year	Sunrise to sunset	Impounded waters and temporary overflow of a river or ditch	

¹ For official sunrise and sunset times, visit <https://aa.usno.navy.mil/data>.

² The possession limit is twice the daily limit, except on the Mississippi River which has a daily and possession limit of 100. Goldfish, bighead carp, common carp, grass carp, and silver carp may be possessed in any number and do not count in the daily or possession limit.

³ The daily limit is the combined total of all nongame species, except that goldfish, bighead carp, common carp, grass carp, and silver carp may be possessed in any number and do not count in the daily or possession limit. On the Current River from the river crossing on Dent County Road 6510/Shannon County Big Creek Road at Cedargrove downstream to the Arkansas line, only 5 hog suckers may be included in a daily limit.

⁴ On Lake of the Ozarks and its tributaries, Osage River below U.S. Highway 54, Table Rock Lake, and Harry S. Truman Reservoir and its tributaries, snagging, snaring, and grabbing are not allowed for any species after taking the daily limit of 2 paddlefish.

⁵ In the Osage River downstream from U.S. Highway 54 to the Missouri River and in the Lake of the Ozarks and Harry S. Truman Reservoir, nongame fish may be taken by snagging, snaring, and grabbing from March 15 through April 30.

⁶ On the Mississippi River, nongame fish may be taken by snagging, snaring, and grabbing from March 15 through May 15 and Sept. 15 through Dec. 15.

Other Seasons and Limits

Live Bait

Live bait includes crayfish, freshwater shrimp, southern leopard frogs, plains leopard frogs, cricket frogs, and nongame fish. Bullfrogs and green frogs taken by legal fishing methods also may be used as bait.

- Bighead carp and silver carp may **not** be used as live bait but may be used as dead or cut bait.
- Live bait taken from public waters of Missouri may **not** be sold or transported from the state.
- Game fish or their parts may **not** be used as bait.
- Crayfish listed in the *Missouri Species and Communities of Conservation Concern Checklist* may not be taken or possessed. The checklist is online at short.mdc.mo.gov/ZJt.

Methods

- Live bait may be taken by trap, dip net, throw net, pole and line, or seine. **Note:** In certain sections of the Black River, St. Francois River, and the Clarence Cannon Reregulation Pool, live bait may be taken only by pole and line. See pages 30 and 35.
- Live-bait traps must have a throat opening not more than 1 1/2 inches in any dimension, and must be labeled with the user's full name and address, or Conservation Number.
- Traps must be removed if they cannot be checked at least once every 24 hours.
- Seines must not be more than 20 feet long and 4 feet deep, with a mesh of not more than 1/2 inch bar measure.
- Live bait, except fish, may be taken by hand.
- Crayfish also may be taken by trap with an opening not to exceed 1 1/2 inches by 18 inches.

Length Limits

- All bluegill, green sunfish, and bullheads more than 5 inches long and other species of nongame fish more than 12 inches long must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught by any of the methods listed above except pole and line. Daily limits for nongame fish apply (see Page 21) to fish exceeding the length limits described above that are taken by pole and line.
- There is no length limit on gizzard shad, goldfish, and bighead, common, grass, and silver carp when used as bait.

Seasons: Live bait may be taken throughout the year.

Daily Limit

- A combined total of 150 crayfish, freshwater shrimp, and non-game fish.
- 5 each of southern leopard frog, plains leopard frog, and cricket frog.
- A combined total of 8 bullfrogs and green frogs. Bullfrogs and green frogs may be taken only from sunset June 30 through Oct. 31.
- Any number of goldfish and bighead, common, grass, and silver carp.

Don't Dump Bait!

It is illegal to dump bait into Missouri waters.

Throw unused bait in the trash.

Unwanted animals and plants can invade local water, damage habitat and ruin your fishing.

To learn more about protecting Missouri's streams, rivers and lakes from invasive species, visit www.missouriconservation.org.



Image courtesy of Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant.



W00003

- Any number of live baits, when purchased or obtained from a source other than the waters of the state or a licensed commercial fisherman. Must be species on the Approved Aquatic Species List, and the angler must carry a dated receipt for the bait.

Other Species That May be Used as Bait

- Nongame fish of any size, except bowfin, if taken according to the methods and seasons listed on Page 21.
- Mussels and clams legally taken by sport fish methods.

Bullfrogs and Green Frogs

Methods: Bullfrogs and green frogs may be taken by hand, hand net, atlatl, gig, bow, trotline, throwline, limb line, bank line, jug line, snagging, snaring, grabbing, or pole and line. An artificial light may be used.

Season: Sunset June 30 through Oct. 31.

Daily limit: 8, combined total of both species.

Mussels and Clams

Methods and season: May be taken by hand, hand net, or pole and line throughout the year.

Daily limit: 5, combined total of all species (except Asian clams, which may be taken and possessed in any number). This limit applies to live and dead animals. Two shell halves (valves) shall be considered 1 mussel or clam.

Mussels listed in the *Missouri Species and Communities of Conservation Concern Checklist* may not be taken or possessed. The checklist is online at short.mdc.mo.gov/ZJt.

Turtles

Methods: Eastern (common) snapping turtles, smooth softshell turtles, and spiny softshell turtles may be taken by hand, hand net, bow, crossbow, trotline, throwline, limb line, bank line, jug line, snagging, snaring, grabbing, or pole and line. Shooting turtles with firearms is prohibited.

Seasons: Eastern (common) snapping turtles throughout the year; softshell turtles from July 1 through Dec. 31.

