Snakehead, Bowfin, or Burbot
Know the difference

**Snakehead**
- Head long, pointed and flattened
- Pelvic fins beneath pectoral fins
- Anal fin long (2/3 of the length of the dorsal fin)

**Bowfin**
- Head rounded, broad
- Lower fins often with greenish tint
- Pelvic fins set back under dorsal fin
- Anal fin short (less than 1/4 length of the dorsal fin)

**Burbot**
- Head flattened with chin barbel
- Pelvic fins beneath pectoral fins
- Anal fin long

*NON-NATIVE*

*NATIVE*
The Saga of the Snakehead in Wisconsin

In the early fall of 2003, an exotic snakehead was collected from the Rock River during routine fisheries surveys. Since that time, the DNR has received numerous reports of anglers catching snakeheads from around the state. Is it really a snakehead? Use the diagrams on the inside to find out.

Snakeheads may be confused with several of our native fish species: bowfin (dogfish) and burbot.

Snakehead and bowfin body and fin shapes are very similar. However, there are two distinct differences:

- The snakehead’s anal fin is long - about 2/3 the length of the dorsal fin, while the bowfin’s anal fin is short - less than one quarter the length of the dorsal fin, and
- The snakehead’s pelvic fins are found almost underneath the pectoral fins, while the bowfin’s pelvic fins are set back from the pectoral fins.

The burbot, like the snakehead, has a long anal fin and pelvic fins actually in front of the pectoral fins, however the burbot has very fine scales and a conspicuous barbel under the chin.

Giant snakehead collected from the Rock River in 2003. The fish was likely released from an aquarium.