WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

HOW MUCH DOES MY FISH WEIGH?

DON'T HAVE A SCALE?

No problem. Reach for a ruler or tape measure and find the answer.

FISHING WISCONSIN

WEIGHING FISH WITH A RULER

Use these equations to find the weight of your fish:

bass = (length x length x girth) / 1,200

pike = (length x length x length) / 3,500

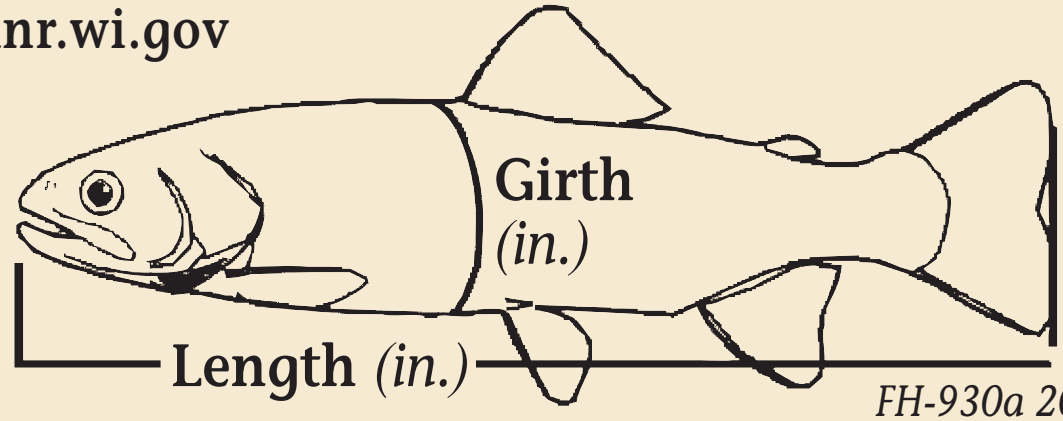
sunfish = (length x length x length) / 1,200

trout = (length x girth x girth) / 800

walleye = (length x length x length) / 2,700

For example, you catch a 16" trout with an 8" girth. Using the equation above you learn that you just landed a trout about 1 1/4 pounds, (16x8x8)/800=1.25.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov



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Note: *Results are rough estimates only. Actual weights vary slightly by waterbody.*

SPORT FISH RESTORATION

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

MATCH YOUR CATCH

HOW ABOUT A GAME?

1. **GO FISH!** Combine your deck of wildcards with a partner's and play the traditional game of Go Fish! Deal out seven cards and put the rest on the draw pile. The idea is to make pairs and go out. Got any suckers?
2. **TWENTY QUESTIONS.** In a group, tape cards to each other's backs. Each person gets to ask two "yes" or "no" questions of a group member that they think will lead them to the identity of his or her fish. Then they move to another member to ask two more questions. For example, ask "Am I a major predator? Do I have whiskers?"
3. **CHARADES.** Draw a card and act out the fish name while others guess what you are.
4. **HOOK 'EM AND I.D. 'EM!** Tape these cards to casting targets and identify them when you reel them in.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

Photo: Theresa Stabo

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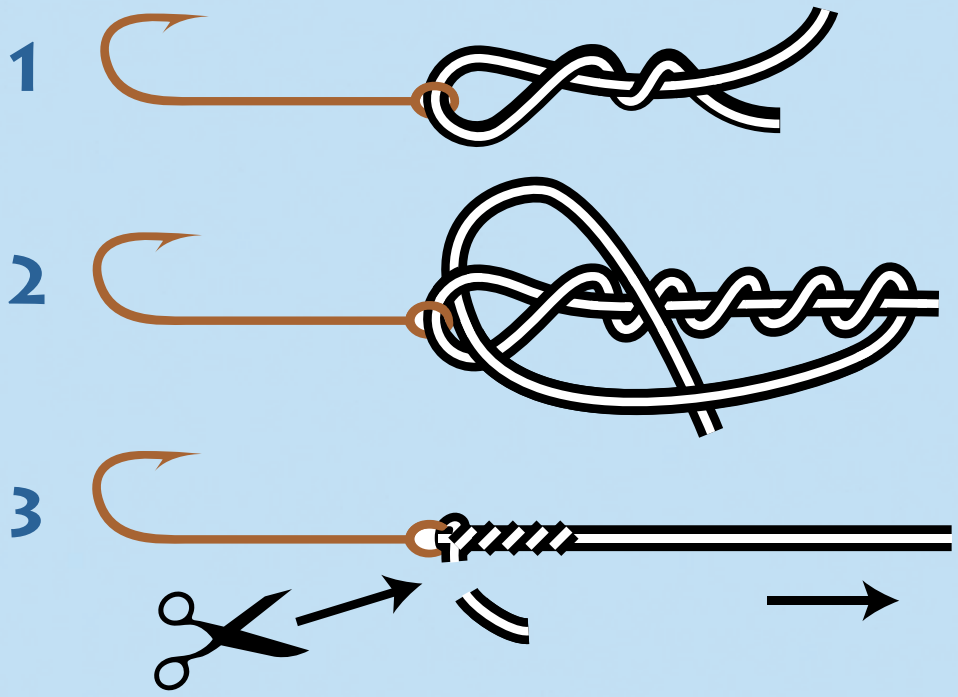
WISCONSIN WILDCARDS



IMPROVED CLINCH KNOT

Introduce a friend to fishing on

FREE FISHING WEEKEND,

the first weekend in June.

No license needed!

The Angler Education Program provides training for educators and adult youth program leaders. For more information, call 608/266-2272 or look us up on our web site:

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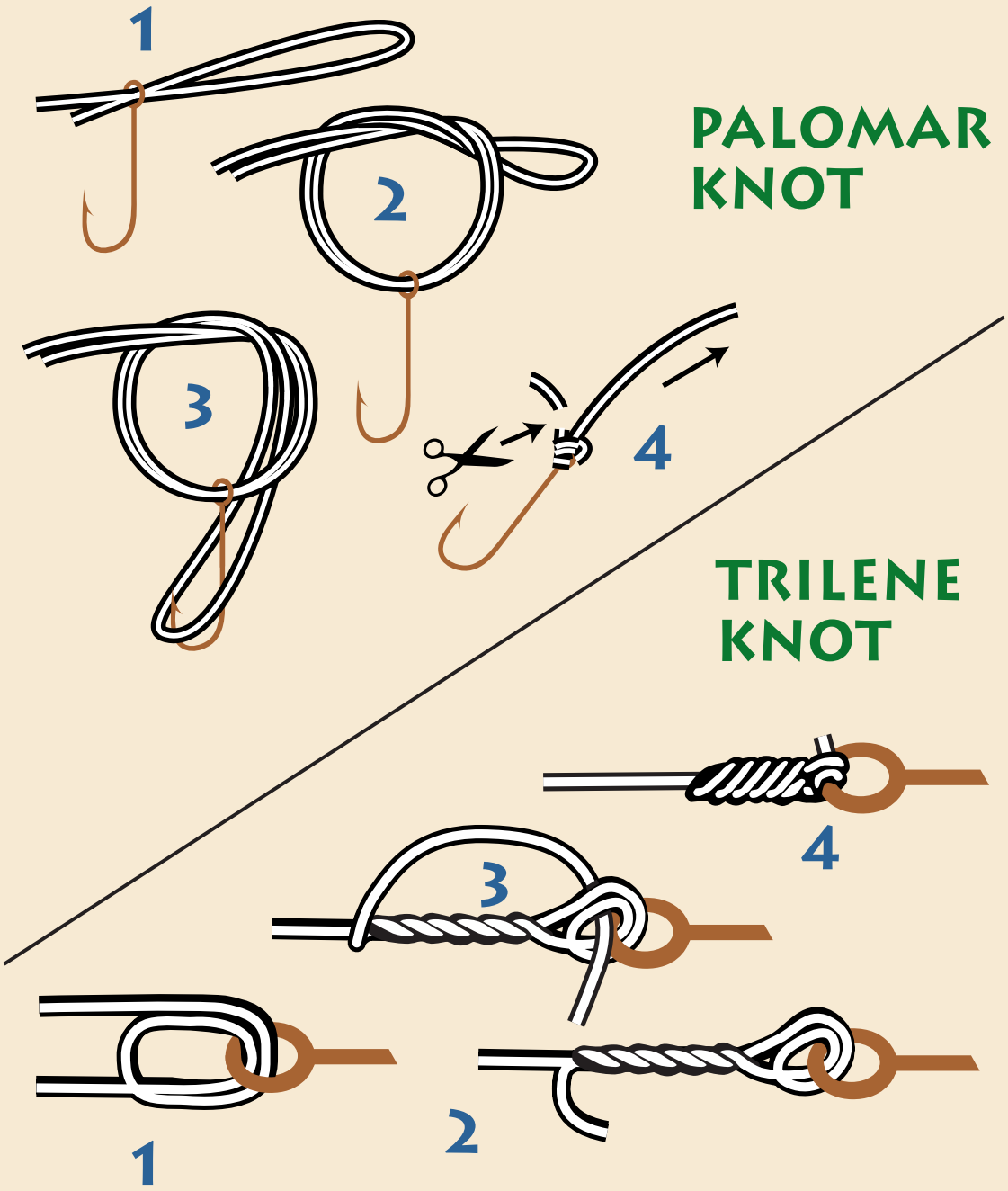
CLINCH A CATCH!

CLINCH A CATCH



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Illustrations: Linda Pohlod

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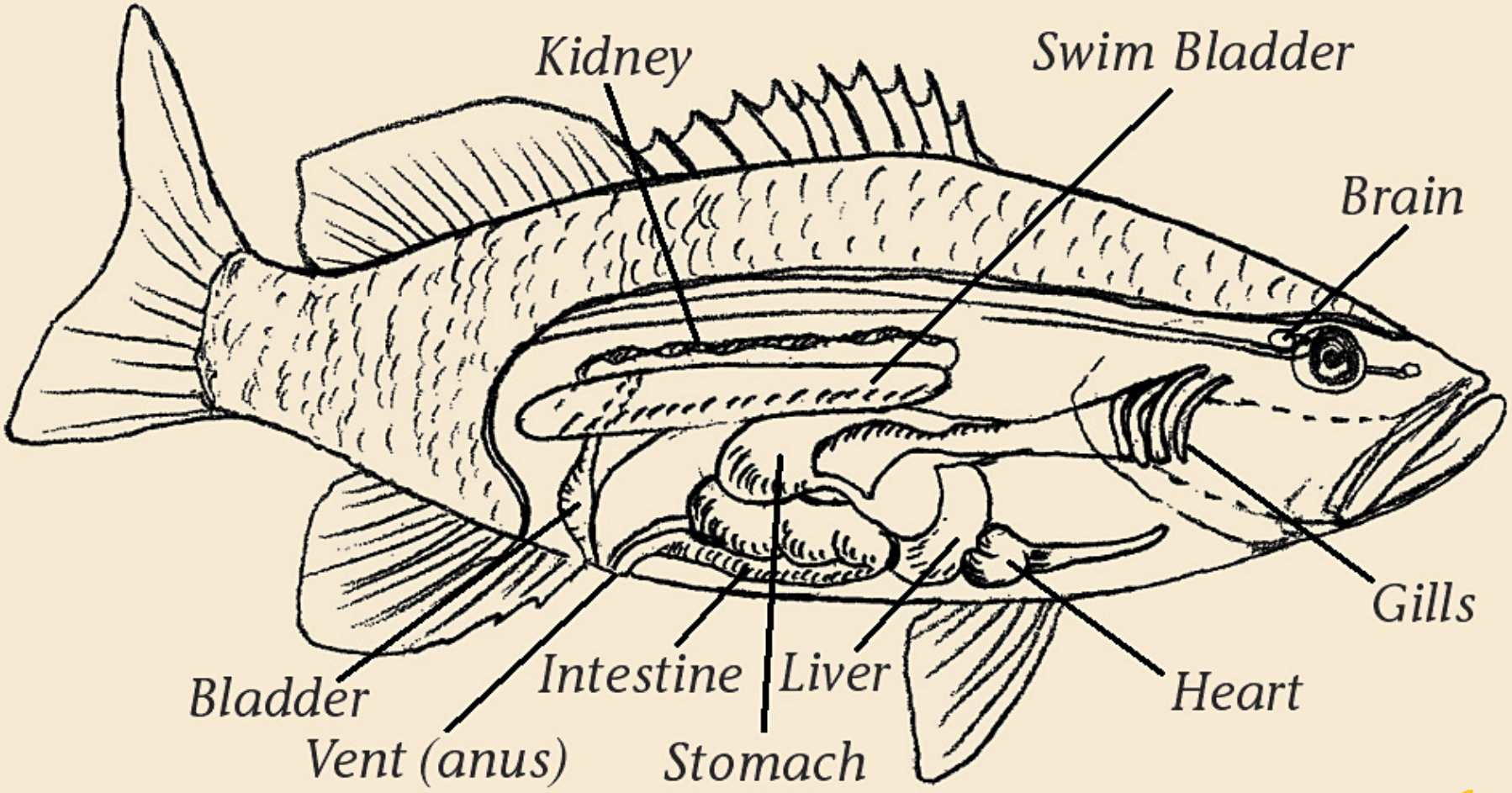
WISCONSIN WILDCARDS



