

Biology of Manitoba Fish Species

Walleye/Pickerel
(*Sander vitreus*)



Yellow Perch
(*Perca flavescens*)



Sauger
(*Sander canadensis*)



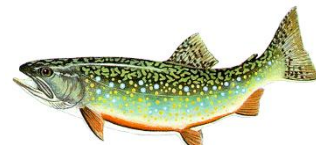
Northern Pike/Jackfish
(*Esox Lucius*)



Lake Trout
(*Salvelinus namaycush*)



Brook Trout
(*Salvelinus fontinalis*)



Brown Bullhead
(*Ameiurus nebulosus*)



Channel Catfish
(*Ictalurus punctatus*)



Burbot/Mariah
(*Lota lota*)



Common Carp
(*Cyprinus carpio*)



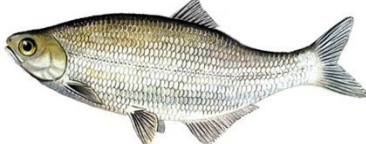
Smallmouth Bass
(*Micropterus dolumieu*)



Goldeye
(*Hiodon alosoides*)



Mooneye
(*Hiodon tergisus*)



Freshwater Drum
(*Aplodinotus grunniens*)



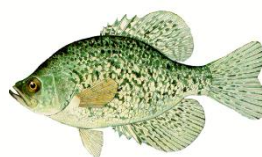
White Bass
(*Morone chrysops*)



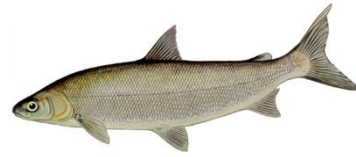
Rock Bass
(*Ambloplites rupestris*)



Black Crappie
(*Promoxis nigromaculatus*)



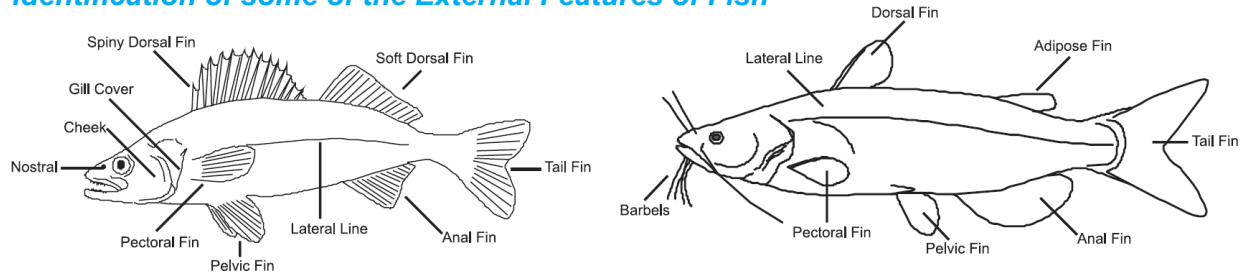
Lake Whitefish
(*Coregonus clupeaformis*)