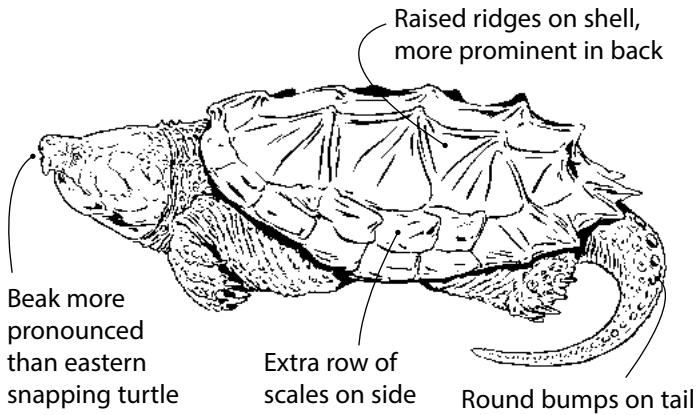
There is no open season on alligator snapping turtles.

Daily limit: 2, combined total of all species.

Know the Differences Between Snapping Turtles

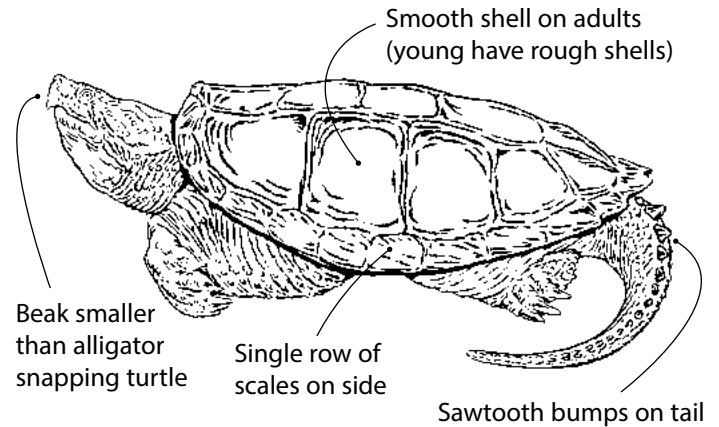
Alligator Snapping Turtle

- Protected species, illegal to harvest
- Found in southern, southeastern, and eastern Missouri in large rivers, reservoirs, sloughs, and oxbow lakes



Eastern (Common) Snapping Turtle

- Legal to harvest
- Found statewide



Alligator Snapping Turtle Hatchling

- Typically orange-brown color
- No white spots on shell

Top



Bottom



Eastern (Common) Snapping Turtle Hatchling

- Gray-brown color
- White spots on edge and bottom of shell

Top



Bottom



Report Alligator Snapping Turtles

If you catch an alligator snapping turtle, before releasing the turtle unharmed please record:

1. Date you caught the turtle.
2. Location (river mile or GPS coordinates) where you caught the turtle.
3. Approximate length of the turtle's upper shell.
4. Method of capture (pole and line, trotline, limb line, etc.).
5. If possible, take a photograph of the turtle.

Report sightings to the State Herpetologist by calling 573-522-4115, ext. 3201 or emailing Jeff.Briggler@mdc.mo.gov.

Remove the hook with a pair of pliers if it can be done safely or simply cut the line. If the turtle appears lethargic, place it on land at the water's edge so it can become active. If a lethargic turtle is released into the water, it will likely drown.



Trout Fishing

Missouri has several types of trout fishing areas, each with its own special rules. In addition to a fishing permit, you will need a trout permit to possess trout on all waters outside of the trout parks and a daily tag while fishing in the trout parks. Unless otherwise indicated, the season is open all year.

Trout Parks

Maramec Spring Park, Bennett Spring State Park, Montauk State Park, and Roaring River State Park are open and stocked daily from March 1 through Oct. 31. Anglers need a fishing permit, unless exempt, as well as a daily trout tag. The price for a daily trout tag is \$5 for anglers 16 and older, and \$3 for anglers 15 and younger. **Note:** At Roaring River State Park, a daily tag or a trout permit may be used for fishing from the first bridge below the old dam in Zone 3 to the downstream park boundary.

The daily limit is 4 rainbow or brown trout in the aggregate. The possession limit is 8 trout in the aggregate state-wide. You must stop fishing for any species after having the daily limit of trout in possession. Area regulations, fishing methods, and zones vary. Ask for details when you purchase your daily trout tag.