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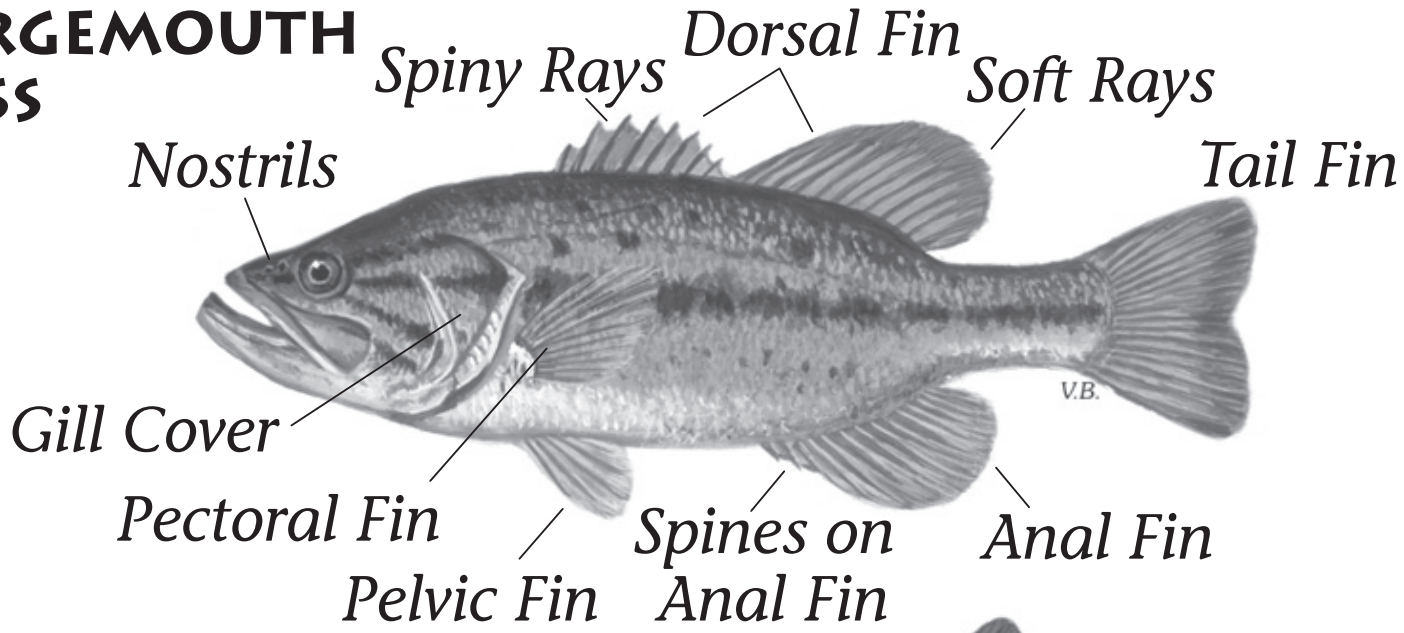
MATCH YOUR CATCH!

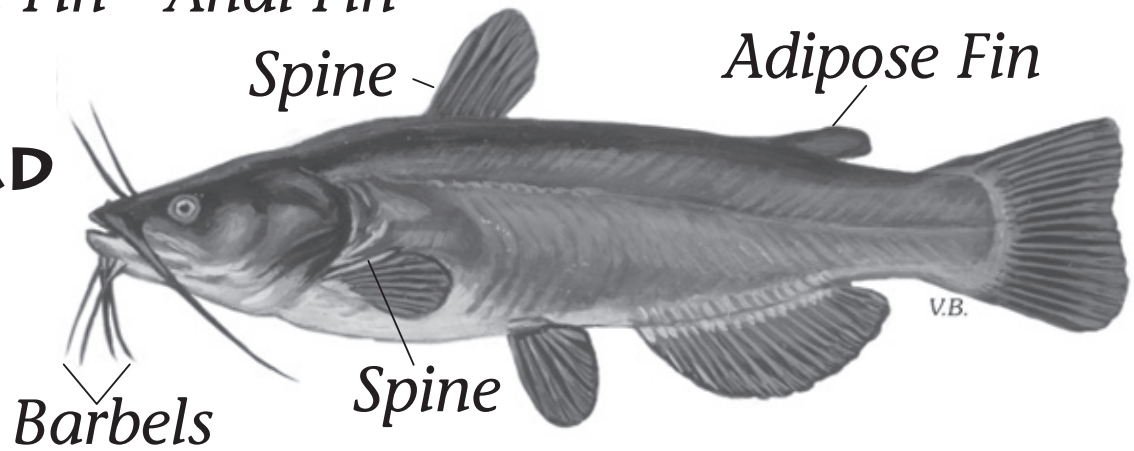
Front illustration: Linda Pohlod
Back paintings: Virgil Beck, WI DNR

...AND OUT!

LARGEMOUTH BASS



BROWN BULLHEAD



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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

BLUEGILL

Lepomis macrochirus

IDENTIFICATION

Bluegills are the most common sunfish in Wisconsin. They are easily identified by the black spot on their "earflaps"– an extension of the gill cover.

HABITAT

Bluegills prefer warm, quiet waters and hide in the cover of weed beds. They can be found in small schools and may group with other sunfish.

TACKLE TIPS

Bring along some garden worms and light tackle to catch these great little fighters!

COMMON CATCH SIZE 6-7", 6-8 oz.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

PUMPKINSEED

Lepomis gibbosus

IDENTIFICATION

Look for a bright red spot, just behind a black spot on their "earflap" – an extension of the gill cover. Belonging to the sunfish family, most anglers know pumpkinseed as just "sunfish".

HABITAT

Pumpkinseeds prefer cool to warm, shallow waters with plenty of weed cover. Like other sunfish, the males use their tails to fan out a nest in the sand or gravel of lake bottoms during the spawning season.

TACKLE TIPS

An easy catch! You can fish from shore using light tackle or worms to catch these tasty little fish.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 4-5", up to 8 oz.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

GREEN SUNFISH

Lepomis cyanellus

IDENTIFICATION A jewel of a panfish, the green sunfish shimmers with flecks of emerald on its brown or olive back. Like other panfish, it has two dorsal fins that are joined and look like one. It has three spines on its anal fin.

HABITAT Green sunfish are common in warm, shallow lakes and ponds and quiet rivers of southern Wisconsin. With his tail, the male creates a depression in the sand and gravel for a nest, which he will vigorously defend against intruders. To attract a mate, he grunts. Green sunfish eat zooplankton, insects, snails and crayfish.

TACKLE TIPS These bait stealers will bite on crickets, worms, grasshoppers and artificial flies.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **4-5", 7 oz.**

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

BLACK CRAPPIE

Pomoxis nigromaculatus

IDENTIFICATION

Black crappies are speckled and have seven to eight spines on their dorsal fin. Outstanding as a sport fish, they can be strong fighters and are fun to catch on light tackle!

HABITAT

Black crappies feed in clear, open water but can also be found resting among logs or weed beds during the day. They live in small schools and prefer cooler, deeper water than white crappies.

TACKLE TIPS

Cast out a minnow, spinner or small jig just as the sun is setting.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 7-10", 7-12 oz.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

LARGEMOUTH BASS

Micropterus salmoides

IDENTIFICATION

They don't call them "Bucketmouth" for nothing! The largemouth bass is the largest member of the sunfish family. It has a big mouth and knows how to use it! Its upper jaw extends beyond its eye. Notice the prominent lateral line on the side of the fish and the deep notch in the dorsal fin.

HABITAT

Largemouth bass prefer warm water and like to hide under lily pads, docks, or in weed beds.

TACKLE TIPS

Old Bucketmouth has excellent senses of sight, smell and hearing. These fish like weedy areas so don't forget to use a weedless bait or you may lose your lure!

COMMON CATCH SIZE 12-14", 1 lb.

(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

SMALLMOUTH BASS

Micropterus dolomieu

IDENTIFICATION

The smallmouth is perhaps Wisconsin's scrappiest game fish. Vertical markings, a shallow notch in the dorsal fin, and an upper jaw that ends in line with the center of their red eye, distinguish smallmouth bass from the largemouth bass.

HABITAT

"Smallies" like rocky streams or lakes where they can find their favorite food – crayfish. In summertime, they seek out deep, cool waters.

TACKLE TIPS

Shhh! Fish quietly and cast near old logs or rocks. Bring along natural baits like hellgrammites or dragonfly larvae. Live crayfish are allowed only on the Mississippi River. For inland use, the crayfish must be dead.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 12", 1-2 lb.

(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)

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For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

ROCK BASS

Ambloplites rupestris

IDENTIFICATION

These bronze-colored panfish have large red eyes and five to seven spines on their anal fins. Rock bass are known as “goggle-eyes” in some states.

HABITAT

Rock bass like rocks! They can be found in rocky-bottomed lakes and rivers.

TACKLE TIP

Rock bass will eat almost anything! They can be caught in different locations using just about any kind of bait. Worms, minnows and poppers work well.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 6-11", 1 lb.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

WHITE BASS

Morone chrysops

IDENTIFICATION

White bass have silvery bodies marked with thin, black stripes. Some anglers refer to these fish as "stripers."

HABITAT

White bass like the open water of lakes and rivers where they come to spawn each spring. Found in large schools, they feed on zooplankton or minnows near the surface of the water.

TACKLE TIPS

Use minnows or bucktail spinners in the spring while white bass are in a feeding frenzy! They're fun to catch using anything from ultra-light spinning tackle to cane poles.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **9-15", 4-20 oz.**

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

YELLOW PERCH

Perca flavescens

IDENTIFICATION

Yellow perch are found in most Wisconsin lakes. These tasty fish can be identified by the prominent vertical bars along their yellow sides.