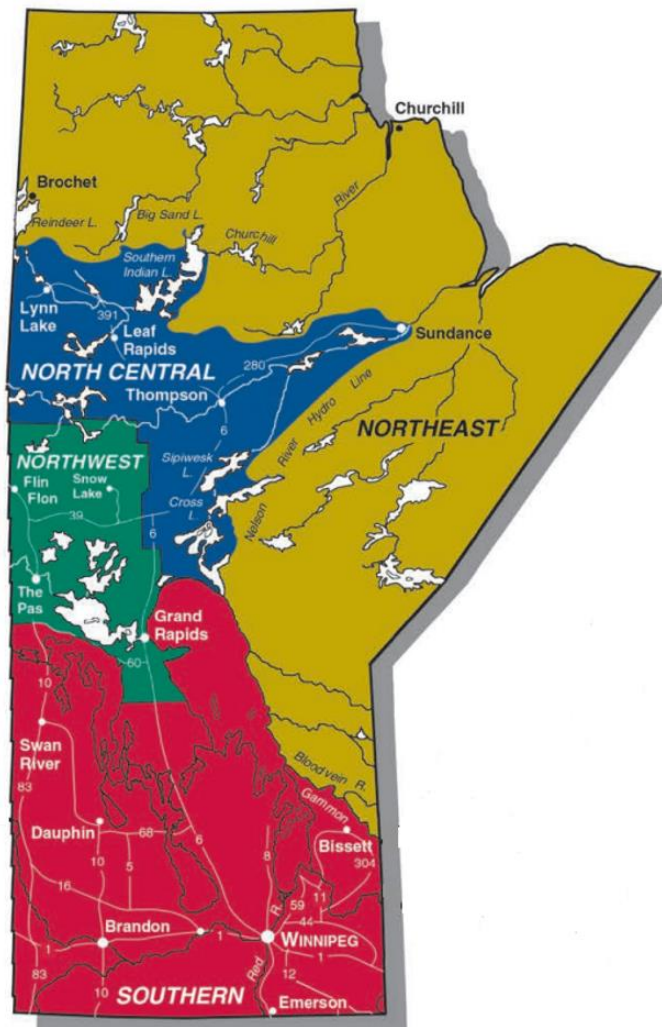
Biology of Manitoba Fish Species

Manitoba's freshwater habitats are home to a wide variety of fish species. Below is a summary of key species, including their common and scientific names, physiology, habitats, diet, and other important details to help anglers understand these fish better.

Identification of some of the External Features of Fish



Fishing Divisions



Walleye/Pickerel

(*Sander vitreus*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~99 cm
- Olive to emerald green to golden body
- White to yellow underbelly
- White bottom tip of the tail fin
- Cheeks are scaleless
- Large mouth extending below the eyes
- Spiny Dorsal Fin
- Physically similar to Sauger and Perch

Habitat

- Freshwater lakes and rivers
- Thrives in low-light environments
- Found in shallow turbid waters
- Found deeper in clear lakes

Life history

- Age at maturity ~2-6 years
- Spawns late winter to early spring

Fish Fact: Walleye is the official Provincial fish of Manitoba.

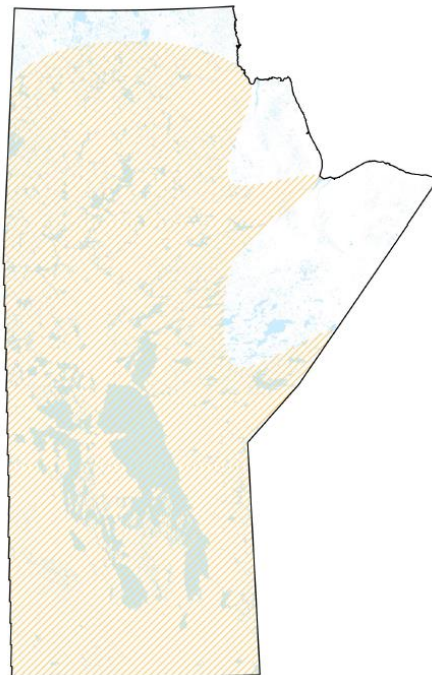
Diet

- Smaller fish, crayfish, leeches, invertebrates

Bait/Tackle

- Minnows, leeches, worms
- Jigs, spinners, diving bait

Map:



Yellow Perch

(*Perca flavescens*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~42 cm
 - Yellow-golden brown to green body
 - Yellow to white underbelly
 - 6-8 dark vertical bars over their sides
 - Elongated oval body
 - Blunt snout
-

Habitat

- Cool waters of lakes and rivers
- May also be found in ponds
- Weedy or sandy areas
- Typically found in schools

Life History

- Age at maturity ~2-4 years
- Spawn during the spring

Fish Fact: Yellow perch belong to the same family as walleye and sauger.

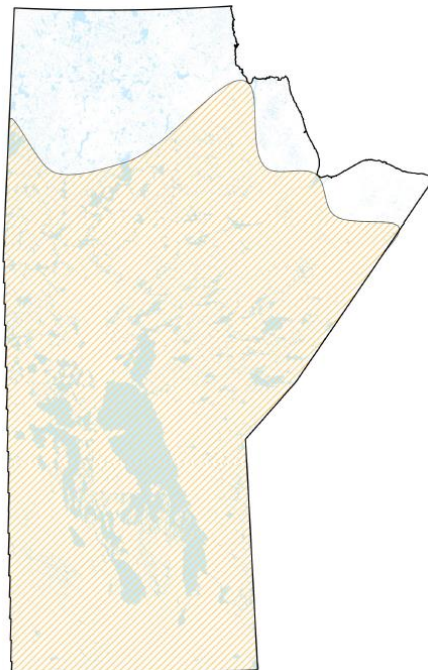
Diet:

- Smaller fish, plankton, insect larvae

Bait/Tackle

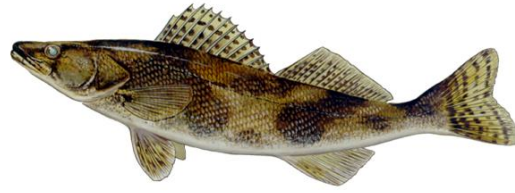
- Minnows, worms
- Small jig, spinners

Map:



Sauger

(*Sander canadensis*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~62 cm
- Olive to gray body with dark spots
- Spotted spiny dorsal fin
- Scales on the cheeks
- White streak along bottom of anal fin
- Similar to Walleye

Habitat

- Large turbid rivers and lakes

Life History

- Age at maturity ~2-5 years
- Spring spawn in shallow, gravel-bottom

Fish Fact: Sauger feed aggressively during the daytime, which makes it popular with anglers.

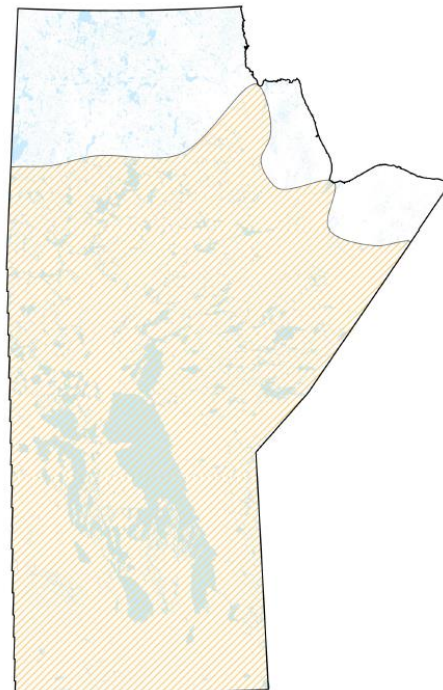
Diet

- Smaller fish, invertebrates, insects

Bait/Tackle

- Minnows, leeches, nightcrawlers
- Jigs, spinners, diving bait

Map:



Northern Pike/Jackfish

(*Esox lucius*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~153 cm
 - Elongated body
 - Long, broad, flat snout
 - Dark green to olive body with pale spots
 - Dorsal and anal fins located near the tail
 - Five pores under each side of the lower jaw
-

Habitat

- Common in lakes and marshes
- Also found in slow-moving rivers

Diet

- Other fish, crayfish
- Frogs, ducks, small mammals

Life History

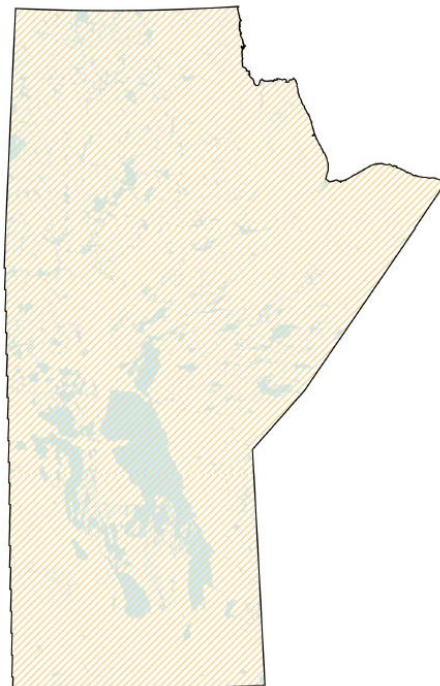
- Age at Maturity ~2 years
- Spawns early April in shallow waters

Bait/Tackle

- Minnows, cut bait, worms
- Spoons, Jigs, topwater lures, spinners

Map:

Fish Fact: Known for its explosive strikes, Northern Pike are a favorite with anglers.



Lake Trout

(*Salvelinus namaycush*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~137 cm
 - Olive to green or silver body
 - Yellowish spots cover body and head
 - Deeply forked tail
-

Habitat

- Cold, deep waters of large lakes

Life History

- Age at maturity ~6–7 years
- Spawns October to November

Fish Fact: Lake Trout can live for over 40 years and grow to impressive sizes. Lake Trout have been found in waters as deep as 100 feet.