Winter Fishing at the Trout Parks

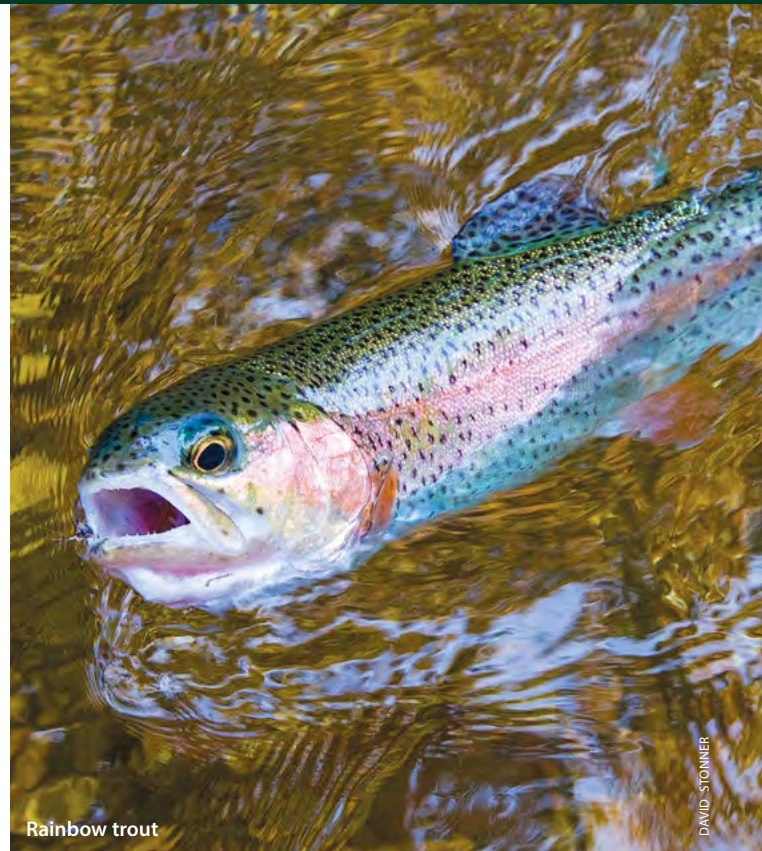
Only catch-and-release fishing is available from Nov. 13, 2026 through Feb. 8, 2027. Maramec Spring Park is open daily from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The three state parks are open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday through Monday. A fishing permit, unless exempt, and a trout permit are required. Only flies may be used.

Porous-Soled Waders

To prevent the spread of an invasive algae called didymo, the use of shoes, boots, or waders with porous soles of felt, matted, or woven fibrous material is prohibited at all trout parks and where specified on pages 26–35.

Didymo spreads rapidly. Left untreated, it can quickly take over a stream. Additional steps you can take to stop its spread include:

- Using wader wash stations at trout areas before entering a stream.
- Checking your waders and fishing gear for algae.
- Cleaning all fishing gear in a 2 percent bleach solution or with dishwashing detergent, or dry any item that's been in the water by exposing it to sunlight for 48 hours.



Rainbow trout

DAVID STONNER

Earn Missouri's Blue Ribbon Trout Slam or Smallmouth Slam

The Blue Ribbon Trout Slam honors anglers who catch a trout in at least five of the nine Blue Ribbon Trout Streams. The Smallmouth Slam honors anglers who catch a smallmouth bass in at least six of the 12 special management areas. To learn more, visit mdc.mo.gov/fishawards; write to Fishing Slams, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180; or call 573-751-4115.

Become a Master Angler

The Conservation Department recognizes anglers who catch selected fish species that meet minimum weight or length requirements. To be eligible for a Master Angler Award, anglers must catch fish in Missouri by legal sport-fishing methods. The catch does not need to be verified. Anglers are on their honor to provide accurate information.

To apply, visit mdc.mo.gov/fishawards; write to Master Angler, PO Box 180, Jefferson City MO 65102-0180; or call 573-751-4115.



Winter Trout Lakes

Rainbow trout are stocked in November in lakes listed in the following table. Fishing is permitted year-round during normal park or area hours. Unless indicated, trout may be taken by pole and line using all types of lures and baits under statewide limits. A trout permit is required to keep trout.

Kansas City Area		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capitol Federal® Sports Complex in Liberty ■ Chaumiere Lake in Kansas City ■ Cleveland Lake in Belton ■ Coot and Plover lakes at the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area ■ Jesse James Park Lake in Kearney ■ Johnston Lake in Raymore 	Year-round	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Statewide limits ■ Only 3 poles may be used.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Honker Pond at the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area 	Year-round	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Statewide limits ■ Only 1 pole may be used. ■ Limited to anglers 15 years of age or younger.
St. Louis Area		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gendron Lake in St. Ann 	Year-round	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Statewide limits ■ Only 3 poles may be used.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lakes 3, 22, and 23 at August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area ■ Boathouse Lake in St. Louis ■ Carp and Island lakes in St. Louis County ■ January-Wabash Park Lake in Ferguson ■ O'Fallon Park Lake in St. Louis ■ Vlais Park Lake in Ballwin 	Year-round	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ You must stop fishing for all species after having 4 trout in possession.
	Nov. 1–Jan. 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Only 1 pole may be used. ■ Use of chum is prohibited.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Jefferson Lake in St. Louis ■ Koeneman Park Lake in Jennings ■ Lakes 7 and 21 at August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area ■ Tilles Park Lake in St. Louis County ■ Union City Lake in Union ■ Walker Lake in Kirkwood 	Nov. 1–Jan. 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Catch-and-release only for trout ■ Flies, artificial lures, and unscented soft plastic baits only ■ Only 1 pole may be used. ■ Use of chum is prohibited.
	Feb. 1–Oct. 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ You must stop fishing for all species after having 4 trout in possession.
Other Cities Around the State		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Beuth Park Lake in Moberly ■ Cosmo-Bethel Lake in Columbia ■ Huckleberry Lake in Hannibal ■ Kiwanis Lake in Mexico ■ Lake Minesa in Marshall ■ Liberty Park Pond in Sedalia ■ McKay Park Lake in Jefferson City ■ Spur Pond in Kirksville ■ Veterans Park Lake in Fulton 	Nov. 1–Jan. 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Catch-and-release only for trout ■ Flies, artificial lures, and unscented soft plastic baits only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capaha Park Lake in Cape Girardeau ■ Legion Lake 1 in Perry County ■ Recreation Complex Lake in Sikeston ■ Rotary Lake in Jackson 	Nov. 1–Jan. 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Catch-and-release only for trout ■ Flies, artificial lures, and unscented soft plastic baits only ■ Only 1 pole may be used. ■ Use of chum is prohibited.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Everyday Pond at Missouri Western State University in St. Joseph ■ Krug Park Lagoon in St. Joseph 	Nov. 1–Jan. 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Catch-and-release only for all species including trout ■ Flies, artificial lures, and unscented soft plastic baits only

Trout Fishing in Ozark Streams

Approximately 120 miles of Ozark streams provide quality trout angling.