HABITAT

Yellow perch prefer the cool, open waters of Wisconsin's deep lakes. They move about in large schools, sometimes numbering in the hundreds. They are not active at night but lie still near the bottom.

TACKLE TIPS

Keep on the move! If you don't get a bite in one area, move to another until you find a school. Yellow perch will bite on almost any bait, but tend to nibble lightly. Use light tackle and set your hook quickly!

COMMON CATCH SIZE 7-10", 4 oz.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

WALLEYE

Sander vitreus

IDENTIFICATION

A white triangular mark on their tail fin, and large eyes, which help them see well in low light, help to make these members of the perch family easy to identify.

HABITAT

Walleye prefer clear-water lakes but can also be found in large river systems like the Mississippi. They stay in deep water during the day and move into the shallows at night.

TACKLE TIPS

Cast or troll minnows, leaches, night crawlers or small plugs.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **14-17", 2 lb.**

(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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MATCH YOUR CATCH!

SAUGER

Sander canadensis

IDENTIFICATION

Sauger share the walleye's body shape but not their marking pattern. What sets them apart is their smaller size; a polka-dotted dorsal fin; the lack of a white patch on the tail fin; and black and rusty blotches on their sides.

HABITAT

Sauger live in Wisconsin's silty rivers and large lakes. They are common in the Mississippi River system and the Lake Winnebago-Fox River system where waters are turbid and dark.

TACKLE TIPS

Try juicy baits like minnows, leeches, or worms. Some of the best fishing for sauger is during the ice fishing season . . . burr!

COMMON CATCH SIZE 10-18", 1-4 lb.

(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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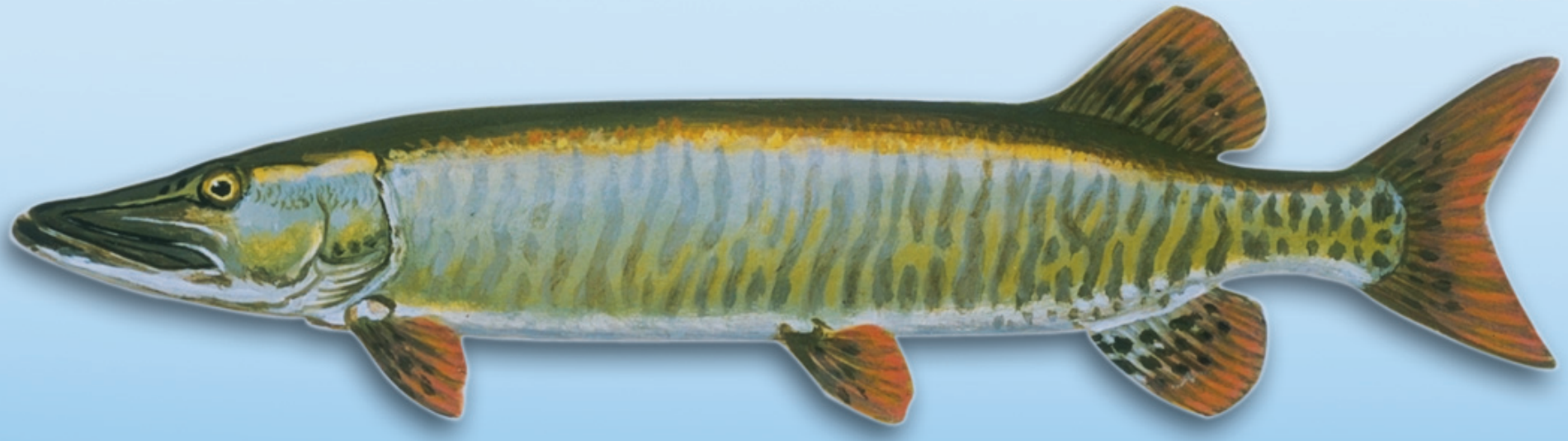

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

MUSKELLUNGE

Esox masquinongy

WISCONSIN'S STATE FISH!

IDENTIFICATION The musky is the largest predator fish in the state. Look for wide, vertical markings to distinguish musky from northern pike. They do not have scales on the lower part of the gill cover like the northern pike does.

HABITAT Musky are found statewide and inhabit a wide range of waters from rivers to the Great Lakes. They live alone, searching weed beds and tangles of old logs for prey.

TACKLE TIPS Bring along some big bait and a steel leader for these ferocious fighters! Jerk baits, spoons, and bucktails are popular lures used to chase the musky.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **38-40", usually less than 15 lb.** *(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)*

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

NORTHERN PIKE

Esox lucius

IDENTIFICATION

Northern pike are large predatory fish with horizontal, "bean-like" markings. They have scales on the lower part of their gill covers and a rounded tail fin.

HABITAT

They spawn along marshy shorelines or marshy streams flowing into lakes. During the day they like to lurk in weed beds waiting for prey and will feed on whatever passes by their trap-like jaws.

TACKLE TIPS

Use a steel leader and keep your bait moving! If hungry, northern pike will bite on almost anything that swims their way. These fish are a favorite among ice fishing enthusiasts!

COMMON CATCH SIZE 18-20", 2 lb.

(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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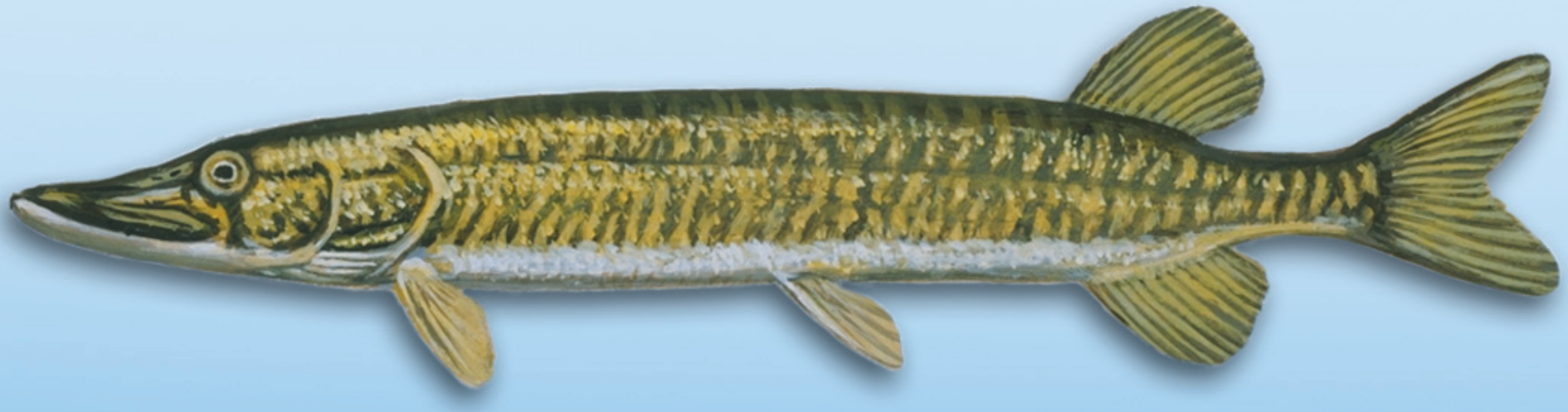

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

GRASS PICKEREL

Esox americanus vermiculatus

IDENTIFICATION

Grass pickerel look like skinny northern pike. The pickerel's cheek and gill covers are entirely covered with scales.

HABITAT

They are found in shallow, weedy lakes, mainly in the southern part of the state as well as the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers.

TACKLE TIPS

They are best caught during the day on live bait or lures.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 8-10", 8 oz.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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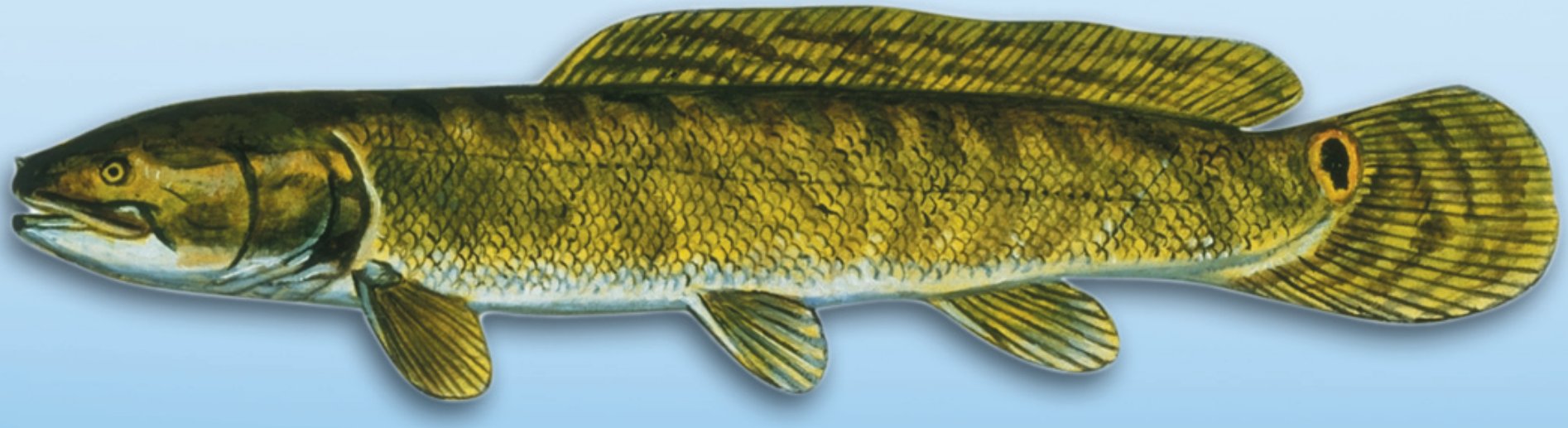

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

BOWFIN

Amia calva

IDENTIFICATION

This odd-looking fish has a long dorsal fin that stretches nearly half the length of its thick body. Look for the large, dark blotch on the tail fin of the male to tell it apart from the female. Also known as dogfish, bowfin can come to the surface to "gulp" a breath of air as well as breathe underwater like other fish.

HABITAT

Bowfin can be found in Wisconsin's lakes and large, slow-moving rivers. They like clear water with lots of plant life, and they feed on frogs, fish and even small rodents.

TACKLE TIP

Although not a "game" fish, you might catch one while fishing for bluegill, crappies or perch.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 15-17", 1-5 lb.

For more information, visit:
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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

LAKE STURGEON

Acipenser fulvescens

IDENTIFICATION This ancient fish with bony plates and barbels (whiskers) shared the swamps with dinosaurs. It can live for over 100 years and females do not spawn until at least 25.

HABITAT The Lake Winnebago system hosts the world's largest population of lake sturgeon. They're also found in the Chippewa-Flambeau system and the Menominee, Mississippi, and Wisconsin rivers. In the late 1800's, sturgeon were considered a nuisance. They tangled and tore commercial fishing nets, so were tossed ashore to rot. Dams and over-fishing further reduced their numbers.

TACKLE TIPS Sturgeon are caught during a short winter spearing season on Lake Winnebago. A record-setting 82-year-old, 180-pounder was speared there in 1953. There is a limited hook and line season in some rivers. Watch them spawn along the banks of the Wolf River in New London and Shiocton.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **3-5', 10-80 lb.**

(Check regulations for legal catch size and seasons.)

