



# *SPECIES NOT COVERED IN THIS KEY*

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There are 50 fish species which are found in Manitoba but not identified in the key. These are not covered because they are either too small to catch, unnecessary for the angler to distinguish, extremely rare, very very seldom caught or are not readily classed as a fish.

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## **Salamander**

Occasionally, an angler will catch a “fish” he describes as having big red ears, a long tail and four legs. This is in fact a *mudpuppy*, a member of the salamander family.

The red ears are actually external gills which are used for absorbing oxygen while underwater. The mudpuppy will grow to about 30 centimetres in length. While this aquatic animal should not be confused with a fish, it is occasionally caught by a surprised angler.

## **Lamprey**

This is scaleless, round eel-like aquatic animal with a jawless disc-shaped mouth which contains sharp rasping teeth. There are three species of lampreys in Manitoba, the *silver*, *chestnut* and *northern brook* which rarely exceed 30 centimetres in size. Silver and chestnut lampreys attach themselves to fish by means of a suction mouth, while the rasping teeth break through the skin and into the flesh of the host fish. Northern brook lampreys are not parasitic.

Lampreys are occasionally seen by anglers who catch a fish to which a lamprey is attached. More often you will see a round scar left by a lamprey which has fed on the host fish.

## **Rainbow Smelt**

Rainbow smelt are small fish, 15 to 20 centimetres long, that look similar to a tullibee. They are very narrow, silver in colour, and have long teeth, some of which are on the tongue.

Smelt are invaders in Manitoba and are not welcome because of the damage they may do to native fish populations. So far, they have only been found in Lake Winnipeg. They may have migrated naturally through river systems from Ontario, or may have been introduced by accident as live bait. It is illegal to use live or fresh rainbow smelt as bait in Manitoba. This regulation is meant to prevent further introductions. Only smelt that has been previously frozen may be used as bait.

## **Rare Species**

*Pumpkinseed*, *bluegill* and *bigmouth buffalo* as well as several small forage fish species fall into this category. These fish are rarely found in Manitoba and therefore seldom caught by anglers. Generally, Manitoba is the extreme northern limit of their range.

## **Unnecessary Classification**

There are four species of fish which can be further classified, but it is unnecessary as far as anglers are concerned. *Bullheads* can be further identified as brown and black, *whitefish* as lake and round, *suckers* as white, longnose, shorthead redhorse, silver redhorse, golden redhorse and quillback. *Tullibees*, the most notorious of the lot, can be broken into five separate species: *cisco*, *bloater*, *blackfin*, *Nipigon* and *shortjaw*.

In most cases even the fisheries workers seldom classify tullibee. White sucker is by far the most common sucker, longnose are found primarily in the north, quillback in the south. The others are rarely found in Manitoba waters. The brown bullhead is by far the most common of the bullheads with the black rarely found in a limited number of lakes and rivers.

## **Forage Fish**

The largest number of species not identified are the forage fish, or “minnows” as many fishermen call them. These include many species with interesting names like darters, sticklebacks, shiners, killifish, trout-perch, sculpin, dace and of course the true minnow family which includes the carp. Although some of these fish resemble the young of larger species, they seldom grow larger than 10 centimetres in length and are distinct species.

It is both unnecessary and almost impossible for the average angler to identify these fish. Their distinguishing features are generally such things as number of scales, numbers of rays in the fins, gillraker counts and in one case, the number of loops in the intestine.

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**Anglers who catch fish which they are unable to identify may contact any of the Natural Resources Offices listed in the Manitoba Anglers' Guide for further assistance.**



