

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

SMALLMOUTH BASS (*Micropterus dolomieu*)

NATIVE RANGE

Smallmouth Bass are native to central and eastern North America, extending from the Great Lakes in Quebec to as far south as central Texas.

DESCRIPTION

Smallmouth Bass...

- Are grey-green to brown on dorsal (back) side
- Are lighter in colour with dark vertical bands on sides
- Are white on ventral (bottom) side
- Have two dorsal fins that are fused together; the most anterior section of dorsal fin has spines and posterior section has soft rays
- Have a mouth that extends just below the eye
- Can grow to be 25-40 cm long as adults
- Have a flat and oval shaped body

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Smallmouth Bass...

- Can have adverse ecological effects on native species and ecosystems
- Are to blame for the decline and local extinction of native prey species (fish and amphibians) in other regions where they have been introduced
- Can feed on juvenile salmon, thus posing a risk to recreational and commercial fisheries in B.C.
- Are known carriers of parasites that can be harmful to native fish species

BIOLOGY AND SPREAD

Smallmouth Bass are spreading into B.C. primarily by intentional introductions for sport fishing. Natural dispersal has also occurred from the US through the Columbia River system and other trans-boundary rivers and streams.

Once introduced, populations can increase quickly as females lay thousands of eggs at a time and spawn several times per season. Their ability to feed on a wide range of prey species further allows them to spread and invade a variety of habitat types. The diet of Smallmouth Bass can include aquatic invertebrates, juvenile fish, amphibians, and even small birds.

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES
www.reportinvasives.ca



Photo: Martina Beck

PRIMARY IMPACT:

Are voracious feeders, preying on a variety of prey species.



Photo : Matthias Herborg

DID YOU KNOW?

Male Smallmouth Bass prepare a nest site along the water's edge for a female to spawn. The female leaves the site immediately after laying her eggs, leaving the male to guard and tend to the nest and young.

SMALLMOUTH BASS

(*Micropterus dolomieu*)

HABITAT

Smallmouth Bass prefer to live in reservoirs, ponds, rivers and streams. They tend to be found in clear waters of the littoral zone where there is gravel substrate with little vegetation. A common place to find Smallmouth Bass is under the cover of submerged logs and docks. Smallmouth Bass are dormant in colder deeper waters during the winter months, and then return to feeding and spawning in shallower depths when waters warm.

ARE THEY HERE YET?

Yes. In B.C., Smallmouth Bass have been introduced to Southern Vancouver Island, Okanagan, Thompson and Kootenay regions; along with the Beaver Creek Watershed in the Cariboo.

HOW CAN WE STOP THEM?

- Do not possess, breed, ship or release Smallmouth Bass in B.C.
- Never use live fish as bait
- Do not release aquarium fish into the wild
- Raise awareness to avoid the spread of this species into B.C.

LOOKALIKES

Smallmouth Bass can be confused for Largemouth Bass. The main distinguishing features between the two species are side-body pattern and mouth size. In comparison to Smallmouth Bass, Largemouth Bass have a **dark horizontal line running from gills to tail, and have a larger mouth that extends past the center of the eye.**

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND ONE?

Report Smallmouth Bass, or any other invasive species via the **Report Invasives phone app**, or via the **webform** available on the B.C. Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group website:

www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species

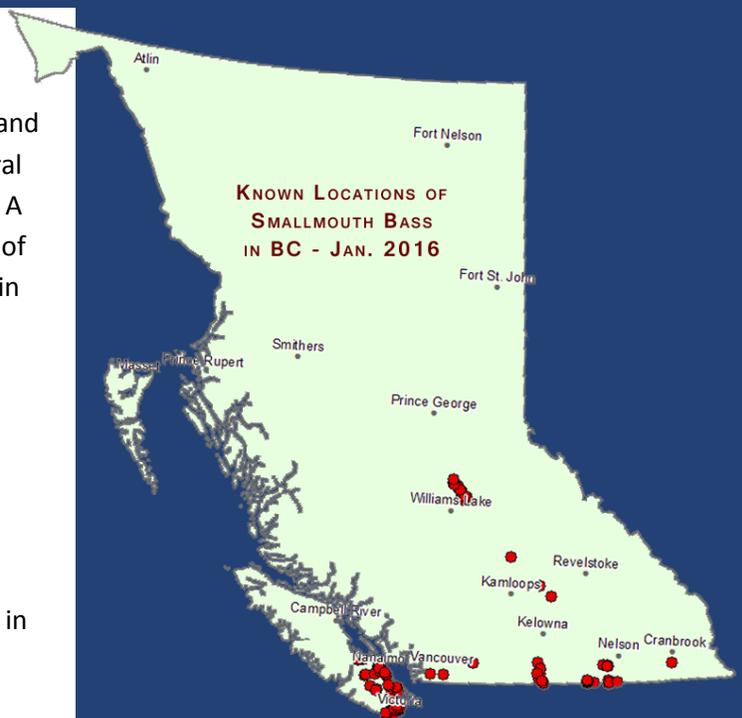


Photo: Duane Raver, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Smallmouth Bass

Largemouth Bass



Photo: Duane Raver, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service