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For more information, visit:

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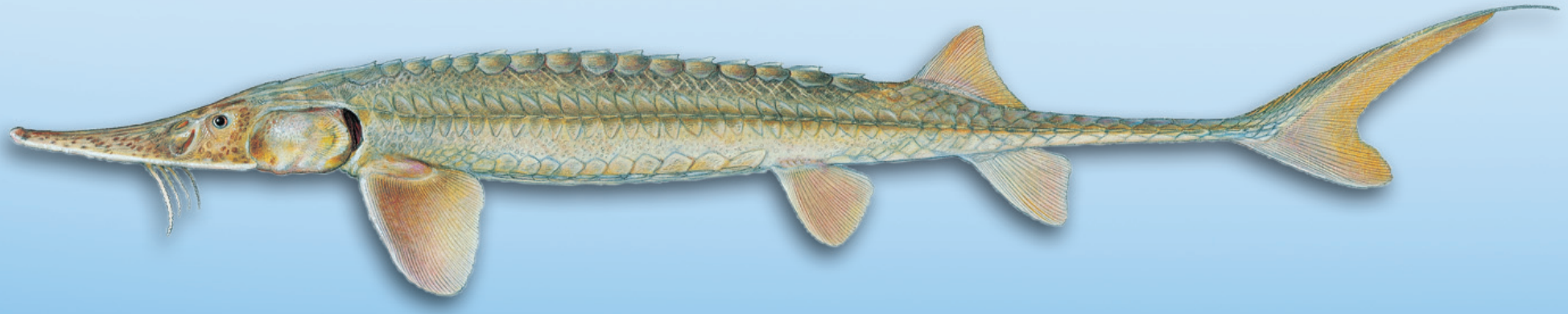

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

SHOVELNOSE STURGEON

Scaphirhynchus platorynchus

IDENTIFICATION Shovelnose sturgeon have long snouts and fringe on their barbels (whiskers). Their torpedo-like bodies are armored in bony plates. Compared to lake sturgeon, they are quite slender and don't grow nearly as large.

HABITAT Shovelnose are found only in the Mississippi River and its tributaries. They swim with the current and will eat anything from clams to insects.

TACKLE TIPS Commercial fishermen use nets to catch sturgeon for their eggs, which are sold and made into caviar. For a real challenge, head for snags in deep-water and try to catch one by hook and line with a worm.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 21", 5 lb.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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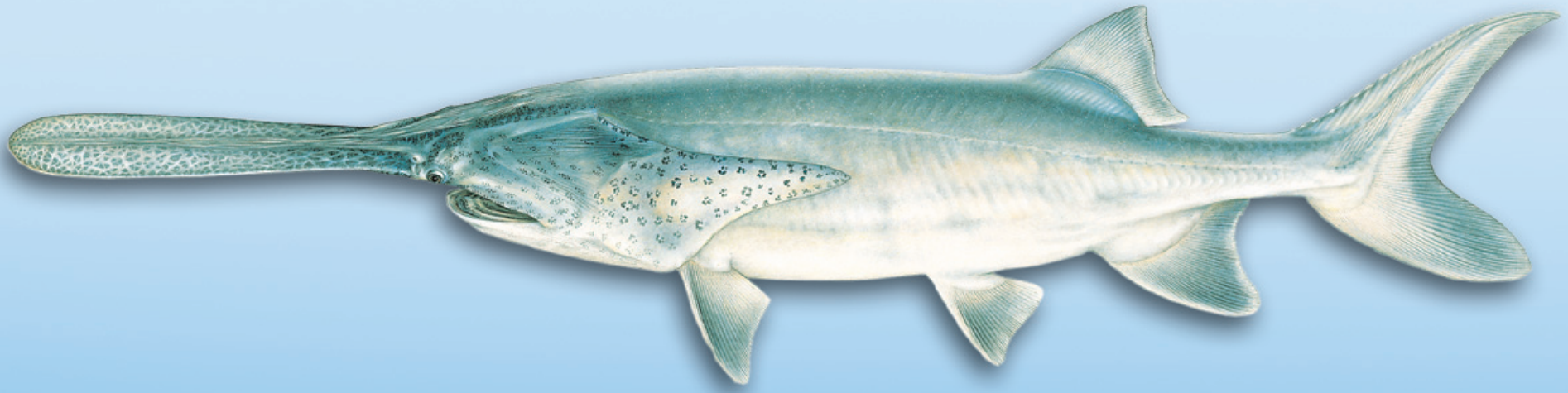

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

PADDLEFISH

Polyodon spathula

IDENTIFICATION You'll have no problem telling this fish apart from any other! Their long, flat, paddle-like snout and shark-like, forked tail fin make them easy to identify. They can grow to be 65 pounds in Wisconsin. Many anglers know them as "spoonbill catfish".

HABITAT Paddlefish move about on muddy bottoms of the Mississippi and Wisconsin river systems, especially where the rivers widen. These fish usually stay in deep water but will come to the surface in the summer. Dams on large rivers have eliminated paddlefish spawning habitat and severely reduced their population.

TACKLE TIP The paddlefish is listed as a threatened species in Wisconsin so don't even try to catch one! They rarely bite on a hook and would rather eat plankton than bait.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **Don't catch one!**

For more information, visit
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

LONGNOSE GAR

Lepisosteus osseus

IDENTIFICATION Longnose gar have skinny bodies and a long snout with many needle-like teeth. Like their shortnose relatives, these living fossils are cloaked in drab olive and grey to better hide in the weeds.

HABITAT Longnose gar inhabit the waters of the Mississippi River and others that drain into lakes Superior and Michigan. They can also be found in large, calm, weedy lakes. Their swim bladder acts as a primitive lung which allows them to breathe out of water; anglers often see them breaking the surface to take a gulp of air.

TACKLE TIP You may hook a gar at night using minnows near the surface of the water. Their habit of lying just below surface exposes gar to bow and arrow and makes them popular with archers.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **Up to 36", 5 lb.**

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For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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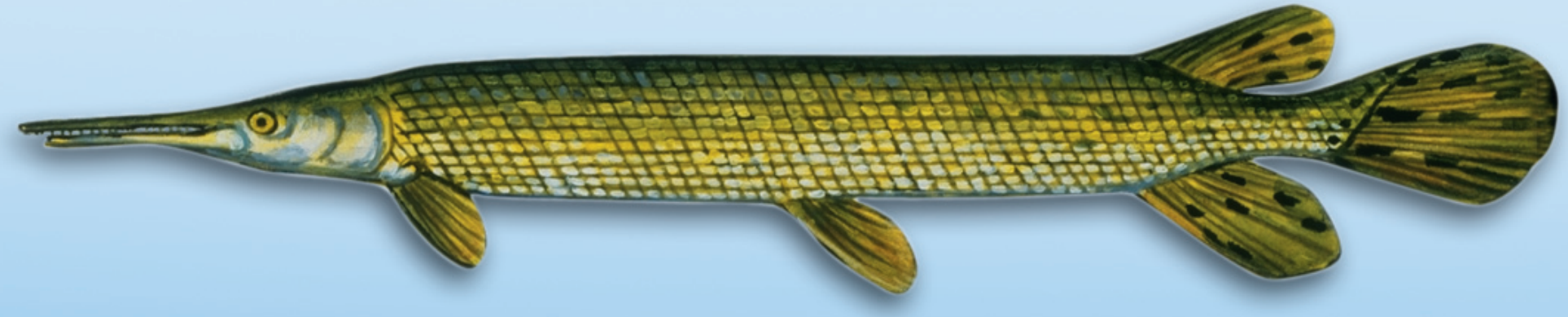

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

SHORTNOSE GAR

Lepisosteus platostomus

IDENTIFICATION Shortnose gar are long and skinny and have short, alligator-like snouts. Since the Age of the Dinosaurs, their brown, olive or dull gray bodies and yellow or whitish bellies have suited them perfectly for life in the river.

HABITAT Shortnose gar can be found in Wisconsin's larger rivers and Green Bay. They prefer open, slow-moving, silty rivers. Their swim bladder is like a primitive lung and allows them to come to the surface for a breath of air – a useful adaptation in polluted water or when oxygen concentrations are low.

TACKLE TIPS During the day, you may catch shortnose at the surface using minnows; at night fish the shallows. Neither the longnose nor shortnose gar is considered a "game" fish.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **16-30", 1-5 lb.**

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

Painting: Virgil Beck
Recycled paper

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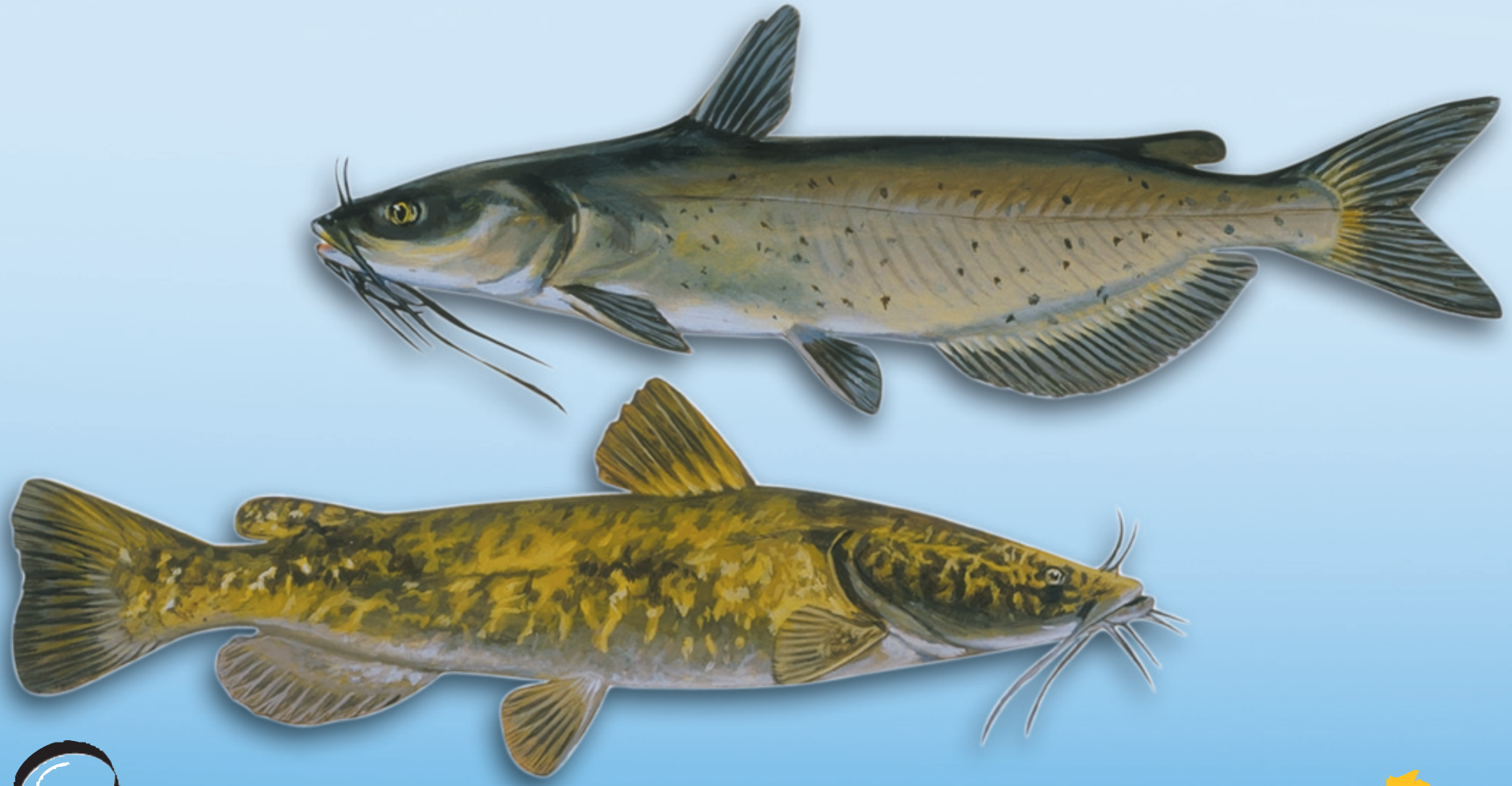

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

CHANNEL CATFISH & FLATHEAD CATFISH

Ictalurus punctatus & Pylodictis olivaris

IDENTIFICATION Wisconsin has two species of catfish: channel and flathead. All catfish have barbels (whiskers) and tough, scaleless skin. The channel catfish has a forked tail fin while the flathead's tail is more square. Flatheads can grow to be very large; a record 74-pounder was caught in the Mississippi River.