*Key to* \_\_\_\_\_

*Manitoba's*

*Sport Fish*



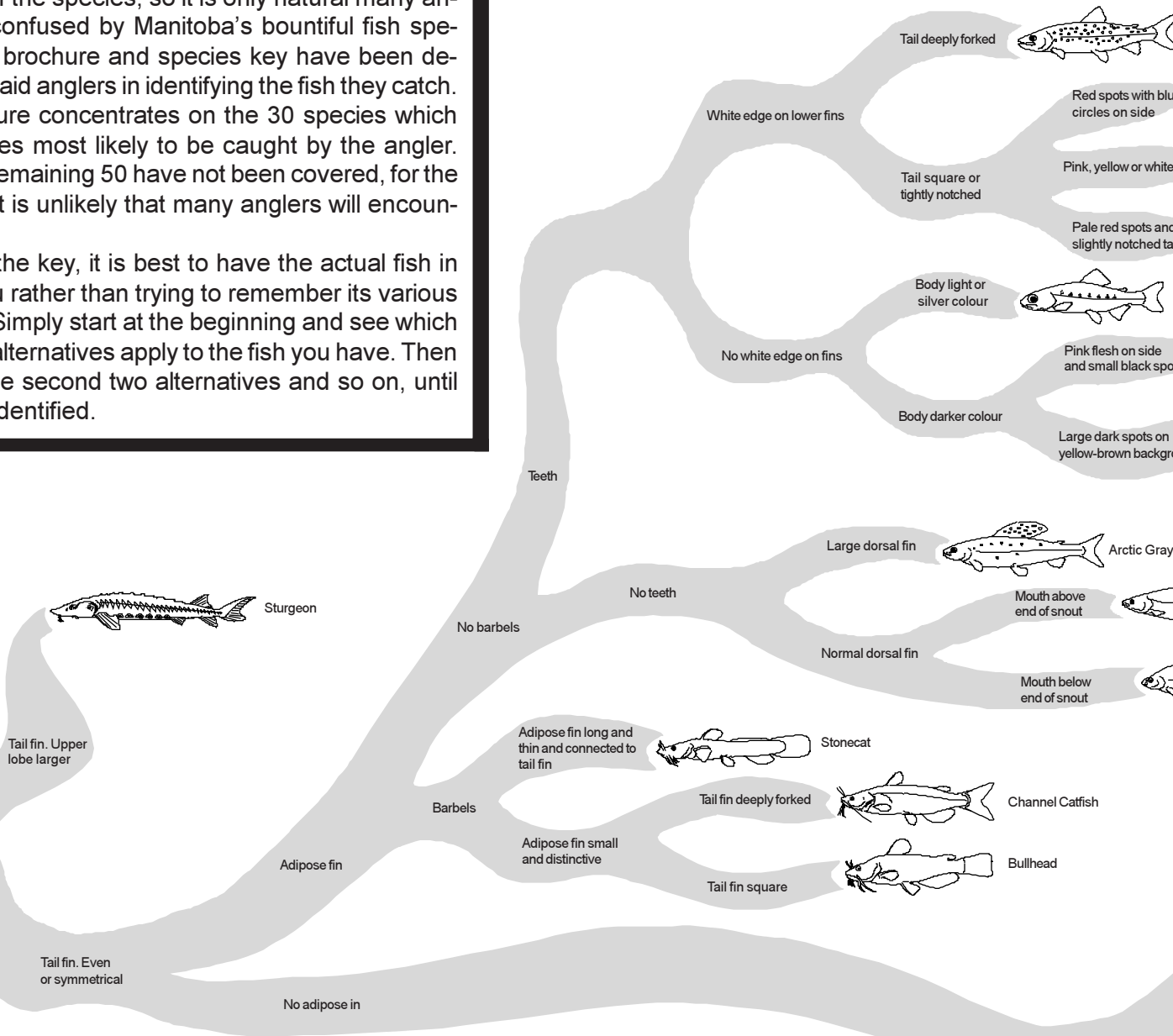
Manitoba has many species of fish, from the huge lake sturgeon to the tiny spottail shiner; the colourful brook trout or the drab bullhead. In fact, Manitoba has 80 species of fish. In all of Canada, only Quebec and Ontario have more kinds of fish.

Even fisheries biologists have difficulty in identifying all 80 of the species, so it is only natural many anglers are confused by Manitoba's bountiful fish species. This brochure and species key have been developed to aid anglers in identifying the fish they catch. The brochure concentrates on the 30 species which are the ones most likely to be caught by the angler. While the remaining 50 have not been covered, for the most part it is unlikely that many anglers will encounter them.

To use the key, it is best to have the actual fish in front of you rather than trying to remember its various features. Simply start at the beginning and see which of the two alternatives apply to the fish you have. Then move to the second two alternatives and so on, until the fish is identified.

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## Identification of some of the External Features of Fish