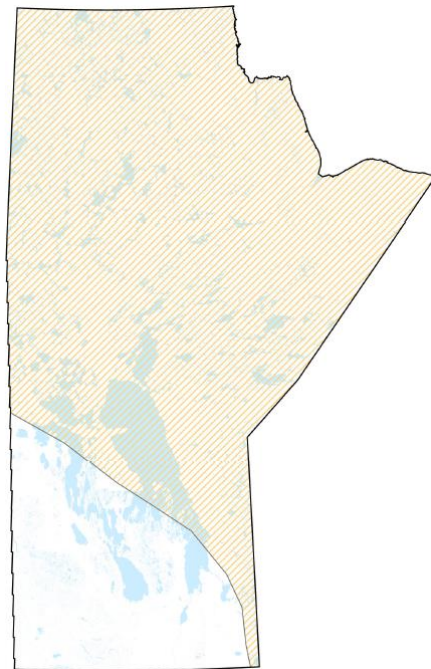
Diet

- Smaller Fish, insects, invertebrates

Bait/Tackle

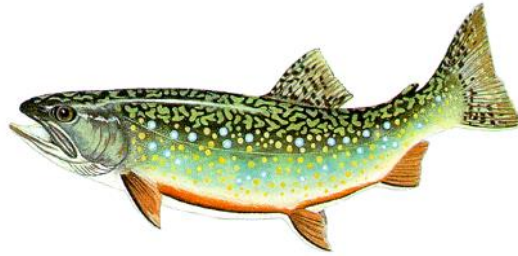
- Large dead bait fish
- Jigs, spoons

Map:



Brook Trout

(*Salvelinus fontinalis*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~76 cm
 - Dark green body with orange underbelly
 - Scattered red spots with bluish halos
 - Vivid white on front edge of lower fins
-

Habitat

- Cold, clear streams and small lakes

Life History

- Age at maturity ~2-3 years
- Spawns in the fall

Fish Facts: Brook Trout is a species of freshwater fish in the salmon family.

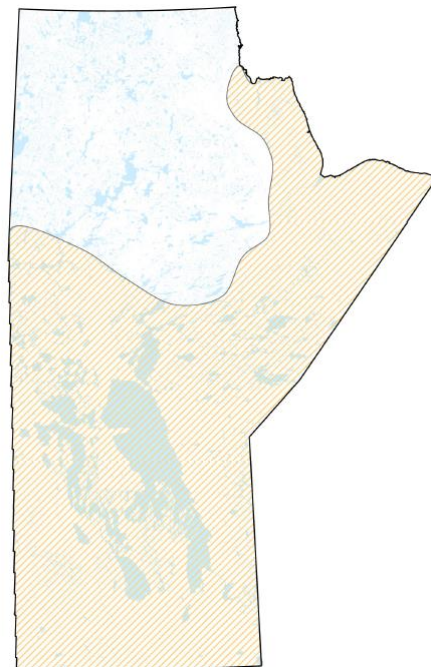
Diet

- Small fish, insects

Bait/Tackle

- Insects, worms
- Small spinners, spoons

Map:



Brown Bullhead

(*Ameiurus nebulosus*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~49 cm
- Brownish green to greenish yellow sides
- Yellow underbelly
- Whisker-like black barbels
- Wide, flat head
- Spine on back of pectoral & dorsal fins

Habitat

- Prefer slow-moving, murky waters

Life History

- Age at maturity ~3 years
- Spawn May to July in shallow water
- The males guard the nest of eggs

Fish Fact: Bullheads can survive in low oxygen conditions, making them resilient to harsh environments.

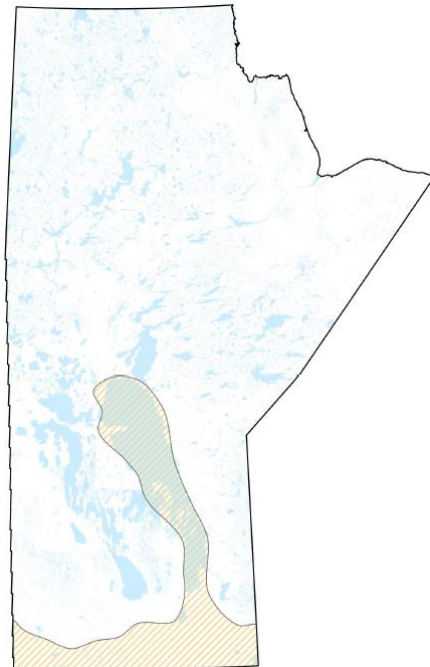
Diet

- Snails, leeches, crayfish

Bait/Tackle

- Worms, minnows, leeches
- Jigs, spinner, rigs

Map:



Channel Catfish

(*Ictalurus punctatus*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~118 cm
- Blue gray to brown sides
- Body marked with dark spots
- White to pinkish underbelly
- Deeply forked tail
- Whisker-like barbels

Habitat

- Prefers deep rivers and lakes
- Slower moving waters

Life History

- Age at maturity ~3-6 years
- Spawns in summer in rocky, shallow waters

Diet

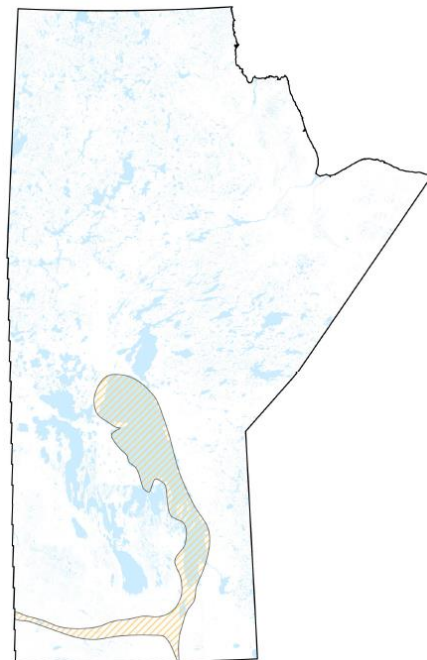
- Smaller fish, insects, frogs, birds
- Aquatic plant material

Bait/Tackle

- Minnows, worms, cut bait
- Jigs, rigs

Fish Fact: Channel catfish's strong sense of smell helps them locate food in murky waters.

Map:



Burbot/Mariah

(Lota lota)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~107 cm
- Elongated, eel-like shaped body
- Mottled brownish black body
- Two soft dorsal fins
- Smooth skin with a flattened head
- A single barbel on the tip of the chin

Habitat

- Prefers cold, deep lakes/large rivers

Life History

- Age at maturity ~3-5 years
- Spawns under the ice mid winter

Fish Fact: Burbot liver is huge! It is six times larger than any other freshwater fish of the same size, comprising approximately 10% of their body weight! Burbot is sometimes referred to as “Freshwater Cod.”

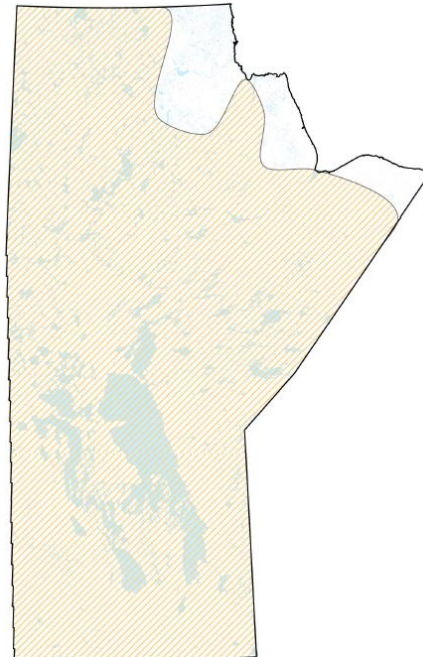
Diet

- Smaller fish, crayfish, insects

Bait/Tackle

- Cut bait, minnows
- Jigs, spoons, rigs

Map:



Common Carp

(Cyprinus carpio)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~108 cm
- Gray to yellow large thick body
- Large scales
- Elongated dorsal fin
- Barbels on either side of the upper jaw
- Spines on leading edges of dorsal/anal fins

Habitat

- Warm, shallow, weedy lakes/rivers

Diet

- Aquatic plants, insects, invertebrates

Life History

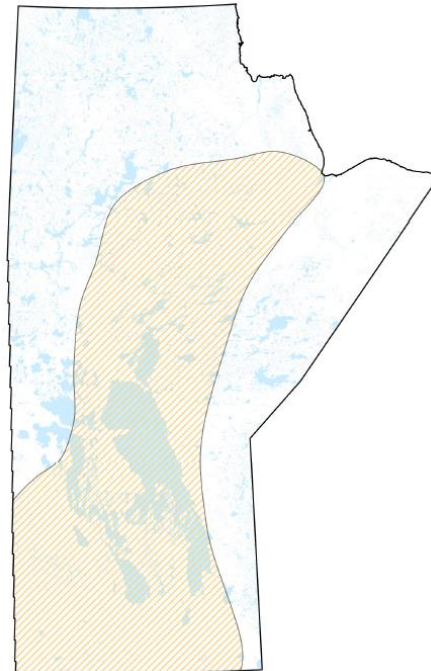
- Age at maturity ~3-5 years
- Spawns late spring in shallow waters

Bait/Tackle

- Corn, dough balls, bread, nightcrawlers
- Hair rig

Fish Fact: Carp are able to tolerate water with very low oxygen levels, by gulping air at the surface.