HABITAT Catfish live in lakes and large river systems. They can be found in deep pools during the day and in the shallows at night.

TACKLE TIPS Make your own bait! Channel catfish are scavengers with a keen sense of smell. Mix up some chopped liver and old cheese to attract them. Live bait is the best bet for catching flathead catfish.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **Channel, 12-20", 1-15 lb.; Flathead, 15-45", 1-45 lb.**

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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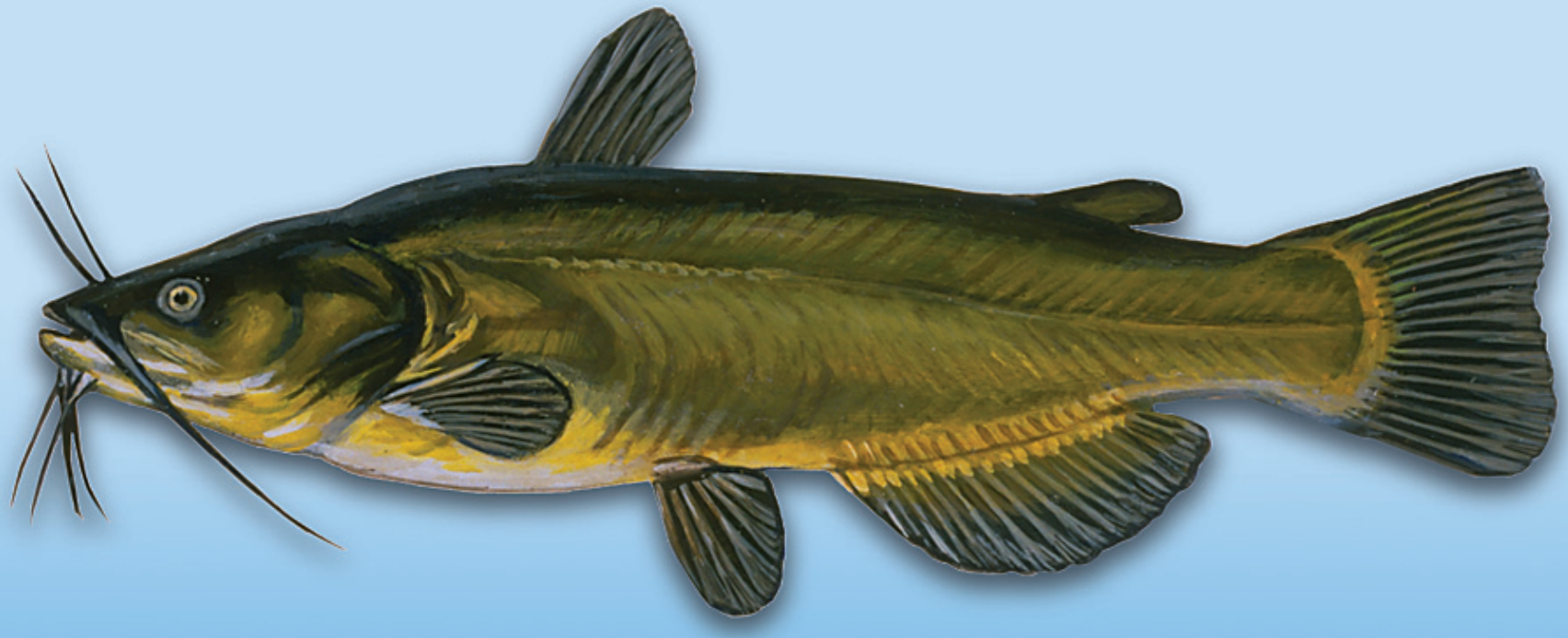

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

BLACK BULLHEAD

Ameiurus melas

IDENTIFICATION Black barbels (whiskers) packed with taste receptors sprout from their chins and help black bullheads locate food in their murky domain. The whiskers are delicate and harmless; just watch out for the spines on their dorsal and pectoral fins. A dark olive to black back and a yellowish belly distinguishes them from brown bullheads.

HABITAT You'll find black bullheads in quiet backwaters throughout the state. Their range has expanded due to their ability to withstand warm, low-oxygen conditions.

TACKLE TIPS Like their yellow and brown cousins, black bullheads will hit on a mass of night crawlers and commonly swallow the hook. Take care to grasp the bullhead so that the fins and spines lay flat. For a tasty fish fry, remove the skin with pliers when cleaning and roll in seasoned flour.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **6-9", less than a pound.**

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

FH-930xx 2009

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

YELLOW BULLHEAD & BROWN BULLHEAD

Ameiurus natalis & Ameiurus nebulosus

IDENTIFICATION Wisconsin has three species of bullheads: black, brown and yellow. All have barbels (whiskers) on their chins and spines on their dorsal and pectoral fins. Black and brown bullheads have black whiskers, while yellow bullheads have white ones.

HABITAT Bullheads like the murky bottoms of Wisconsin's lakes and rivers. They are one of the few fish that can survive in shallow, weedy waters with low oxygen content and warm temperatures.

TACKLE TIPS Bullheads will hit on a mass of night crawlers, but bring a hook disgorger, because they commonly swallow the hook!

COMMON CATCH SIZE 6-9", 1-3 lb.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

LAKE WHITEFISH

Coregonus clupeaformis

IDENTIFICATION

More silver than white, with a head that looks too small for its body, the lake whitefish looks like an oversized minnow.

HABITAT

Lake whitefish are found in the shallow waters of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior where they spawn over rocky reefs.

TACKLE TIP

Anglers can catch these tasty members of the trout family by jigging in the winter with spoons, or with seine and dip nets during the spring. Try a forkful at a Door County fish boil or visit Bayfield County where whitefish livers are considered a delicacy.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 18", 10 lb.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

WHITE SUCKER

Catostomus commersonii

IDENTIFICATION

White suckers have slim bodies with lots of tiny scales while other suckers have larger, harder scales. All suckers have mouths that point downward.

HABITAT

White suckers like to hide in old logs and deep holes of Wisconsin's lakes, ponds, and streams. They can withstand lower oxygen levels than most fish.

TACKLE TIPS

You can use minnows or worms to catch these bottomdwelling critters. Check with your local DNR office to find out about spearing and dipnetting regulations.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **10-6", 8-12 oz.**

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

LAKE TROUT

Salvelinus namaycush

IDENTIFICATION

Lake trout have a bright white belly and deep green-blue sides mottled with splotches of dull yellow.

HABITAT

Lake trout naturally reproduce in a few northern lakes and, to a limited extent, in lakes Superior and Michigan. They are also stocked in some of the state's deepest, coldest lakes.

TACKLE TIPS

Fish the shallows with live or cut bait in the early season and troll the deep waters later in the year. In winter, bobbing (an old-fashioned term for jigging) works well.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **17-27", 3 lb.**

(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

BROOK TROUT

Salvelinus fontinalis

IDENTIFICATION

Brook trout are Wisconsin's only native stream- dwelling trout. Look for worm-like markings on their backs and white edges on their fins.

HABITAT

Brook trout like to hide at the head of a stream in small pools or under logs. In the fall, they make gravel nests close to the springs that feed the stream where water is the freshest.

TACKLE TIP

Be quiet! Brook trout are easily spooked. After a short rain, use flies, worms or minnows. For successful catch and release, however, flies are best.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 10-12", 1-2 lb.

(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

RAINBOW TROUT

Oncorhynchus mykiss

IDENTIFICATION Look for white mouthparts and lots of spots on the tail fin to tell these fish apart from other trout. The rosy side-stripe is brighter on inland rainbow trout than those found in the Great Lakes, where they are known as steelhead.

HABITAT Rainbow trout, native to the Pacific Ocean, were introduced into the Great Lakes for sport fishing. Eggs don't successfully hatch on their own in Wisconsin waters, so they are collected and brought to hatcheries. Young fish are then stocked into Great Lakes' tributaries and inland waters.

TACKLE TIPS Fish at night! Use anything from minnows to flies to catch these hard-fighting fish.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **20-30", 2-8 lb.**
(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

BROWN TROUT

Salmo trutta

IDENTIFICATION

Look for halo-like rings around black or red spots on the sides of the brown trout. The dorsal and adipose fins have lots of spots, but the tail fin is nearly spotless.

HABITAT

Introduced from Europe, brown trout can be found hiding under rocky ledges or in the deep pools of Wisconsin's rivers and streams. They feed on insects, worms, and other fish.

TACKLE TIPS

Brown trout love mayflies! Fish inland streams during mid-May to mid-June using dry flies.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 16", 2 lb.

(Check regulations for legal catch size and seasons.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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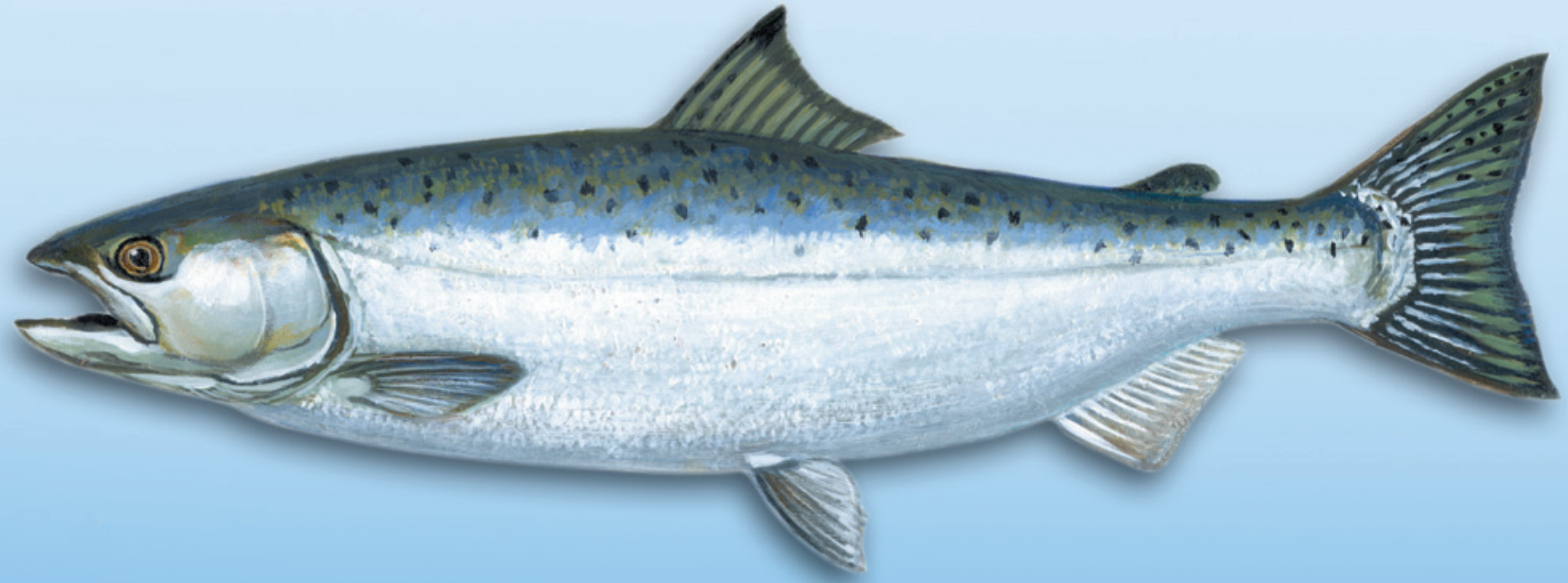

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

COHO SALMON

Oncorhynchus kisutch

IDENTIFICATION The coho salmon has a slightly forked tail fin with spots on the upper lobe. It has a mouth that is completely white inside and spots on its sides that are sometimes hard to see on its shiny, silver body.

