

Fish Species Information

A silhouette of a person fishing is shown against a sunset background. The person is standing on a rocky shore, holding a fishing rod that extends diagonally across the frame. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow over the water and sky.

Black Crappie (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*)

Description: Deep bodied with dark overall color; body color is basically silvery on the sides with black blotches overlaid, the pattern of blotches on the median fin often gives the appearance of white spots on a black background; 7-8 dorsal fins; 6-7 anal spines; 16-19 soft rays

Ecology: Prefer clear water with more vegetation; partial to brush piles and similar sources of cover; feed on small fish and aquatic insects

Note: Black Crappie are typically lower in levels of mercury because they are smaller fish that feed on small fish and insects

Bluegill Sunfish (*Lepomis macrochirus*)

Description: Large, deep bodied sunfish with a small mouth, slender gill rakers; Black opercular flap; Black spot at the base of the posterior dorsal rays

Ecology: Does best in clear, quiet waters with limited vegetation; Feed mainly on microcrustaceans and insects though larger adults will feed on small fish

Notes: Bluegill Sunfish are typically lower in levels of mercury because they are smaller fish that feed on microcrustaceans and insects

Channel Catfish (*Ictalurus punctuatus*)

Description: Elongated, slender body with a deeply forked tail; Color is gray-blue gradually grading into whitish underside with small dark spots scattered on the sides; Anal fin is rounded with 24-29 rays

Ecology: Do equally well in streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds; Prefer cover such as logs but when they venture out to feed will eat almost any dead or alive organic material

Notes: Channel Catfish are typically lower in mercury because they eat a variety of organisms and organic material

Common Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*)

Description: Deep bodied with strongly arched back and very long dorsal fin of 18-21 rays; Dark olive color that grades quickly to bronze or golden sides with yellowish/white below; Fins are golden, orange or light olive

Ecology: Very adaptable though it prefers quiet, shallow waters of rivers; Feeds on plants, insect larvae, and crustaceans

Notes: Common Carp are typically lower in levels of mercury because they are smaller fish that feed on microcrustaceans and insects

Flathead Catfish (*Pylodictis olivaris*)

Description: Broad, flat head; Caudal fin is slightly notched with a white triangle on the upper rays, Anal fin is rounded and short with 14-17 rays; Lower jaw protrudes beyond the upper; Pectoral spine is serrated on both edges

Ecology: Successful in both quiet and flowing waters; tolerates a wide range of turbidity; Prefer deep holes and channels of rivers and lakes; Feed on smaller fish

Notes: Flathead Catfish are typically higher in mercury levels because they feed mostly on small to medium size fish

Smallmouth Buffalo (*Ictiobus bubalus*)

Description: Deep-bodied, highly compressed fish with a straight ventral contour and highly arched back; Long dorsal fin with 26-31 rays; Dark golden to olive in color with whitish belly

Ecology: Prefers deeper, less turbid waters; Diet consists of small aquatic benthic animals and algae

Notes: Smallmouth Buffalo are typically lower in mercury levels because they feed very low on the food chain

White Crappie (*Pomoxis annularis*)

Description: Deep bodied, fairly elongated with large mouth and over all silvery appearance with faint, dark vertical bars; Median fins are lightly mottled; 6 dorsal spines; protruding lower jaw

Ecology: Quite tolerant of turbidity, prefer brush piles or submerged trees in shallow water close to vegetation; feed on smaller fish and insects

Note: White Crappie are typically lower in levels of mercury because they are smaller fish that feed on small fish and insects

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A silhouette of a person fishing is shown against a background of a sunset over water. The person is on the left, holding a fishing rod that extends diagonally across the frame. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and reflecting on the water's surface.

Largemouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*)

Description: Elongated body with white underside; Large mouth with upper jaw extends beyond posterior edge of the eye; Spinous dorsal fin is barely connected to the soft-rayed dorsal fin; the shortest dorsal fin is less than half the length of the longest dorsal spine; 9 dorsal spines; 12 or 13 dorsal rays

Ecology: Largemouth bass inhabit warm, quiet waters with low turbidity, soft bottoms, and beds of aquatic plants; typical habitats include farm ponds, swamps, lakes, reservoirs, sloughs, creek pools, and river coves and backwaters; In lakes and reservoirs these fishes are usually close to shore; Feeds mainly on fish, crayfish, and insects

Note: Largemouth Bass are typically higher in mercury levels because they feed aggressively on small to medium size fish and are cannibalistic when they get larger

Smallmouth Bass (*Micropterus dolmieu*)

Description: Large, elongated body with a low spinous dorsal fin joined to the soft rayed portion; 68-76 Lateral line scales; Bronze color with dark vertical bars on sides; Three dark bars are visible on cheek

Ecology: Located in cool, clear, and rocky streams; Feed mainly on crayfish, fish, and aquatic insects

Notes: Even though they feed on insects and crayfish when they are younger, Smallmouth Bass are typically higher in mercury levels because they feed on small fish as they mature

