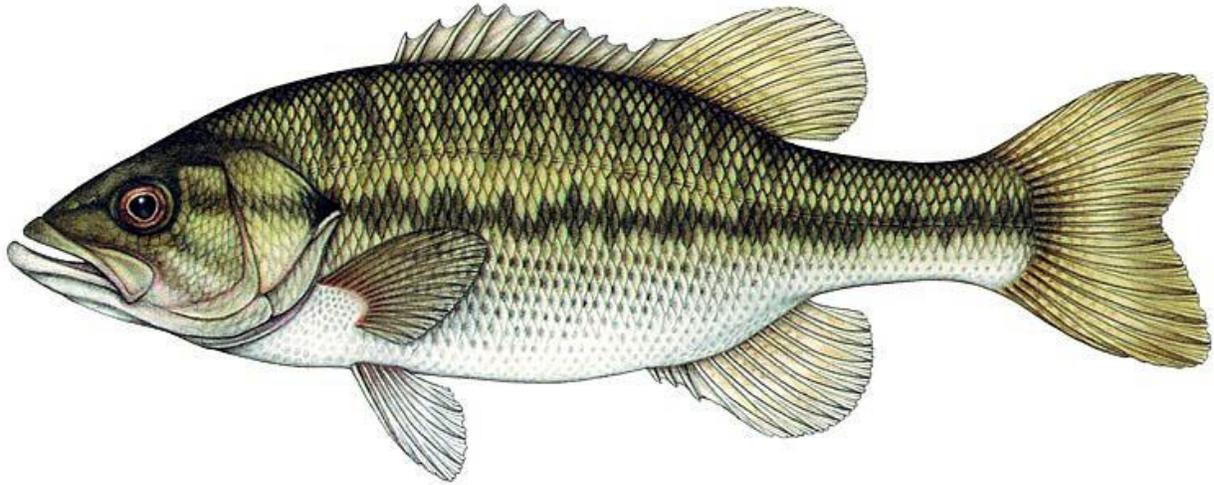


Spotted Bass



The **spotted bass** (*Micropterus punctulatus*), also called **spotty**, or **spots** in various fishing communities, is a [species of freshwater fish](#) of the sunfish [family](#) ([Centrarchidae](#)) of the [order Perciformes](#). One of the [black basses](#), it is native to the [Mississippi River](#) basin and across the [Gulf](#) states, from central [Texas](#) through the [Florida](#) panhandle. Its native range extends into the western [Mid-Atlantic states](#) and it has been introduced into western [North Carolina](#) and [Virginia](#). It has also been introduced to southern [Africa](#), where it has become established in some isolated waters. It is often mistaken for the similar and more common [largemouth bass](#).

A convenient way to distinguish between a largemouth bass and a spotted bass is by the size of the mouth. A spotted bass will resemble a largemouth bass in coloration but will have a smaller mouth.

M. punctulatus can reach an overall length of almost 64 cm (25 in), reaching weights of up to 4.6 kg (10 lb). It can reach an age of at least seven years. It is noted for the rows of dark spots below the lateral line, which give it its common name.

Preferring cool and warm mountain streams and reservoirs with rocky bottoms, the spotted bass feeds on [insects](#), [crustaceans](#), [frogs](#), [annelid](#) worms, and smaller fish.

In 2010, the scientific community officially recognized a separate subspecies of spotted bass, native to the [Tallapoosa](#) and [Coosa Rivers](#), and their lakes. This species is commonly known as the "Alabama spotted bass" (*M. henshalli*) and known locally as the "Coosa spotted bass", not to be confused with the "red-eye Coosa bass" found in northeast Georgia.^[1]

The Alabama spotted is highly prized as a gamefish and average size is much larger than the more common Kentucky spotted bass. The current record spotted bass, caught in pine Flat Lake, California, weighed 10.27 lb.^[2]