HABITAT Native to the Pacific Ocean, coho were stocked in the Great Lakes to help control alewives. Eggs don't hatch on their own in Wisconsin waters, so they are collected and brought to hatcheries. Young fish are then stocked into Great Lakes' tributaries to support the thriving sport fishing and tourism industries.

TACKLE TIPS Fish for coho near spawning streams in the fall or try trolling on the Great Lakes using shiny flashers.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **25", 6 lb.**
(Check regulations for legal catch size and seasons.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

CHINOOK SALMON

Oncorhynchus tshwytscha

IDENTIFICATION

Chinook salmon have more spots on their backs than the coho salmon, a squared-off tail fin, and spots on both lobes of the tail fin. The interior of the mouth is black.

HABITAT

Chinook are native to the Pacific Ocean. They are stocked in the Great Lakes' tributaries and harbors and then head for the open water of the lake. State fish hatcheries must continue to stock young fish because salmon eggs do not successfully hatch in Wisconsin waters.

TACKLE TIPS

Fish for chinook in open waters during the summer and near shore in the fall.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 34", 16 lb.

(Check regulations for legal catch size and season.)

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

FRESHWATER DRUM

Aplodinotus grunniens

IDENTIFICATION This chunky fish has a highly arched back and looks a lot like the common carp. The freshwater drum lacks barbels and its lateral line runs all the way through the tail fin (the only Wisconsin species in which this occurs).

HABITAT In Wisconsin, freshwater drum, known to many anglers as sheepshead, occur in Lake Michigan, the Mississippi River and connected waters. They get their name from the drumming sound the male makes during the spawning season. Could it be a love song?

TACKLE TIP Freshwater drum will bite on minnows, worms or cut-bait. Summer is the best time to catch them. Not only do drums drum, they also croak like bullfrogs when taken from the water.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 14", 1 lb.

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For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

COMMON CARP

Cyprinus carpio

IDENTIFICATION

Imagine a giant goldfish! Unlike other whiskered fish, carp have two barbels on the sides of their mouths.

HABITAT

Native to Asia and introduced from Europe, carp have adapted very well to most of Wisconsin's waters and are now considered invasive pests. They like warm, weedy water and can survive with very little oxygen. Carp are known to muddy the water as they pull up and feed on plant roots.

TACKLE TIPS

Cane poles and dough balls are enough to catch these fish! Take your time - carp like to smell bait before they suck it into their mouths.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 12-25", 1-8 lb.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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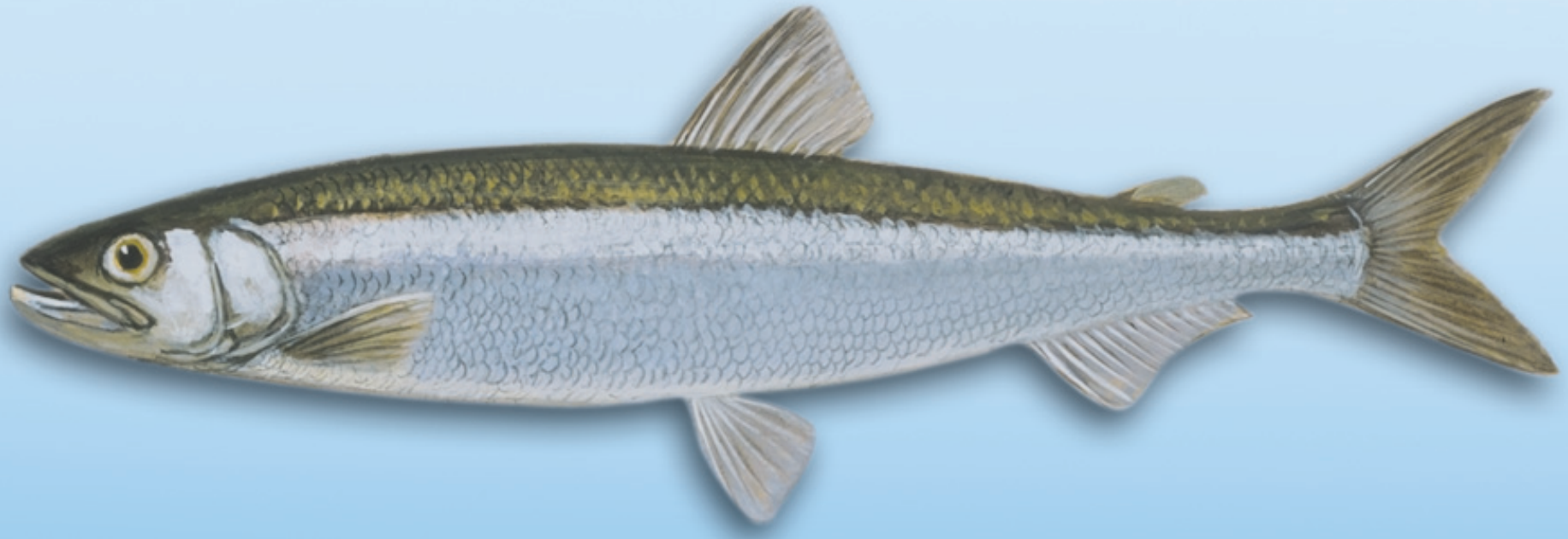

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

RAINBOW SMELT

Osmerus mordax

IDENTIFICATION As their name suggests, rainbow smelt are colorful. They have pale green backs and silvery sides with iridescent purple, blue and pink streaks.

HABITAT Native to the ocean, rainbow smelt were originally stocked in the state of Michigan as food for salmon and made their way to Lake Michigan and Door County by 1928. They sometimes school along the shore but are more commonly found offshore, avoiding bright light in cool, deep water. This carnivorous exotic competes with native herring and yellow perch for food. They have invaded a few inland lakes in Wisconsin.

TACKLE TIPS Anglers dip-net and seine for smelt in spawning streams and along the shores of the Great Lakes.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **7-9", 3 oz.**

Do the lakes a favor and eat a plateful today!

(Check the Spearing and Netting Regulations for current harvest restrictions.)

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For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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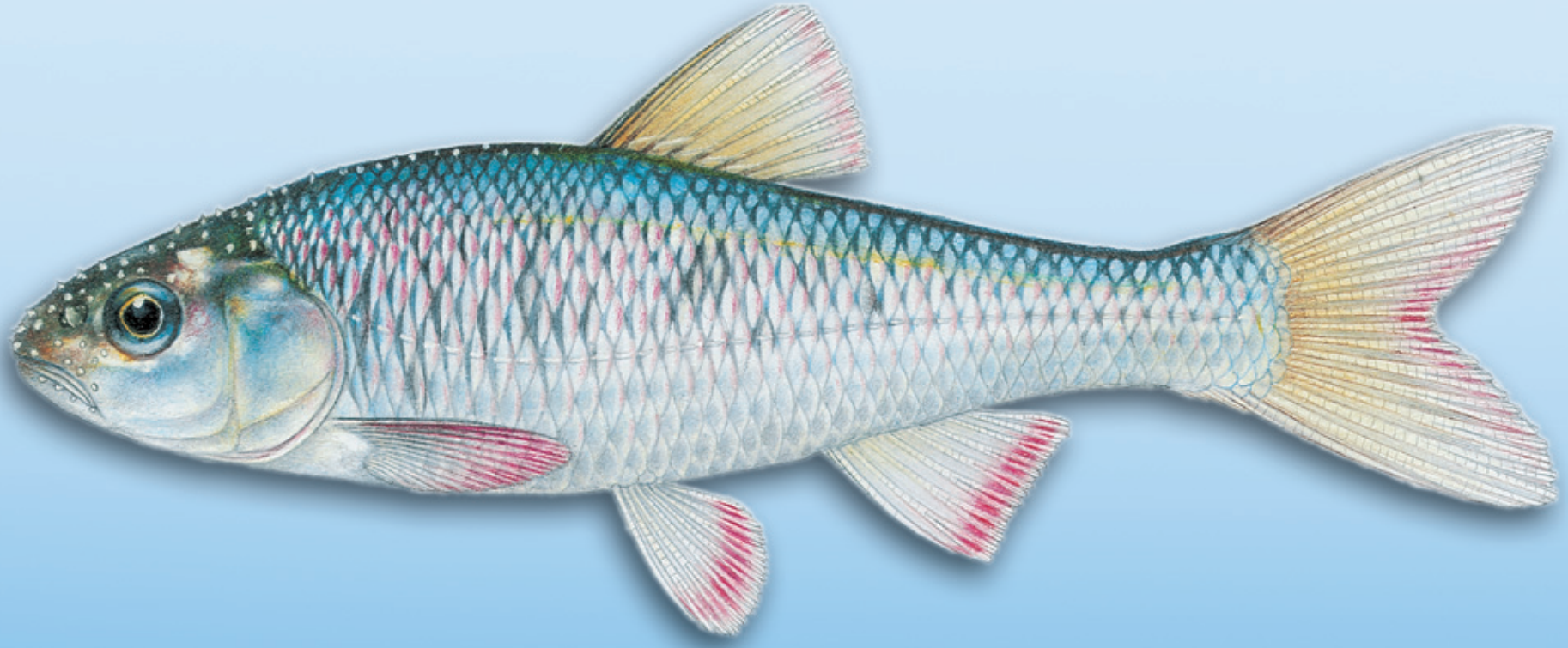

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

COMMON SHINER

Luxillus cornutus

IDENTIFICATION Shiners are members of the minnow and carp family. Of the 46 different species of minnows, 21 are shiners. Two species are threatened and two are endangered. All have slender, minnow-like bodies and are usually less than 5" long. They are an important food source for many other fish. The male common shiner is pictured.

HABITAT Shiners can be found in most of Wisconsin's waters. Even though most species are abundant, harvest by bait dealers is licensed and regulated so as not to harm the shiner population.

TACKLE TIPS Catch your own bait! Shiners can be caught and used for bait. Place bread balls inside an open glass jar in the water and wait. Soon the jar will fill with feeding shiners!

COMMON CATCH SIZE **2-3", less than one ounce.** *(Check the regulation for harvest limits and closures.)*

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For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

IOWA DARTER

Etheostoma exile

IDENTIFICATION

Wisconsin has 15 different species of darters. Few, if any, of these little fish are more than four inches long, but what they lack in size they make up for in beauty. They are some of Wisconsin's most colorful fish and have large eyes for the size of their bodies.