Spotted Bass (*Micropterus punctulatus*)

Description: Large, slim, elongated green body with a white under body and a series of dark blotches that form a horizontal band on the side; Low spinous dorsal fin; 10 dorsal spines; 12 dorsal rays

Ecology: Best adapted to turbid waters such as small streams but do fairly well in clear lakes; Diet consists mostly of crayfish and insects but small fish are also eaten

Notes: Even though they feed on insects and crayfish when they are younger, Spotted Bass are typically higher in mercury levels because they feed on small fish as they mature

Striped/Hybrid Bass (*Morone saxatilis*)

Description: Thinner, silver body with 7-8 distinct horizontal dark lines across the side; Spiny dorsal fin that is separated from the second dorsal fin

Ecology: Lakes and rivers with moderately strong currents; feeds mainly on fish and crustaceans

Notes: Striped/Hybrid Bass can have medium to high levels of mercury depending on the forage fish they eat; If their diet consists of shad, they will have lower mercury levels

Walleye (*Lepomis microlophus*)

Description: Large, streamlined body with high fins and large mouth with both villiform and large canine jaw teeth; Spinous dorsal fin has a black spot on posterior membranes; 19-22 soft dorsal rays; white tip on the lower lobe of the caudal fin

Ecology: Prefers deep or weedy areas in fairly clear water with dim light; Feeds mainly on fish

Notes: Walleye are typically higher in mercury levels because they feed aggressively on small to medium size fish

White Bass (*Morone chrysops*)

Description: Deep and compressed steely blue body; two separated dorsal fins, the first with 9 spines and the second with 3 spine and 13 rays; the anal fin has 3 spines, the second shorter than the third with 11-13 rays; 6-10 horizontal stripes on the side

Ecology: do well in both rivers and lakes; Feed on smaller fish

Notes: White Bass are typically higher in mercury levels because they feed aggressively on smaller fish

Redear Sunfish (*Lepomis microlophus*)

Description: Short opercular lap with bright red posterior crescent; Long, pointed pectoral fin; Body color is pale olivaceous above and silvery below

Ecology: Does well in lakes and ponds; Congregates around brush and stumps; Feeds primarily on invertebrates and small snails

Notes: Redear Sunfish are typically lower in levels of mercury because they are smaller fish that feed on microcrustaceans and insects

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Green Sunfish (*Lepomis cyanellus*)

Description: Large mouth with blue/green lines on cheeks; Black spots at the bases of the posterior rays of dorsal and anal fins

Ecology: Prefers small streams and ponds; Feeds primarily on insects and fish

Notes: Green Sunfish are typically lower in levels of mercury because they are smaller fish that feed on microcrustaceans, small fish, and insects

Warmouth (*Lepomis gulosus*)

Description: Brown body and yellowish belly sunfish that have teeth on the tongue, red eyes, and large mouth; Large supramaxillary bone; Several mottled, dark vertical bars on sides; Opercle flap is short with a black spot

Ecology: Typically found in ponds and lakes but can be located in pools of sluggish streams and rivers; Prefers weedy or brushy habitats in quiet waters; Feeds on fish crayfish and insects

Notes: Warmouth are typically lower in levels of mercury because they are smaller fish that feed on microcrustaceans and insects

Saugeye (*Sander vitreus* x *Sander canadense*)

Description: dark bars or oblong vertical spots between the spines of the first dorsal fin; white tips on the lower part of the tail and anal fins;

Ecology: highly adaptable to most lake and river environments and are tolerant of murky waters; Feed on small fish

Notes: Saugeye are typically higher in mercury levels because they feed aggressively on small to medium size fish

Blue Catfish (*Ictalurus furcatus*)

Description: Large, heavy-bodied catfish with deeply forked tail; conspicuously humped in front to the dorsal fin; Long anal fin has 30-35 rays; Color is bluish to pale gray grading to white sides and belly

Ecology: Live in large lakes and deeper portions of major rivers with swift water; Feed on a variety of living or dead animals

Notes: Blue Catfish are typically lower in mercury because they eat a variety of organisms and organic material

Black Bullhead Catfish (*Ameiurus melas*)

Description: Heavy bodied with dark coloration and a slightly notched caudal fin; Gray chin barbels and pectoral spines without well-developed serrae; Membranes of the anal fin are dark with light fin rays; 17-21 rays in the anal fin

Ecology: Prefer quite, soft-bottomed backwaters, oxbows, and pools of small streams; Feed on animals and plants

Notes: Black Bullhead Catfish are typically lower in mercury because they eat a variety of organisms and organic material

Reference:

- Miller, R.J. and Robinson H.W. Fishes of Oklahoma Norman, Ok. University of Oklahoma Press. 2004.
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources. 2011.
- Accessed on 2-22 11. http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/Home/species_a_to_z/SpeciesGuideIndex/saugeye/tabid/6750/Default.aspx