



Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee

Keep, cool, call: What to do if you capture a black carp

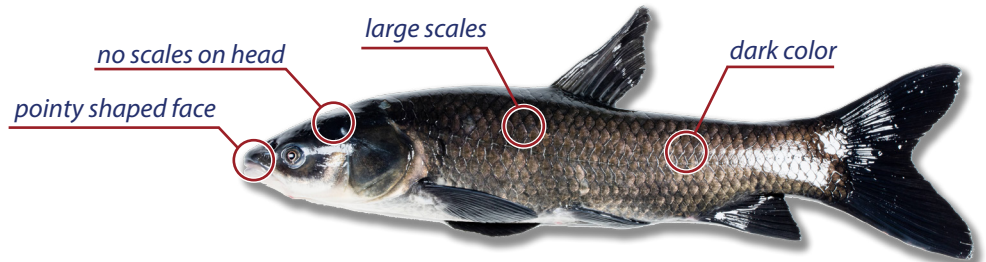
Black Carp Bounty Program

Compared to other invasive carps in North America, less is known about the black carp. State and federal fisheries partners offer a bounty program to more broadly engage commercial fishers in providing black carp for research.

Most of what we know about black carp comes from specimens provided by commercial fishers during the last 10 years as part of this bounty program. The majority of these have been caught incidentally when commercial fishers are harvesting other species using hoop nets. Less than 1% of black carp harvested under the bounty program have been caught with recreational fishing gear.

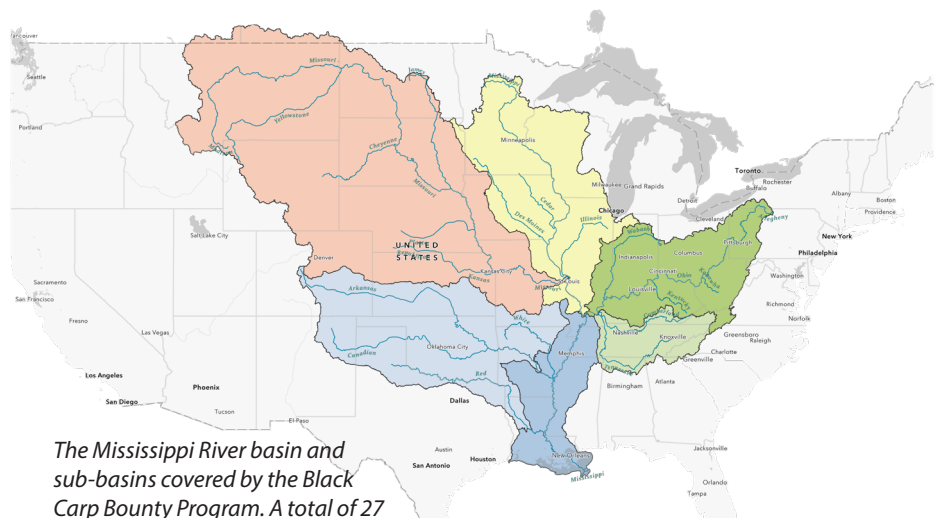
A total of 27 state agencies support the bounty program, offering \$100 per individual black carp, with up to 10 reimbursements per month. Although open to anyone, states are particularly interested in engaging more commercial fishers because commercial gear and techniques are much more effective in catching black carp.

Proper fish identification is crucial because some protected species look similar to black carp. Fishers are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with identification information prior to any capture effort.



black carp

Black carp possess a long and narrow head, dark external coloration (ranging from black to blue grey) and a nearly straight lateral line with slight decurvature midbody.



The Mississippi River basin and sub-basins covered by the Black Carp Bounty Program. A total of 27 state agencies are participating.

Keep

Use the information in this handout to accurately identify the fish. If you believe your fish might be a black carp, keep the fish and make note of the capture location, preferably by taking GPS coordinates. Cell phone photos of head, mouth and total length of fish are helpful for identification. Please note the type of fishing gear and bait you used, and if possible, habitat conditions such as substrate, depth, water temperature and flow.