▶ **Blue Ribbon Trout Areas** include parts of large, cold rivers with excellent trout habitat and smaller streams that support naturally reproducing rainbow trout. Harvest is limited to maintain the maximum density of adult trout, create excellent catch-and-release fishing, and provide the occasional chance to harvest a trophy. These areas on the Current River and North Fork of the White River are stocked with brown trout, and the Eleven Point River is stocked with rainbows.

▶ **Red Ribbon Trout Areas** are stocked primarily with browns. They provide catch-and-release fishing and a chance to harvest quality-sized trout.

▷ **White Ribbon Trout Areas** are coldwater streams capable of supporting trout populations year-round. All receive periodic stockings of rainbow trout, and some also receive brown trout. They provide great opportunities for catching and harvesting trout and the occasional chance to harvest a large trout.

Area name and type Directions and total miles	County	Length Limit	Daily Limit	Authorized Lures
▶ Barren Fork Creek ^{1,2} County Road A-D to its junction with Sinking Creek — 3.2 miles	Shannon	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies
▶ Blue Springs Creek ^{1,2} From Blue Springs to its junction with Meramec River — 4 miles	Crawford	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies
▷ Capps Creek ^{1,2} 4 miles upstream from its junction with Shoal Creek	Barry and Newton	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 15"	4	All
▶ Crane Creek ^{1,2} Upstream from Quail Spur Road crossing on Stone County Road 13-195 — 8 miles	Stone and Lawrence	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies
▶ Current River ^{1,2} River and its tributaries from lower boundary of Montauk State Park to the river crossing on Dent County Road 6510/Shannon County Big Creek Road at Cedargrove — 9 miles	Dent and Shannon	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies
▷ Current River ^{1,2} Downstream from the river crossing on Dent County Road 6510/Shannon County Big Creek Road at Cedargrove — 7.7 miles	Dent and Shannon	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 15"	4	All
▶ Eleven Point River ^{1,2} Greer Spring Branch junction to Turner Mill Access — 5.5 miles	Oregon	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies
▷ Eleven Point River ¹ Downstream from Turner Mill Access — 14.2 miles	Oregon	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 15"	4	All
▷ Hickory Creek ^{1,2} From Highway 86 bridge to Shoal Creek — 2.7 miles	Newton	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 15"	4 (March 1–Oct. 31)	All (March 1–Oct. 31)
		Catch-and-release	0 (Nov. 1–Feb. 28)	Artificial lures and flies only (Nov. 1–Feb. 28)
Lake Taneycomo and its tributaries ^{1,2,3,4} From the closed zone 760 feet below Table Rock Dam to the mouth of Fall Creek — 3 miles	Taney	Rainbows: less than 12" or greater than 20" Browns: at least 20"	4 (only 1 brown)	Artificial lures and flies

Area name and type Directions and total miles	County	Length Limit	Daily Limit	Authorized Lures
Lake Taneycomo ^{1,2,3,4} Mouth of Fall Creek to Powersite Dam and tributaries to Lake Taneycomo — 19.7 miles	Taney	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 20"	4 (only 1 brown)	All
▶ Little Piney Creek ^{1,2} From Phelps County line in Sections 9 and 16 of T35N, R8W, including Piney Spring Branch and Lane Spring Branch to Milldam Hollow Access — 9.9 miles	Phelps	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies
▷ Little Piney Creek ^{1,2} Downstream of Milldam Hollow Access — 3.7 miles	Phelps	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 15"	4	All
▶ Meramec River ^{1,2} From Highway 8 bridge to Scott's Ford and in Dry Fork Creek from the elevated cable crossing to its confluence with the Meramec River — 8.2 miles	Phelps and Crawford	At least 15"	2	Artificial lures and flies
▶ Mill Creek ^{1,2} Yelton Spring to its junction with Little Piney Creek including Wilkins Spring and spring branch — 7.7 miles	Phelps	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies
▷ Niangua River ^{1,2} From Bennett Spring Branch to Prosperine Access — 11.5 miles of stocked stream	Dallas	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 15"	4	All
▶ North Fork, White River ^{1,2} Upper outlet of Rainbow Spring to Patrick Bridge — 8.6 miles	Ozark	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies
▶ North Fork, White River ^{1,2} Unimpounded river and its tributaries from Patrick Bridge to Norfork Lake — 7.0 miles	Ozark	At least 15"	2	All
▷ Roaring River ^{1,2} From the lower boundary of Roaring River State Park to Table Rock Lake — 4 miles	Barry	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 15"	4	All
▷ Roubidoux Creek ^{1,2} Downstream from Roubidoux Spring — 3.1 miles	Pulaski	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 15"	4	All
▶ Spring Creek ^{1,2} Relfe Spring to its junction with Big Piney River — 6.2 miles	Phelps	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies
▷ Stone Mill Spring ^{1,2} Entire spring branch — 0.3 mile	Pulaski	Rainbows: none Browns: at least 15"	4 (Feb. 28– Oct. 31, 2026)	All (Feb. 28–Oct. 31, 2026, or as posted)
		Catch-and-release	0 (Nov. 1, 2026– Feb. 26, 2027)	Artificial lures and flies (Nov. 1, 2026–Feb. 26, 2027, or as posted)

¹ The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

² While on any waters with length limits, all trout you possess must be kept with head, tail, and skin intact.