HABITAT

Darters can be found in most of Wisconsin's lakes and river systems. Most prefer swift-moving water and disappear when dams are built.

TACKLE TIP

Anglers usually don't catch darters, but fish-eating birds and larger, predatory fish are major consumers of these little beauties.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 2-4", less than an ounce.

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For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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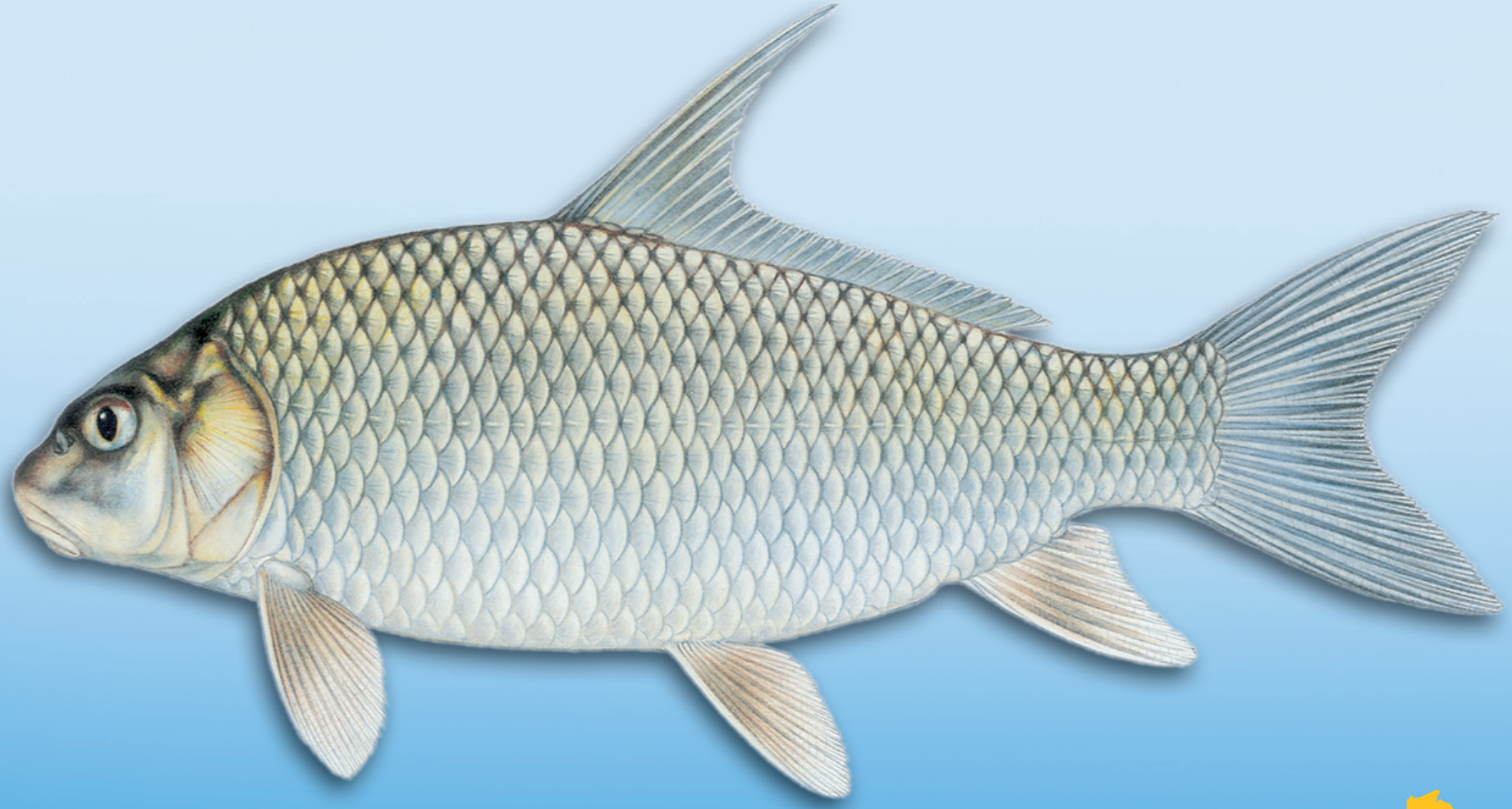

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

QUILLBACK

Carpiodes cyprinus

IDENTIFICATION

A carpsucker, the quillback has delicate, colorless fins and an arched back. Its mouth is pointed downward – just right for sucking up tasty morsels on the river bottom. There are two other species of carpsuckers in Wisconsin.

HABITAT

Quillbacks prefer quiet water and are abundant in Lake Winnebago and major river systems. They scavenge the bottom ooze for bits of plants, other rotting matter, and insect larvae. Females deposit eggs randomly over mud and sand.

TACKLE TIPS

Catch them with grubs, small worms, bread or doughballs. Quillback flesh is light, flaky and sweet, but be careful of the numerous bones.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 14", 1 lb.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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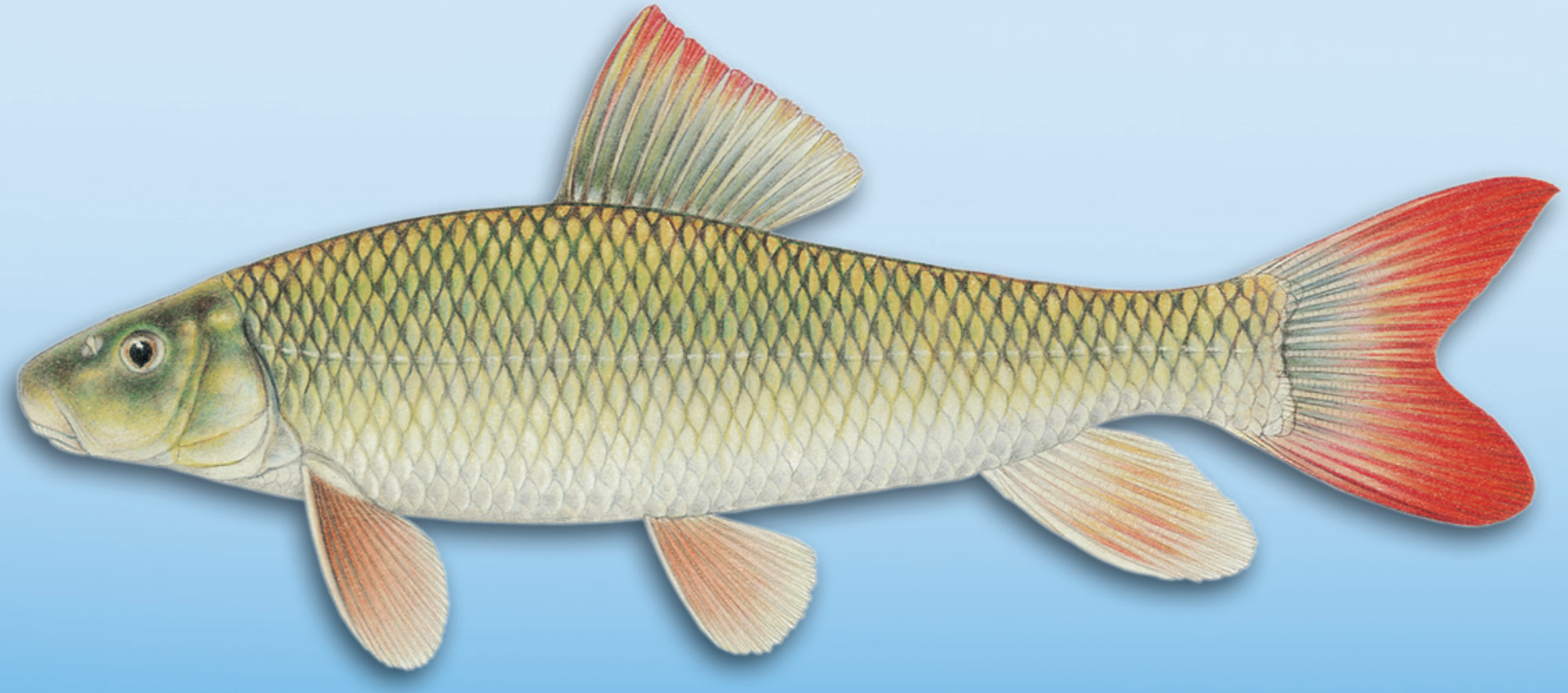

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

SHORTHEAD REDHORSE

Maxostoma macrolepidotum

IDENTIFICATION Six species of redhorse live in Wisconsin. The most common redhorse, the shorthead redhorse, has a red tail fin and red edging on the dorsal fin. This member of the sucker family also has a yellowish back and white belly.

HABITAT Shorthead redhorse are found statewide in medium to large rivers, large inland lakes and in Green Bay. They spawn over circular nests of rubble and stones and eat plant matter, aquatic larvae and an occasional clam.

TACKLE TIPS Redhorse are more often used as bait than sought after themselves. However, they do bite on grasshoppers, worms, crickets, grubs and bits of meat. For real excitement, fish the rapids below a dam with a stream fly on a fly rod.

COMMON CATCH SIZE **12", 8 oz., estimated.**

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For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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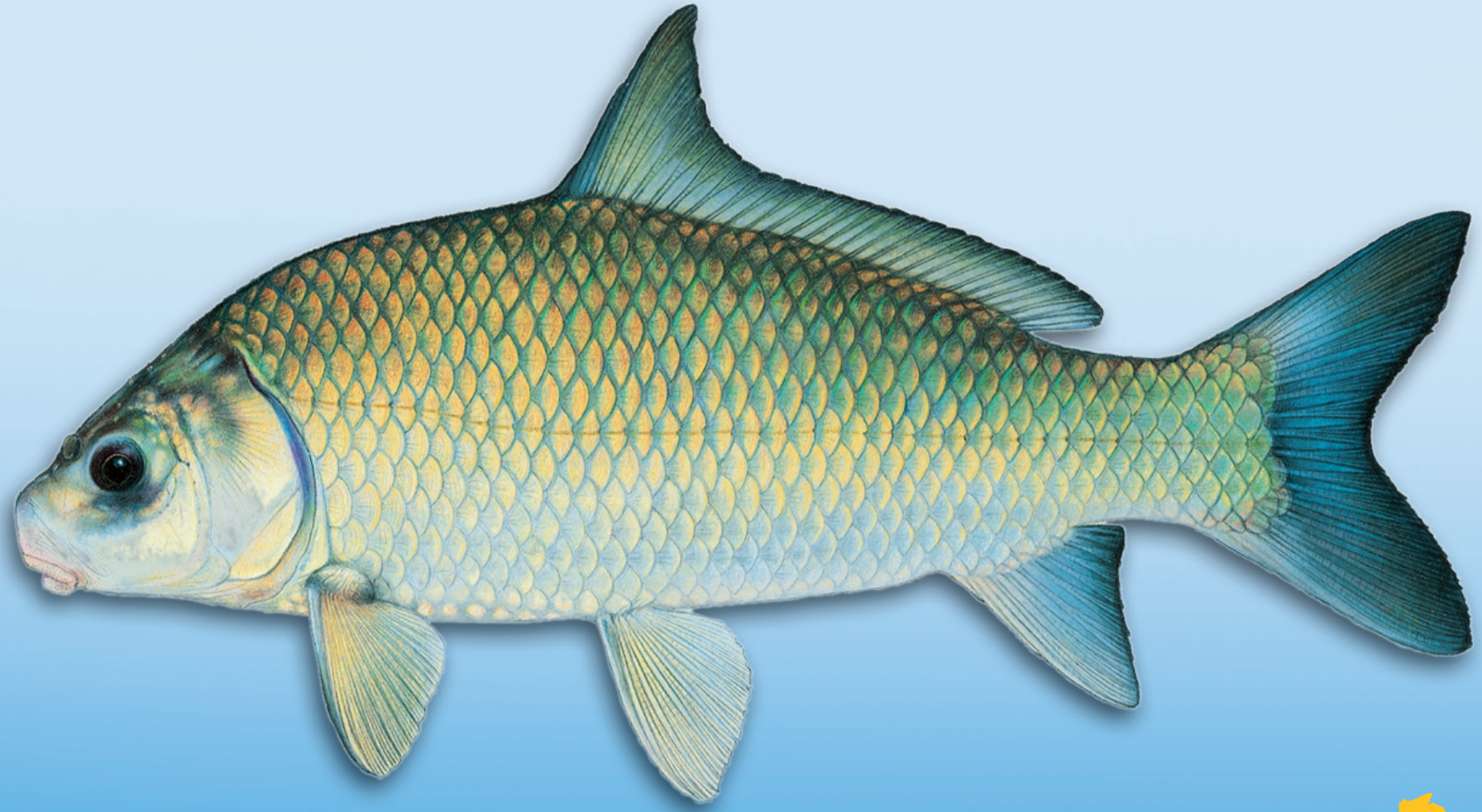

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

SMALLMOUTH BUFFALO

Ictiobus bubalus

IDENTIFICATION

The smallmouth buffalo have sickle-shaped dorsal fins, highly arched bronze or olive backs and sucker-like mouths.