Cool

Humanely kill the fish and keep it cool on ice or in a freezer. Live possession of black carp is illegal.

Call

Immediately contact state agency personnel. Find contact information by state of capture on the back of this handout.

More information is available online at icrcc.fws.gov/black-carp-bounty. The QR code will take you there.



Additional Program Contacts

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Jeremiah Smith
(573) 306-5889

Tetra Tech
Josh Mitchell
(217) 969-2045

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
dnr.ans@illinois.gov

Alabama

Dave Armstrong
(251) 331-7050

Arkansas

Rachael Irby
(501) 517-3904

Colorado

Robert Walters
(303) 291-7833

Georgia

Jim Page
(912) 285-6485

Illinois

Sara Tripp
(618) 444-3078

Indiana

Craig Jansen
(812) 827-2836

Iowa

Kim Bogenschutz
(515) 290-0540

Kansas

Chris Steffen
(785) 230-2033

Kentucky

Ohio River Basin
Jeff Herod
(270) 978-5377

Tennessee and Cumberland
River Basins
Joshua Tompkins
(270) 226-4192

Minnesota
Grace Loppnow
(651) 259-5670

Mississippi

Dennis Riecke
(601) 432-2207

Missouri

Joe McMullen
(314) 606-5260

Montana

Eileen Ryce
(406) 444-2449

Nebraska

Kristopher Stahr
(402) 471-7602

North Carolina

Doug Besler
(828) 803-6032

North Dakota

Ben Holen
(701) 368-9117

Ohio

John Navarro
(614) 265-6346

Oklahoma

Erika Sarvela
(580) 596-8025

Pennsylvania

Mike Depew
(814) 445-3454

South Dakota

Tanner Davis
(605) 367-5244

Tennessee

Cole Harty
(629) 702-0324

Texas

Monica McGarrity
(512) 552-3465

Virginia

Jeff Williams
(276) 783-4860

West Virginia

Katherine Zipfel
(304) 420-4550

Wisconsin

Greg Sass
(715) 891-1875

Wyoming

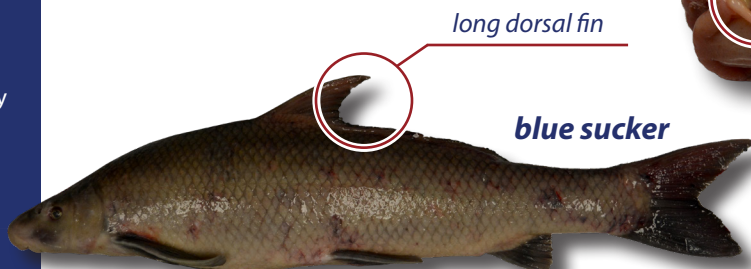
Reed Moore
(307) 290-2828

Other species commonly misidentified as black carp

The upper jaw on an invasive grass carp is prominent and visible from the top down and the lateral line initially declines near the length of the pectoral fin then continues straight along the body. Grass carp are olive, silvery white, or olive brown, but coloration should not be used as a primary method of identification because fish color can vary.

**grass carp****common carp**

Common carp are a non-native species that possess a single barbel at each corner of the mouth and a stockier less elongated body than black carp.

barbel**long dorsal fin****blue sucker**

Blue suckers are a native fish species protected in some waters. Blue suckers are identifiable by the long dorsal fin, elongated body and bottom-oriented or sucker mouth. Take care to identify and release blue suckers alive.

**smallmouth buffalo****largemouth buffalo**

Native species of buffalo, such as smallmouth buffalo and bigmouth buffalo, possess large scales with coloration that can be similar to black carp. The bodies of these fish are stockier than the more elongated black carp.

Visit our website for more information including carp identification guides.

www.icrcc.fws.gov



December 2025