Map:



Smallmouth Bass

(Micropterus dolomieu)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~61 cm
- Bronze to greenish body
- Small mouth relative to head size
- Three dark bands radiating over cheeks
- Dark vertical stripes over sides
- Males are generally smaller than females

Habitat

- Clear rocky bottom lakes and rivers

Diet

- Smaller fish, crayfish, insects

Life History

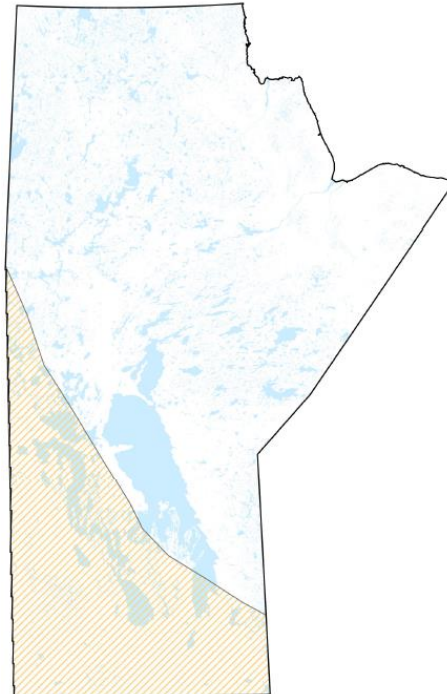
- Age at maturity ~3-5 years
- Spawns late spring in shallow nests

Bait/Tackle

- Soft plastic bait, crankbaits
- Spinners, topwater lures

Fish Fact: Smallmouth bass are known for their acrobatic leaps when hooked.

Map:



Goldeye

(Hiodon alosoides)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~53 cm
- Silver compressed body, dark back
- Large, distinctive eyes with yellow iris
- Goldeye are similar to Mooneye

Habitat

- Slow-moving rivers and turbid lakes

Diet

- Smaller fish, insects, crustaceans

Life History

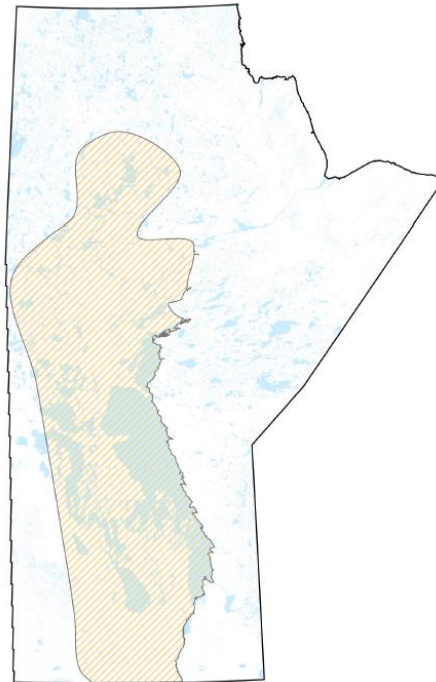
- Age at maturity ~6-7 years
- Spawn in early summer

Bait/Tackle

- Minnows, worms
- Bobber stop, slip float, smaller jig

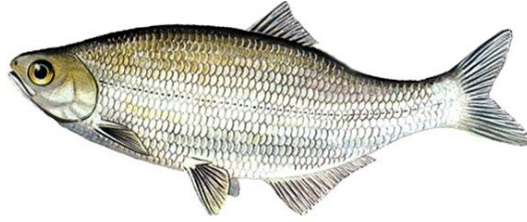
Fish Fact: Goldeye is considered a delicacy when smoked, known as “Lake Winnipeg Goldeye.”