³ Lake Taneycomo is stocked monthly with rainbow trout and annually with brown trout.

⁴ Must also have trout permit upstream of U.S. Highway 65 bridge to fish for any species.

Special Regulations on Large Lakes

Most public fishing areas have methods, seasons, limits, or other fishing regulations that are different from the statewide rules. These special regulations are posted at the areas and also can be found at mdc.mo.gov/atlas. It is your responsibility to know what regulations apply to the waters you are fishing. Please refer to area maps, signs, and bulletin boards before fishing.

Special regulations on large reservoirs, rivers, streams, and trout areas are summarized below. **Statewide regulations apply unless otherwise indicated.**

Blue Springs Lake

- Pole and line fishing only, except that shad may be taken by dip net or throw net.
- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit

Bull Shoals Lake

Lakewide:

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass; 12" minimum length limit on spotted bass
- Catfish (blue, channel, and flathead) — 10 fish daily limit, combined total of these three species
- Crappie — 10" minimum length limit; 15 fish daily limit

On the lake and its tributaries:

- Walleye and sauger — 18" minimum length limit
- Striped bass — 20" minimum length limit; only 3 striped bass may be included in the aggregate. There are no length limits for white bass, yellow bass, or their hybrids.

In the Swan Creek Arm above U.S. Highway 160:

- From Feb. 20 through April 14, walleye and sauger may be taken and possessed only between 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset. **Changes to this rule for walleye and sauger were pending at the time of this booklet's publication. Please check current regulations in Chapter 6 at sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/3csr/3csr.asp.**

From Powersite Dam to Highway 76:

- Trotlines, throwlines, and limb lines are prohibited.

Harry S. Truman Reservoir

Lakewide:

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass; 12" minimum length limit on spotted bass
- Crappie — 9" minimum length limit; 15 fish daily limit
- Nongame fish — Snagging, snaring, and grabbing are allowed from March 15 through April 30 only.

On the lake and its tributaries:

- Paddlefish — 34" minimum body length, measured from eye to fork of tail
- No person shall continue to snag, snare, or grab for any species after taking a daily limit of 2 paddlefish.
- Blue catfish — 26" to 34" protected slot length limit; 10 fish daily and possession limit; the daily limit may not contain more than 2 blue catfish more than 34".

Lake of the Ozarks

Lakewide:

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass; 12" minimum length limit on spotted bass
- Crappie — 9" minimum length limit; 15 fish daily limit
- Nongame fish — Snagging, snaring, and grabbing are allowed from March 15 through April 30 only.

On the lake and its tributaries:

- Paddlefish — 34" minimum body length, measured from eye to fork of tail
- No person shall continue to snag, snare, or grab for any species after taking a daily limit of 2 paddlefish.
- Blue catfish — 26" to 34" protected slot length limit; 10 fish daily and possession limit; the daily limit may not contain more than 2 blue catfish more than 34".

Within a boundary beginning from the face of Truman Dam downstream along the left descending bank to the no-fishing zone sign at the East Bledsoe Ferry Park, across the water in a straight line to the no-fishing zone sign at West Bledsoe Ferry Park, upstream along the right descending bank to the face of the Truman Dam, and returning to the point of origin along the face of the Truman Dam in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' restricted zone:

- No fishing is allowed.

From the downstream end of the no-fishing zone below Truman Dam throughout the no-boating zone (look for signs and buoys):

- Paddlefish may not be possessed.

From the downstream end of the no-fishing zone below Truman Dam to U.S. Highway 65:

- Trotlines, throwlines, limb lines, jug lines, snagging, snaring, and grabbing are prohibited.

Lake Taneycomo

On the lake and its tributaries:

- Brown trout — 20" minimum length limit; the daily limit of 4 trout, combined total of both species, may include only 1 brown trout.
- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

Within 760 feet below Table Rock Dam:

- No fishing is allowed.

From the closed zone 760 feet below Table Rock Dam to the mouth of Fall Creek:

- Rainbow trout — 12" to 20" protected slot length limit
- Pole and line fishing only
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.

From the closed zone 760 feet below Table Rock Dam to U.S. Highway 65 bridge:

- Fishing permit (unless exempt) and a trout permit are required to fish for any species.

Long Branch Lake

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit
- Hybrid striped bass — 20" minimum length limit; daily limit of 4
- Crappie — 15 fish daily limit
- Walleye and sauger — 18" minimum length limit

Longview Lake

- Pole and line fishing only, except that shad may be taken by dip net or throw net.
- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit

Mark Twain Lake

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit
- Blue and flathead catfish — 26" minimum length limit
- Crappie — 15 fish daily limit

Montrose Lake

- Black bass — 18" minimum length limit; 2 fish daily limit
- Crappie — 15 fish daily limit

Norfolk Lake

Lakewide:

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass; 12" minimum length limit on spotted bass
- Catfish (blue, channel, and flathead) — Daily limit of 10 fish, combined total of these species
- Crappie — 10" minimum length limit; 15 fish daily limit

On the lake and its tributaries:

- Walleye and sauger — 18" minimum length limit
- Striped bass — 20" minimum length limit; only 3 striped bass may be included in the aggregate. There are no length limits for white bass, yellow bass, or their hybrids.

