

Largemouth Bass



Max – 30 inches

Average – 4-12 inches

← EATS

The **largemouth bass** (*Micropterus salmoides*) is a freshwater gamefish in the sunfish family, a species of black bass native to North America.

Physical Description - The largemouth is an olive green fish, marked by a series of dark, sometimes black, blotches forming a jagged horizontal stripe along each flank. The upper jaw (maxilla) of a largemouth bass extends beyond the rear margin of the orbit. The largemouth is the largest of the black basses, reaching a maximum recorded overall length of 29.5 in and a maximum unofficial weight of 25 pounds 1 ounce. The fish lives 16 years on average.

Forage -The juvenile largemouth bass consumes mostly small bait fish, scuds, small shrimp, and insects. Adults consume smaller fish (bluegill), snails, crawfish (crayfish), frogs, snakes, salamanders, bats and even small water birds, mammals, and baby alligators. In larger lakes and reservoirs, adult bass occupy deeper water than younger fish, and shift to a diet consisting almost entirely of smaller fish like shad, yellow perch, ciscoes, shiners, and sunfish. It also consumes younger members of larger fish species, such as pike, catfish, trout, walleye, white bass, striped bass, and even smaller black bass. Prey items can be as large as 25 to 50% of the bass's body length.

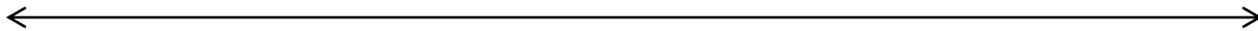
Angling - Largemouth bass are keenly sought after by anglers and are noted for the excitement of their fight. The fish will often become airborne in their effort to throw the hook,. Anglers most often fish for largemouth bass with lures such as plastic worms (and other plastic baits), jigs, crankbaits and spinnerbaits. Live bait, such as nightcrawlers, minnows, frogs, or crawfish can also be productive. Largemouth bass usually hang around big patches of seaweed/cattails near shallow water.

Largemouth Bass may only be consumed if they are bigger than 12” to preserve the supply of Largemouth Bass in this pond.
Please catch and release if under 12”.

Bluegill



Max – 16 inches



Average – 10-20 inches



← EATS + Smaller Bluegill

The **Bluegill** (*Lepomis macrochirus*) is a species of freshwater fish and a member of the sunfish family Centrarchidae of the order Perciformes. *Lepomis*, in Greek, means "scaled gill cover" and *macrochirus* means large hand, which may be a reference to its body shape. A defining characteristic of the bluegill is the bright blue edging visible on its gill rakers.

Physical Description - The bluegill is noted for the darkened spot that it has on the posterior edge of the gills and base of the dorsal fin. The sides of its head and chin are a dark shade of blue. It usually contains 5-9 vertical bars on the sides of its body, but these stripes are not always distinct. It has a yellowish breast and abdomen, with the breast of the breeding male being a bright orange. The bluegill typically ranges in size from four to 12 inches, and reaches a maximum size just over 16 inches. The largest bluegill ever caught was 4 pounds, 12 ounces.

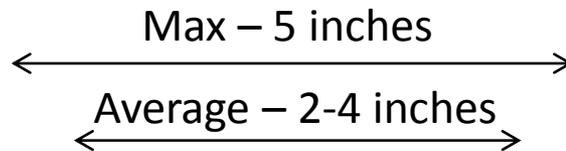
Habitat and Ecology -Bluegill live in the shallow waters of many lakes and ponds, along with slow-moving areas of streams and small rivers. They prefer water with many aquatic plants, and hide within fallen logs or water weeds. They can often be found around weed beds, where they search for food or spawn. Young bluegills' diet consists of rotifers and water fleas. The adult diet consists of aquatic insect larvae (mayflies, caddisflies, dragonflies), but can also include crayfish, leeches, snails, and other small fish. Their diet can also include the waxworm and nightcrawler that can be provided for them by anglers. Most bluegills feed during daylight hours, with a feeding peak being observed in the morning and evening. Bluegill are prey to many larger species like largemouth bass, and even larger bluegill.

Fishing -Bluegills are popular panfish, caught with live bait, flies, pieces of corn, small crankbaits, spinners, American cheese pushed around a hook, maggots, small frogs, or even a bare hook. They mostly bite on vibrant colors like orange, yellow, green, or red, chiefly at dawn and dusk. Some of the easiest baits to use for them are earthworms, live crickets and grasshoppers, white bread, cheese, or a corn kernel. Other efficient baits are redworms, waxworms, and other worms. They are noted for seeking out underwater vegetation for cover; their natural diet consists largely of small invertebrates and very small fish.

Although the majority of bluegills are caught on live bait—particularly worms, leeches, grubs and crickets—they can also be taken on tiny artificials such as jigs and spinnerbaits. They will rise to small poppers, sponge bugs and dry flies.

Any size Bluegill may be consumed if wanted. If you are not going to consume please catch and release.

Minnows



Insects and Plants ← EATS

Minnow is a general term used to refer to small freshwater and saltwater fish, especially those used as bait fish or for fishing bait. More specifically, it refers to small freshwater fish of the carp family.

True minnows

Smaller fish in the subfamily Leuciscinae are considered to be "true" minnows:

Bluntnose Minnow (*Pimephales notatus*): The Bluntnose minnow is a primary bait fish for Northern America (more specifically Ohio) and has a very high tolerance for variable water qualities, which helps its distribution throughout many regions. The snout of the Bluntnose minnow overhangs the mouth, giving it the bluntnose. There is a dark lateral line which stretches from the opercle to the base of the tail, where a large black spot is located. The average size of the adult is approximately 2 in.

Common Shiner (*Notropis cornutus*): These fish are one of the most common type of bait fish and are almost exclusively stream dwellers. The Common Shiner can be identified by the nine rays on its anal fin and terminal mouth. This minnow is typically bluish silver on the sides and greenish blue on the back, save for breeding season in which case the male gains a rose colored tail and anal fin. The Shiner grows about 2–4 in within one year and reach a size of 5 in at adulthood. Another common "shiner" bait fish is the young version of the European chub (*Leuciscus cephalus* or *Squalius cephaloides*) which is quite easy to catch.

Common Emerald Shiner (*Notropis alterinoides alterinoides*): Common Shiners are most abundant in the Great Lakes of North America, primarily Lake Erie. The name of the Emerald Shiner comes from the greenish emerald band that expands from the back of the gill cover to the tail. This type of minnow has a short, rounded snout, the only difference between the Common Emerald Shiner and the Silver Shiner is that the Silver Shiner has a longer snout and a larger eye. These fish grow to an average length of about 6 cm. This is one of the most common bait fish used in the Lake Erie region of Ohio and many fisherman hold it over all other bait.

Catching minnows for bait

Using minnows as baits can be seen by many fishermen as one of the most effective methods for fishing. Bait minnows can usually be found in any bait shop, especially ones near a body of water, but many anglers prefer to capture their own. A method in which a fisherman finds a school of minnows and using a fine meshnet scoops through the school, bringing the net back out of the water in one motion. This method is primarily used on the shore near the bank of a stream or a shallow area of a lake or pond.

See if you can catch a minnow with a net.