Map:



Mooneye

(Hiodon tergisus)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~50 cm
- Similar to Goldeye with larger eyes
- Iris of the eye is silver
- Back is blue instead of black

Habitat

- Clear, fast-moving rivers and large lakes

Life History

- Age at maturity ~6-7 years
- Spawns in spring or early summer in rivers

Diet

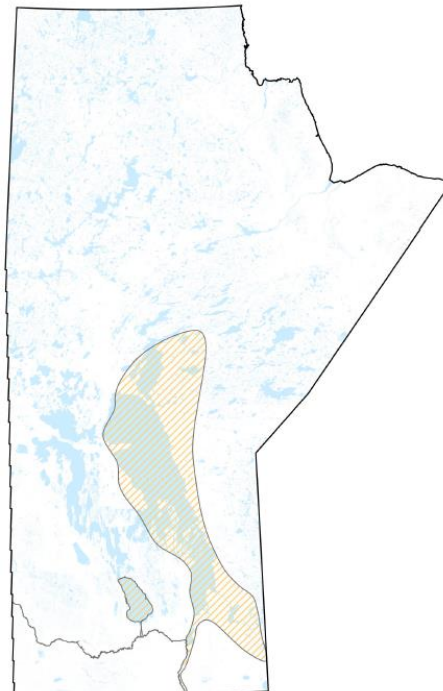
- Smaller fish, insects, crustaceans

Bait/Tackle

- Worms, minnows
- Bobber stop, slip float, smaller jig

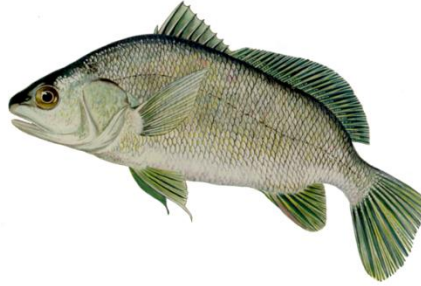
Fish Fact: Mooneye are sometimes confused with Goldeye due to their similar appearance.

Map:



Freshwater Drum

(*Aplodinotus grunniens*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~91 cm
- Head and body slope steeply up from snout
- Large, blue or purplish to silver body
- Long dorsal fin divided into two lobes

Habitat

- Large rivers and lakes

Life History

- Age at maturity ~4-6 years
- Spawns in late spring

Diet

- Invertebrates, smaller fish, leeches

Bait/Tackle

- Worms, minnows
- Spinners, Jigs

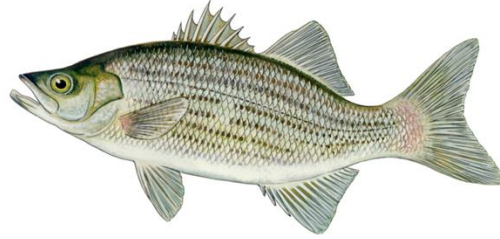
Fish Fact: Freshwater Drum are unique in that they produce a drumming sound by vibrating muscles in their swim bladder.

Map:



White Bass

(*Morone chrysops*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~50 cm
 - Spine on upper corner of opercular bone
 - Silver body horizontal black stripes
 - Deep, laterally compressed profile
-

Habitat

- Shallow lakes, large slow-moving rivers

Life History

- Age at maturity ~2-3 years
- Spawns in early to mid-June

Diet

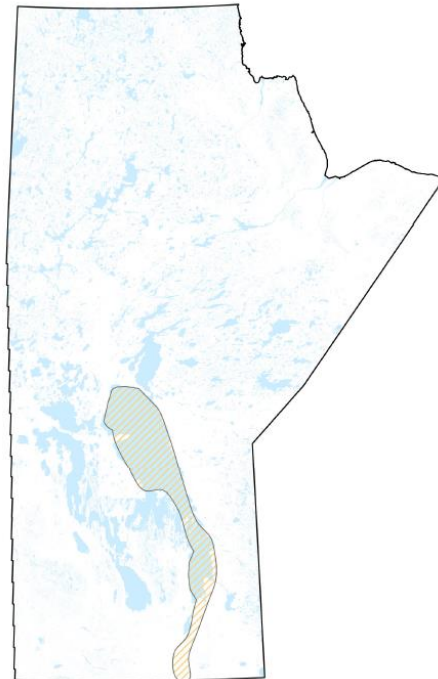
- Small fish, insects, aquatic plants

Bait/Tackle

- Minnows, worms
- Crankbait, spinners

Fish Facts: White Bass are known for their aggressive schooling behavior, making them a fun target for anglers.