Pomme de Terre Lake

- Black bass — 13" minimum length limit
- Crappie — 9" minimum length limit; 15 fish daily limit

Smithville Lake

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit
- Crappie — Daily limit of 30 fish may include no more than 15 fish more than 9" in total length.

Stockton Lake

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass; 12" minimum length limit on spotted bass
- Crappie — 10" minimum length limit; 15 fish daily limit



Many lakes in Missouri have docks that provide easy access to good fishing. For a list of accessible fishing spots and other facilities around the state, visit mdc.mo.gov/accessible.



Black crappie

Table Rock Lake

Lakewide:

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit. **Changes to spotted bass length limits for Table Rock Lake were pending at the time of this booklet's publication. Please check current regulations in Chapter 6 at sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/3csr/3csr.asp.**
- Catfish (blue, channel, and flathead) — Daily limit of 10 fish, combined total of these species
- Crappie — 10" minimum length limit; 15 fish daily limit
- Walleye and sauger — 18" minimum length limit
- No person shall continue to snag, snare, or grab for any species after taking a daily limit of 2 paddlefish.

On the lake and its tributaries:

- Paddlefish — 34" minimum body length, measured from eye to fork of tail

Thomas Hill Reservoir

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit
- Crappie — 15 fish daily limit
- Hybrid striped bass — 20" minimum length limit; daily limit of 4

Wappapello Lake

Lakewide:

- Crappie — Daily limit of 30 fish may include no more than 15 fish more than 9" in total length.

On the lake and its tributaries including the St. Francis River and its tributaries above Wappapello Dam:

- Walleye and sauger — 18" minimum length limit

Special Regulations on Rivers and Streams

Apple Creek

From the Interstate 55 bridge to its confluence with the Mississippi River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Barren Fork Creek

In Shannon County:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

In Shannon County from County Road A-D to Sinking Creek:

- ▶ **Blue Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 26 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.
- Gigging, bowfishing, and using an atlatl are prohibited, and fish taken by these methods may not be possessed on these waters or their banks.

Big Piney River

From Highway 17 to the Gasconade River:

- Goggle-eye and warmouth — 8" minimum length limit

From Slabtown Access to the Gasconade River:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. The daily limit of 6 black bass may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

Big River

Mainstem and its tributaries, except as noted below:

- Black bass — The daily and possession limit is 12 fish and may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species.
- Spotted bass — No minimum length limit

From the Council Bluff Lake Dam to the Meramec River:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. The daily and possession limit of 12 black bass, which may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species, may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

Black River

Within the wing walls of Clearwater Dam:

- No fishing is allowed.

From the closed zone within the wing walls of Clearwater Dam to the Highway 34 bridge:

- Live bait may be taken only by pole and line.

Within 700 feet below the spillway walls of Clearwater Dam:

- Trotlines, throwlines, limb lines, bowfishing, gigging, and atlatls are prohibited.

Blackwater River

From the U.S. Highway 65 bridge to its confluence with the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Blue Springs Creek

- Black bass — The daily and possession limit is 12 fish and may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species.
- Spotted bass — No minimum length limit

In Crawford County:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

In Crawford County from Blue Springs to the Meramec River:

- ▶ **Blue Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 26 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.
- Gigging, bowfishing, and using an atlatl are prohibited, and fish taken by these methods may not be possessed on these waters or their banks.

Bourbeuse River

Mainstem and its tributaries:

- Black bass — The daily and possession limit is 12 fish and may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species.
- Spotted bass — No minimum length limit

Capps Creek

In Barry and Newton counties, 4 miles upstream from its junction with Shoal Creek:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

Cedar Creek

From the Interstate 70 bridge to its confluence with the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Courtois Creek

Mainstem and its tributaries:

- Black bass — The daily and possession limit is 12 fish and may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species.
- Spotted bass — No minimum length limit

From Highway 8 bridge in Crawford County to Huzzah Creek:

- Goggle-eye and warmouth — 8" minimum length limit



Redear sunfish

CLIFF WHITE

Crane Creek

In Stone and Lawrence counties:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

In Stone and Lawrence counties upstream from Quail Spur Crossing on Stone County Road 13-195:

- ▶ **Blue Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 26 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.
- Gigging, bowfishing, and using an atlatl are prohibited, and fish taken by these methods may not be possessed on these waters or their banks.

Current River

Mainstem and its tributaries:

- Walleye and sauger — 18" minimum length limit

In Dent, Texas, and Shannon counties:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

From Montauk State Park to the river crossing on Dent County Road 6510/Shannon County Big Creek Road at Cedargrove:

- ▶ **Blue Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 26 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.
- Gigging, bowfishing, and using an atlatl are prohibited, and fish taken by these methods may not be possessed on these waters or their banks.

From the river crossing on Dent County Road 6510/Shannon County Big Creek Road at Cedargrove to the Arkansas line:

- Nongame fish — The daily limit may include no more than 5 hog suckers.

Diversion Channel/Hubble Creek

From the Highway N bridge to its confluence with the Mississippi River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Dry Fork Creek

Mainstem and its tributaries:

- Black bass — The daily and possession limit is 12 fish and may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species.
- Spotted bass — No minimum length limit

In Crawford and Phelps counties:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

In Crawford and Phelps counties from the elevated cable crossing to the Meramec River:

- ▶ **Part of the Meramec River Red Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 27 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.