HABITAT

Smallmouth buffalo roam in clear, deep waters of oxbow lakes and pools of the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers and their tributaries. They search the river bottoms for insect larvae, zooplankton and algae. At spawning time they move into flooded marshes and meadows where their sticky eggs attach to plants.

TACKLE TIPS

Though often overlooked for dinner, anglers who try for smallmouth buffalo with worms are rewarded with a tasty catch.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 11-16", 1-2 lb.

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For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

FISH HEALTH

BLACK SPOT

Uvulifer ambloplitis & Apophallus brevis

WHAT IS IT? Black spot is a common fish parasite (a fluke) you might see when landing a bluegill or other fish.

IDENTIFICATION Look on the skin and fins for flat or slightly raised black cysts or "spots" formed by the fluke in its larval stage.

LIFE CYCLE Adult black spot lives in kingfishers and gulls. The birds' droppings carry black spot eggs into water where they hatch. Snails host the larvae until they are ready to burrow into the skin of a fish. The cycle continues when a bird eats an infected fish.

IS IT A PROBLEM? No. Most parasites are harmless to fish, but heavy infections can weaken and kill them. Cooking a fillet will kill the fluke; it doesn't infect or harm people.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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Photo: Dave Marshall

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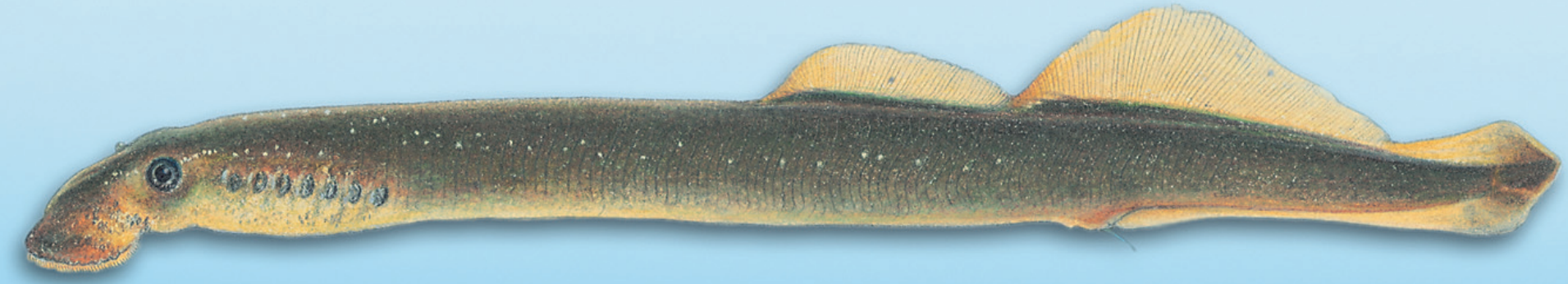

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

AMERICAN BROOK LAMPREY

Lampetra appendix

IDENTIFICATION Blind and wormlike as ammocoetes (pronounced ammo-seat) or larvae, the American brook lamprey metamorphoses (changes) into a brown cylinder, almost 8 inches long. Adults have a dark back, pale belly, yellowish fins and a dark blotch at end of the tail.

HABITAT Brook lampreys share the clear headwaters of small, cool streams with suckers and trout. They are sensitive to pollution. Ammocoetes feed on single-celled algae. Adults do not eat, but are eaten by game fish. Unlike the non-native, invasive sea lamprey, adult brook lampreys are not parasites. The male selects a nesting site and excavates a nest in the gravel using its mouth. Two to three dozen adults congregate at these nests and die after spawning.

WILD! Its Latin name means, "sucker of stone!"

For more information visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

BURBOT

Lota lota

IDENTIFICATION Also known as the "lawyer"or "eel pout," the burbot is a long, slender fish with dorsal and anal fins that run half the length of its body. One whisker hangs off its chin.

HABITAT Burbot are common to Lake Superior, large inland lakes, and northern rivers. They're the earliest of Wisconsin fish to spawn, beginning on January nights. They eat fish and crustaceans, and are eaten by lake trout.

TACKLE TIPS Burbot are known as rough fish and are often unwelcome among ice anglers pursuing walleye. To experience the flavor of this unsung delicacy, bait up with minnows and serve the catch fresh as poor man's lobster. In summer, fish deep to find them. For more information, visit: dnr

COMMON CATCH SIZE **18-24", 1-2 lb.**

For more information visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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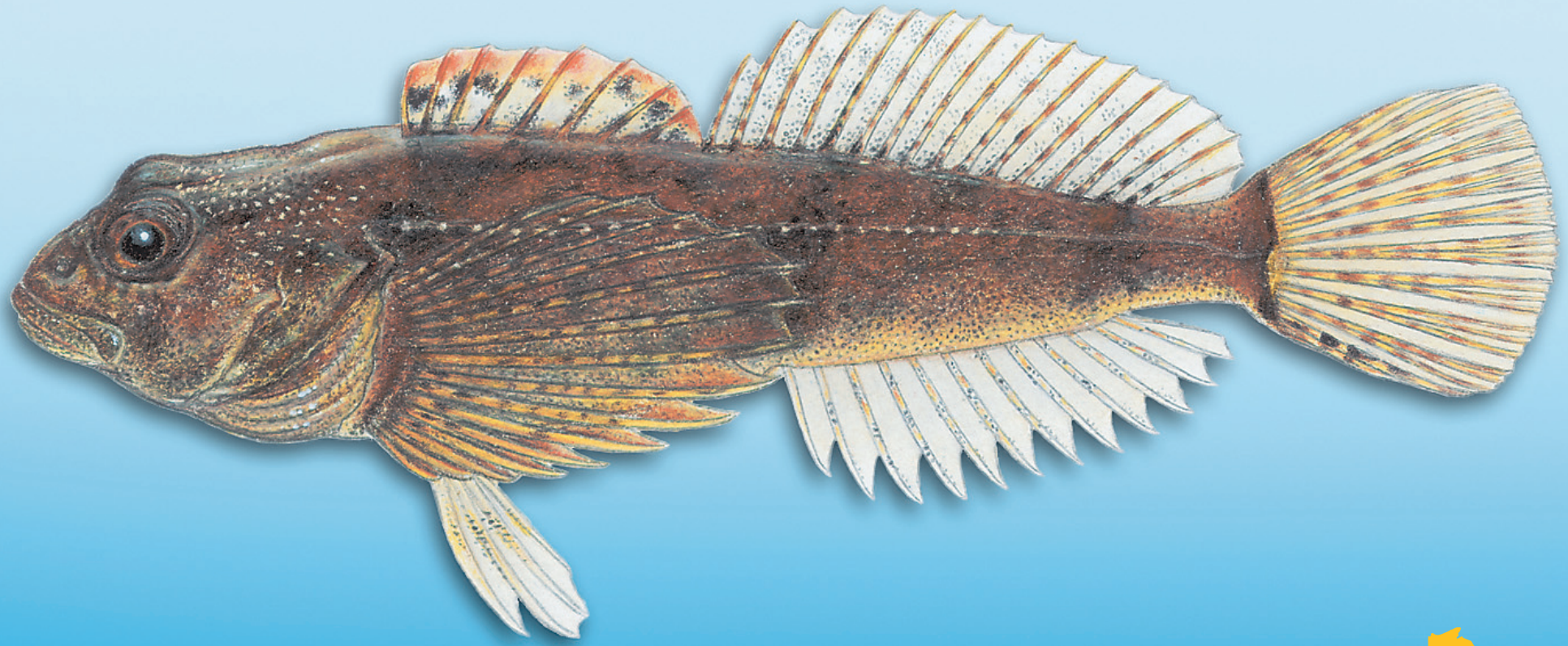

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

MOTTLED SCULPIN

Cottus bairdi

IDENTIFICATION Historically called miller's thumb, its flattened head resembles a miller's thumb that got crushed between millstones. The mottled sculpin measures only 3 to 4 inches, much smaller than the non-native, invasive look-alike round goby that grows to 10 inches. Its pelvic fin is split; the goby's is fused.

HABITAT The mottled sculpin is common, especially in cold northern headwater streams, large inland lakes, Lake Superior and the northern reaches of Lake Michigan. It's an indicator of clean water and often, of trout. The male ferociously defends the gravel nest until the fry (baby fish) leave home.

TACKLE TIPS Not a game species, it is often caught when fishing for trout with worms and is sometimes used as brown trout bait.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

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WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

MATCH YOUR CATCH!

YELLOW BASS

Morone mississippiensis

IDENTIFICATION

Similar to white bass, these fish shine golden yellow with six to eight dark, horizontal stripes.

HABITAT

Yellow bass are newcomers to Wisconsin. By the late 1920's they had entered Lake Pepin via the Mississippi River. Their range expanded with the stocking of children's fishing ponds. Yellow bass hang out in weedless areas of big lakes and large rivers. At spawning time, they move into tributaries and rocky areas of lakes. These carnivores eat insect larvae, tiny crustaceans and other yellow bass, and are eaten by other fish.

TACKLE TIPS

Fish for yellow bass at night with light tackle. Use poppers on a fly rod for a fun challenge.

COMMON CATCH SIZE: 5-7", less than 1/2 lb.

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For more information visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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SPORT FISH RESTORATION

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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MATCH YOUR CATCH!

WHITE CRAPPIE

Pomoxis annularis

IDENTIFICATION

The white crappie has a lighter belly than the black crappie, speckled vertical bands, and six dorsal spines. On average, white crappies tend to be slightly larger than black crappies.

HABITAT

White crappies can be found in shallow, cloudy water where vegetation is sparse. They travel in small schools and prefer warmer temperatures than black crappies.

TACKLE TIPS

Get up early and go to bed late! Cast in the early morning or late evening using minnows, small jigs or spinners.

COMMON CATCH SIZE 7-10", 7-12 oz.

For more information, visit:
dnr.wi.gov

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