

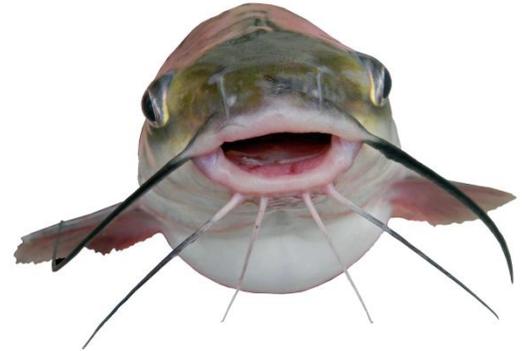
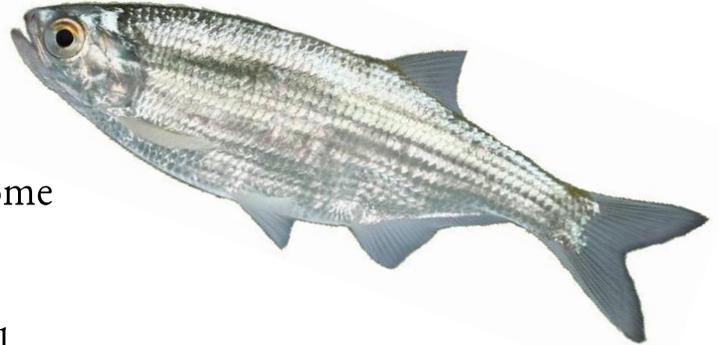
Field Guide to Fishes of Oklahoma



Getting to Know Your Oklahoma Fish



Most anglers are aware that our state is home to one of the most diverse and productive fisheries in the nation. However, few Oklahoman's can name more than a small fraction of the 175 fish species swimming in Oklahoma waters. Some of these species are small and relatively ordinary looking, while others have strange body shapes, bizarre appendages or dazzling coloration. Here is a brief guide to some of the fishes most likely to be encountered in Oklahoma waters.



Fish coloration is often highly variable depending on water or fish condition. In addition, many fish lose their life colors very quickly after death or when stressed. One method that sometimes works to restore life colors in live specimens is to put the fish in a black bucket or tub. Just as fish caught from clear water are darker than fish caught from muddy water, fish placed in a black bucket will often quickly assume dark coloration, while those in a white or light-colored bucket will remain “washed out.”

Pigment is partly determined by the amount of light entering the eye, which is one reason fish get dark in a dark bucket or muddy water. The clearer the water, the more light that passes through causing the fish to get darker. Another reason some fish are darker in color is due to a fish’s ability to change colors to blend in with their surroundings, which is a form of protection from predation.

Biologists Tip: Note the changes in eyes, fins, body color and pattern after few minutes exposure of the same fish to different background colors.



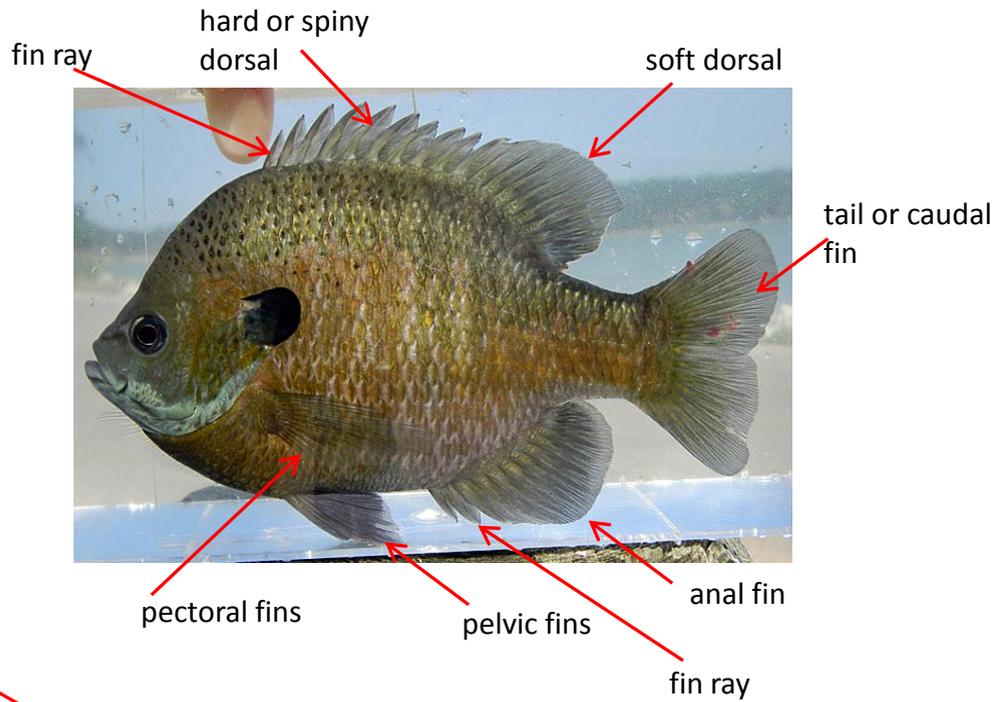
Light bucket after five minutes.



Dark bucket after five minutes.



Fish Terminology



adipose fin



fin rays



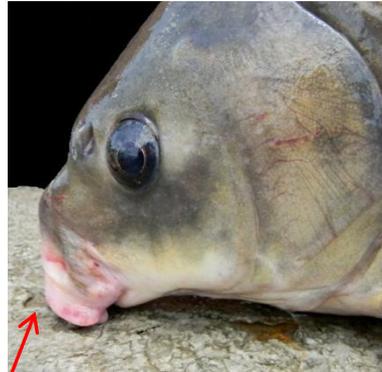
Fish Terminology Continued...

gill flap or opercula

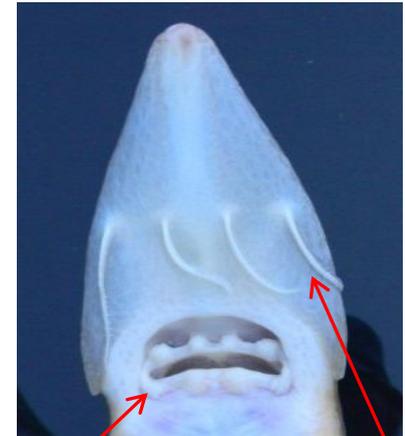
lateral line



terminal mouth -
located at the end of
the snout



subterminal mouth -
located on lower part
of snout



inferior mouth - located
on underside of fish,
well below the snout

barbels