In Phelps and Dent counties, upstream from the elevated cable crossing:

- Trout — 15" minimum length limit; daily limit 2

Eleven Point River

Mainstem and its tributaries:

- Walleye and sauger — 18" minimum length limit

In Oregon County:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

From Thomasville Access to the Arkansas line:

- Goggle-eye and warmouth — 8" minimum length limit
- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. The daily limit of 6 black bass may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

From Greer Spring Branch to Turner Mill:

- ▶ **Blue Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 26 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.
- Gigging, bowfishing, and using an atlatl are prohibited, and fish taken by these methods may not be possessed on these waters or their banks.

Special Regulations on Rivers and Streams

Elk River

- Black bass — 15" minimum length limit for smallmouth bass. The daily limit of 6 black bass may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

Fishing River

From the Highway 210 bridge to its confluence with the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Gasconade River

From Highway Y in Pulaski County to Highway D in Phelps County:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. The daily limit of 6 black bass may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

From the U.S. Highway 50 bridge to its confluence with the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Grand River

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Greer Spring Branch

Upstream from its confluence with the Eleven Point River:

- No fishing is allowed.

Hickory Creek

Mainstem and its tributaries:

- ▷ **White Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 26 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species from Nov. 1 through Feb. 28.
- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

Huzzah Creek

Mainstem and its tributaries:

- Black bass — The daily and possession limit is 12 fish and may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species.
- Spotted bass — No minimum length limit

From Willhite Road in Crawford County to the Meramec River:

- Goggle-eye and warmouth — 8" minimum length limit

Jacks Fork River

From Highway 17 to the Current River:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. The daily limit of 6 black bass may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

James River

From Hooten Town bridge (the Loop Road at Route O) to the Highway 413/Highway 265 bridge at Galena:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. The daily limit of 6 black bass may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

Joachim Creek

From Jefferson County Highway V bridge to Highway A bridge:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. The daily limit of 6 black bass may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

Lamine River

From the U.S. Highway 50 bridge to its confluence with the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Little Blue River

From the U.S. Highway 24 bridge to its confluence with the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Little Piney Creek

In Phelps County:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

From the Phelps County line in sections 9 and 16 of T35N, R8W, including Piney Spring Branch and Lane Spring Branch to Milldam Hollow Access:

- ▷ **Blue Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 27 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.
- Giggling, bowfishing, and using an atlatl are prohibited, and fish taken by these methods may not be possessed on these waters or their banks.

Little Platte River

Between Smithville Dam and U.S. Highway 169:

- Pole and line fishing only
- Paddlefish may not be possessed on the water or adjacent banks.

From the U.S. Highway 169 bridge to its confluence with the Platte River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Meramec River

Mainstem and its tributaries, except as noted below:

- Black bass — Daily and possession limit is 12 fish and may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species.
- Spotted bass — No minimum length limit

In Crawford and Phelps counties:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

From Highway 8 bridge to Scotts Ford:

- ▶ **Red Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 27 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.

From Highway 8 bridge to the railroad crossing at Bird's Nest:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. Daily and possession limit of 12 black bass, which may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species, may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

From Highway 19 bridge in Dent County to Pacific Palisades Conservation Area:

- Goggle-eye and warmouth — 8" minimum length limit

Mill Creek

In Phelps County:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.
- ### From Yelton Spring to Little Piney Creek, including Wilkins Spring and spring branch:
- ▶ **Blue Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 27 for special regulations.
 - Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.
 - Gigging, bowfishing, and using an atlatl are prohibited, and fish taken by these methods may not be possessed on these waters or their banks.

Mineral Fork

Mainstem and its tributaries, except as noted below:

- Black bass — The daily and possession limit is 12 fish and may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species.
- Spotted bass — No minimum length limit

From Highway F in Washington County to the Big River:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. Daily and possession limit of 12 black bass, which may include no more than 6 largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, combined total of both species, may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

Giggers, Anglers: Protect Hellbenders

Hellbenders are harmless, aquatic salamanders that live under flat rocks or within crevices in clear, swift-flowing streams throughout the Ozarks. They are Missouri's largest salamander, typically reaching 11–20 inches long. They resemble mudpuppies but do not have gills. Hellbenders venture out at night to search for food, primarily crayfish but occasionally small fish, earthworms, and other aquatic invertebrates.

Due to declining numbers, hellbenders are listed as both state and federally endangered. Many citizens and agencies, including the Saint Louis Zoo and the Conservation Department, are working together to conserve Missouri's hellbenders. Efforts include raising hellbenders in captivity and releasing them in rivers throughout the Ozarks to bolster populations.

Hellbender

11–22 inches

No external gills

Mudpuppy

8–13 inches

External gills

Fold of skin along body

No folds of skin along body

If you gig, fish, or float Ozark streams, it is illegal to possess, harm, or kill hellbenders. If you catch one on hook-and-line, you must release it unharmed by gently removing the hook. If this isn't possible, simply cut the line to release the hellbender. Also, please do not move rocks, which

can destroy crevices where hellbenders take shelter.

Thank you for helping to conserve these unique Ozark salamanders and their riverine habitat. Please report sightings by calling 573-522-4115, ext. 3201 or emailing Jeff.Briggler@mdc.mo.gov.

