

## Black Crappie

(Dorsal fin has 7-8 spines)



## White Crappie

(Dorsal fin has 5-6 spines)



The genus name *Pomoxis* derives from the [Greek](#) πώμα (cover, plug, [operculum](#)) and οξύς (sharp). The common name (also spelled croppie or crappé), derives from the [Canadian French](#) *crapet*, which refers to many different fishes of the sunfish family. Other names for crappie are papermouths, strawberry bass, speckled bass or specks (especially in [Michigan](#)), speckled perch, calico bass (throughout [New England](#)),

The currently recognized species in this genus are:<sup>[5]</sup>

- [White crappie](#) – *P. annularis* [Rafinesque](#), 1818
- [Black crappie](#) – *P. nigromaculatus* ([Lesueur](#), 1829)

Both species of crappie as adults feed predominantly on smaller species, including the young of their own predators (which include the [northern pike](#), [muskellunge](#), and [walleye](#)). They have diverse diets, however, including [zooplankton](#), [insects](#), and [crustaceans](#).<sup>[6][7]</sup> By day, crappie tend to be less active and to concentrate around weed beds or submerged objects, such as logs and boulders; they feed especially at dawn and dusk, moving then into open water or approaching the shore.

Black crappies are most accurately identified by the seven or eight spines on its [dorsal fin](#) (white crappies have five or six dorsal spines).<sup>[1]</sup> Crappies have a deep and laterally compressed body. They are usually silvery-gray to green in color and show irregular or mottled black splotches over the entire body.<sup>[1][2]</sup> Black crappies have rows of dark spots on their dorsal, anal, and caudal fins.<sup>[1]</sup> The dorsal and anal fins resemble each other in shape.<sup>[1]</sup> Both crappies have large mouths extending to below the eye, and thin lips—both suggestive of their [piscivorous](#) feeding habits.<sup>[1][3]</sup> Crappies are typically 4–8 inches (10–20 cm) long. The current all-tackle fishing world record for a black crappie is 2.25 kg (5 lbs. 0 oz.).<sup>[4]</sup>

The maximum length reported for a black crappie is 19.3 inches (49 cm) and the maximum published weight is just under 6 pounds (2,700 g).<sup>[1]</sup>

White crappies are very similar in appearance to [black crappies](#). They have 5–10 vertical bars along their body, rather than the randomly scattered spots like the black crappie. It has a silvery color with green or brown shades along its back, with dark lateral bars along its side and a white belly. The [dorsal fin](#) of the white crappie starts further back on the body than that of the black crappie. White crappies are also slightly more elongated than black crappie.<sup>[2]</sup> The species is a deep-bodied fish with a flattened body. It has spinous rays and ctenoid scales. Both species of crappie have a terminal mouth with many small conical teeth. The teeth occur in two rows along the mouth and are called *cardiform*, because they resemble a tool used for [wool carding](#). White crappie belong to the Infraclass [Teleostei](#), which is one of three infraclasses in the class [Actinopterygii](#).<sup>[3]</sup>

White crappie rarely exceed two pounds, and live around 2–7 years. The current for all-tackle fishing world record for a white crappie is 2.35 kilograms (5.2 lb).<sup>[4]</sup>