Map:



Rock Bass

(*Ambloplites rupestris*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~40 cm
- Rows of dark spots along body
- Golden brown to olive body
- 5-7 spines on anal fin
- 10-12 dorsal spines
- Red eyes

Habitat

- Rocky streams and rivers

Life History

- Age at maturity ~2-3 years
- Spawns in June in shallow nests

Fish Facts: Rock Bass are not really bass, they are members of the sunfish family.

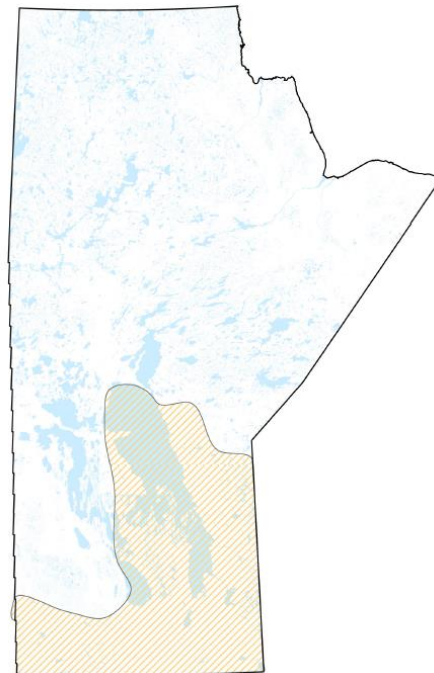
Diet

- Crayfish, aquatic insects, small fish

Bait/Tackle

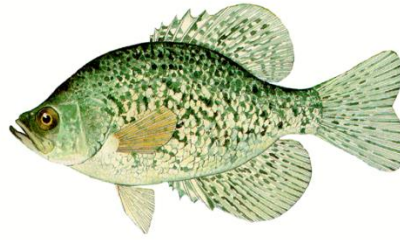
- Worms, minnows
- Crankbait, spinners

Map:



Black Crappie

(*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~44 cm
 - Dark speckled sides over a greenish body
 - 6-7 spines in the anal fin
 - 7-8 spines in dorsal fin
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Habitat

- Clear, quiet lakes and rivers

Diet

- Small fish, insects

Life History

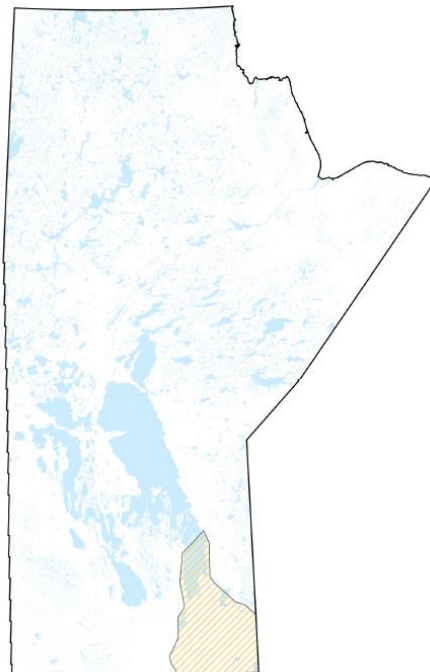
- Age at maturity ~2-3 years
- Spawns in June and July

Bait/Tackle

- Minnows, worms
- Jigs, small lures

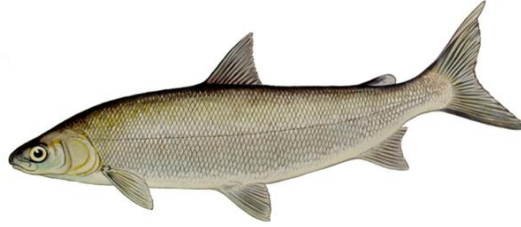
Fish Facts: Male Black Crappie showcase their parenting skills by creating nests for spawning in the spring.

Map:



Lake Whitefish

(Coregonus clupeaformis)



Common Characteristics

- Lengths recorded up to ~72 cm
- Large silver scales on sides
- Inferior mouth
- Forked tail

Habitat

- Near the bottom of lakes and rivers

Life History

- Age at maturity ~3-5 years
- Spawns in September to October

Diet

- Invertebrates, small fish, insects

Bait/Tackle

- Minnows, worms
- Jigs, spoons, spinners

Fish Facts: Their closet relatives include Trout, Salmon, Grayling, and Char.

Map:

