

The Black Bass



Largemouth bass



- The largemouth bass is North America's most popular sport fish. It is an aggressive predator, eating virtually any prey that will fit in its mouth.
- Largemouth bass look very much like spotted bass, but differ in having larger mouths with the rear margin of the jaw hinge extending beyond the back of the eye. The tongue is typically without a tooth patch, and the first and second dorsal fins are barely connected.

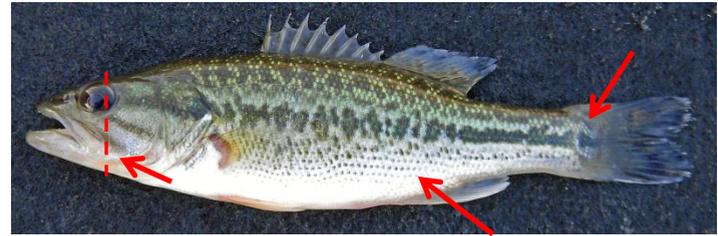


Biologist Tip: From clear water, the largemouth bass can have very dark coloration and can resemble a spotted bass.

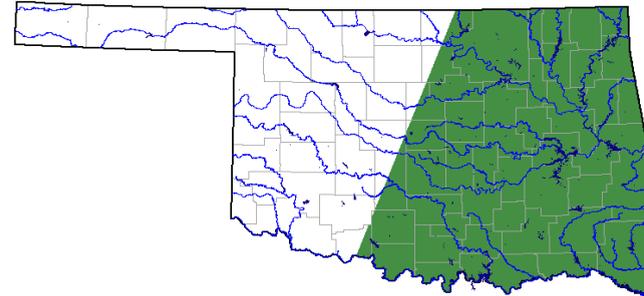
Spotted bass



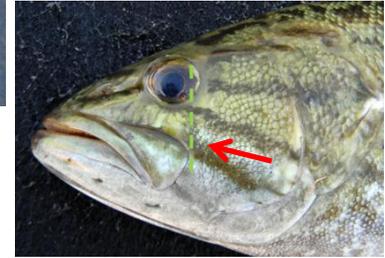
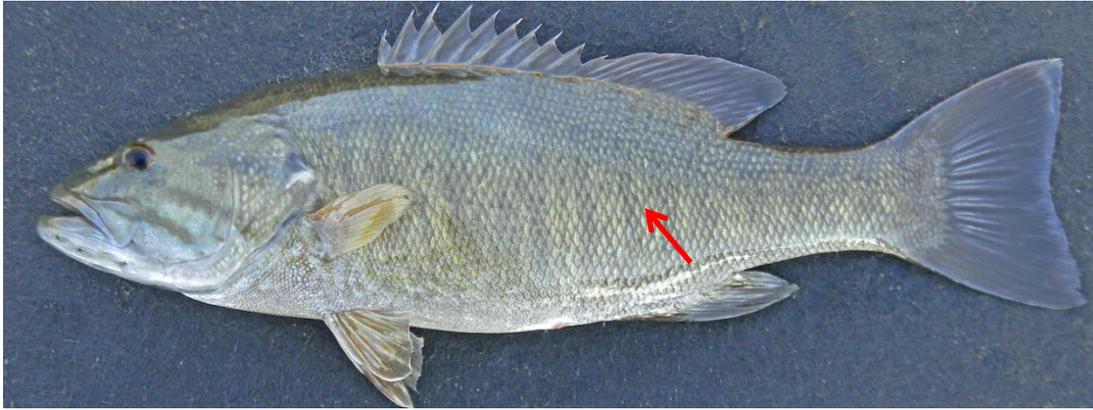
- The spotted bass is similar to the largemouth bass. It can be identified by rows of spots on the belly with an iridescent green pattern along the back. The jaw hinge does not extend beyond the back of the eye when the mouth is closed, and it has a sandpaper-like tooth patch on the tongue. The dorsal is not deeply notched.
- Eyes are sometimes red.
- Also called “Kentuckies,” or “redeye bass.”



Biologist Tip: Small fish (< 8”) are sometimes identified by a black spot at the base of the tail and rough sandpappy scales.



Smallmouth bass



- Smallmouth bass are native to many clear eastern Oklahoma streams and have been stocked in many reservoirs.
- Easily distinguished from largemouth and spotted bass by dark brown or bronze coloration often with barring and or blotches.
- No spots along lateral line. Dorsal not deeply notched. Usually without tooth patch. Hinge of jaw doesn't extend beyond back of eye when mouth is closed.
- Also called brown bass, brownies, bronze backs or smallies.
- **Fish Fact: Oklahoma is home to two native strains of smallmouth bass (the Neosho and Ouachita strains) and has some of the highest smallmouth bass densities in the nation. However, our native strain smallmouth seldom exceed 14". The larger smallmouth found in lakes are from the "Tennessee Lake" strain and can surpass five pounds.**