TOM R. JOHNSON

Special Regulations on Rivers and Streams

Mississippi River, including pools 20–26

- Black bass — 12" minimum length limit
- Blue and channel catfish — The daily and possession limit is 20, combined total of these species.
- Flathead catfish — The daily and possession limit is 10 fish.
- Paddlefish — The season is open from March 15 through May 15 and Sept. 15 through Dec. 15.
- Walleye and sauger — No minimum length limit. The daily and possession limit is 8, combined total of both species. No seasonal restrictions on the hours for take and possession.
- White bass, yellow bass, striped bass, and their hybrids — No minimum length limit. The daily and possession limit is 30, combined total of these species.
- Nongame fish — The daily and possession limit is 100, combined total of these species, except that bighead carp, common carp, goldfish, grass carp, and silver carp may be taken and possessed in any number. Snagging, snaring, and grabbing are allowed from March 15 through May 15 and from Sept. 15 through Dec. 15.
- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day in all flowing portions, except in Sand Chute below the mouth of the Salt River in Pike County where they may only be taken by bow from sunrise to midnight.
- Limit of 2 unlabeled poles per licensed angler
- Limit of 50 hooks on a trotline

Temporary overflow waters east of the Missouri Pacific Railroad between Cape Girardeau and Scott City:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Temporary overflow waters east of the mainline and setback levees between Commerce and the Arkansas state line:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Missouri River

- Walleye and sauger — No seasonal restrictions on the hours for take and possession
- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day in all flowing portions.

Downstream from Carl R. Noren Access to Chamois Access:

- All shovelnose sturgeon must be returned to the water immediately after being caught.

Niangua River

In Dallas and Laclede counties:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

Nishnabotna River

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

North Fork of the White River

In Ozark County:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

From the upper outlet of Rainbow Spring to Patrick Bridge:

- ▶ **Blue Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 27 for special regulations.
- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.
- Gigging, bowfishing, and using an atlatl are prohibited, and fish taken by these methods may not be possessed on these waters or their banks.

The unimpounded portion of river and its tributaries in Ozark County from Patrick Bridge to Norfolk Lake:

- ▶ **Red Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 27 for special regulations.

102 River

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Osage River

Within 225 feet below Bagnell Dam:

- No fishing is allowed, except live bait may be taken by dip net and throw net only.

From the no-fishing zone below Bagnell Dam to U.S. Highway 54:

- Trotlines, throwlines, limb lines, snagging, snaring, and grabbing are prohibited.

From the no fishing zone below Bagnell Dam to its confluence with the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

From U.S. Highway 54 to the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish — Snagging, snaring, and grabbing are allowed from March 15 through April 30 only.
- No person shall continue to snag, snare, or grab for any species after taking a daily limit of 2 paddlefish.

Osage Fork of the Gasconade River

From Skyline Drive bridge near Orla in Laclede County to the Gasconade River:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. The daily limit of 6 black bass may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

Perche Creek

From the Interstate 70 bridge to its confluence with the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.



White crappie

Platte River

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Roaring River

In Barry County:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

Roubidoux Creek

In Pulaski County:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

Sac River

From below Stockton Dam to Highway 32:

- Pole and line fishing only

St. Francis River

Above Wappapello Dam, from the lake and its tributaries including the St. Francis River and its tributaries:

- Walleye and sauger — 18" minimum length limit

Within 225 feet below Wappapello Dam:

- No fishing is allowed.

From the closed zone 225 feet below Wappapello Dam to Wayne County Road 517:

- Live bait may be taken only by pole and line.

From within 700 feet below the spillway walls of Wappapello Dam:

- Trotlines, throwlines, limb lines, bowfishing, gigging, and atlatls are prohibited.

Within that part of the river that forms a boundary between Arkansas and Missouri:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day in the flowing portions.

Salt River

On the Clarence Cannon Reregulation Pool within 400 feet below Clarence Cannon Dam in the no-boating zone:

- No fishing is allowed.

On the Clarence Cannon Reregulation Pool, from below the zone closed to all fishing 400 feet below Clarence Cannon Dam to the Reregulation Dam:

- Live bait may be taken only by pole and line.

From the downstream end of the no-fishing zone below Clarence Cannon Dam to the posted powerline crossing on the Clarence Cannon Reregulation Pool:

- Pole and line fishing only

From the Clarence Cannon Reregulation Pool below Mark Twain Lake dam:

- Black bass — 12" minimum length limit

From all adjoining backwaters and from the main channel beginning 1,000 feet below the Clarence Cannon Reregulation Pool Dam to Route A:

- Fishing by pole and line and bow only

Sni-a-bar Creek

From the confluence with East Sni-a-bar Creek to its confluence with the Missouri River:

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Spring Creek

In Phelps County:

- The use of porous-soled waders is prohibited. See Page 24.

In Phelps County from Relfe Spring to the Big Piney River:

- ▶ **Blue Ribbon Trout Area** — See Page 27 for special regulations.

- Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species.
- Gigging, bowfishing, and using an atlatl are prohibited, and fish taken by these methods may not be possessed on these waters or their banks.

Tarkio River

- Nongame fish may be taken by bow and possessed at any hour of the day.

Tenmile Creek

From Highway B in Carter County to Cane Creek:

- Smallmouth bass — 15" minimum length limit. The daily limit of 6 black bass may include only 1 smallmouth bass.

Don't Trespass!

Many rivers and streams flow through private land. Before entering, ask landowners for permission.



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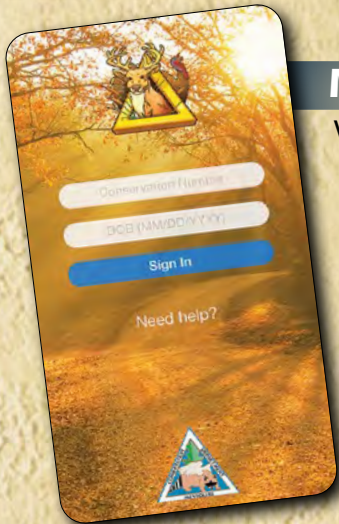
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