UNDERC Fish Guide

Compiled by Stephen Elser

Summer 2014

*Identification notes taken from Peterson Field Guide to Freshwater Fishes of North America North of Mexico 2011*

*Lakes caught in and equipment are taken from Gonad Surveys and Monitoring Data from 2013-2014*

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Big (relatively) Fish

**Black Crappie** (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*)

**Identification:** Has 7-8 dorsal spines, 1st much shorter than last. Large mouth; upper jaw extends under eye. Deep, extremely compressed body. Gray-green above; wavy black lines, blotches, green flecks on silver blue side; white below; many wavy black bands, spots on dorsal, caudal, and anal fins. Has 15-16 dorsal rays, 6 anal spines, 17-19 rays. Can be as large as 49cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Brown, Tenderfoot, Red Bass Lake\*, Big Arbor Vitae\*, Erickson\*, Helmet\*, Deadwood\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets, minnow traps

**Black Bullhead** (*Ameiurus melas*)

**Identification:** Dusky to black chin barbels. Relatively short anal fin, rounded in outline, 19-23 rays; rays at front distinctly longer than rear rays. Rear edge of caudal fin slightly notched. Dark olive, yellow-brown, or slate-olive above; lighter, often shiny green-gold side; bright yellow to white below; dusky to black fins. Pale rays, black membranes on caudal and anal fins. No mottling on body; no dark blotch at dorsal fin base. Has 15-21 rakers on 1st gill arch. Can be as large as 62cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Morris, Tenderfoot, Hummingbird, Ward, Red Bass Lake\*, Big Arbor Vitae\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets, minnow traps

**Bluegill** (*Lepomis macrochirus*)

**Identification:** Large black spot at rear of dorsal fin (faint on young); often a dusky spot at rear of anal fin. Dark bars on deep, extremely compressed body. Long pointed pectoral fin; usually extends far past eye when bent forward. Small mouth, upper jaw not extending under eye pupil. Olive back side with yellow and green flecks; adult with blue sheen overall. 2 blue streaks from chin to edge of gill cover; white to yellow below; clear to dusky red fins. Complete lateral line; 38-48 lateral scales; usually 13 pectoral rays, 11 anal rays. Long, think rakers on 1st gill arch. Can be as large as 41cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Bay, Brown, Crampton, Hummingbird, Peter, Tenderfoot, Red Bass Lake\*, Big Arbor Vitae\*, Erickson\*, Birch\*, Deadwood\*, McCullough\*, Allequash\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets, minnow traps

**Largemouth Bass** (*Micropterus salmoides*)

**Identification:** First dorsal fin highest at middle, low at rear; 1st (spinous) and 2nd (soft) dorsal fins nearly separate. Very large mouth, upper jaw extending well past eye (except in young). Silver to brassy green (brown in dark water) above, dark olive mottling; broad black stripe (often broken into series of blotches) along side and onto snout; brown eye; scattered black specks on lower side; white below. Usually 58-73 lateral scales, 8 rakers on 1st gill arch. Can be as large as 97cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Bay, Crampton, Hummingbird, Paul, Peter, West Long, Red Bass Lake\*, Helmet\*, Erickson\*, Birch\*, Big Arbor Vitae\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets, minnow traps

**Muskellunge** (*Esox masquinongy*)

**Identification:** Partly scaled cheek and opercle. Dark spots, blotches, or bars on light yellow-green back and side; cream to white below with small brown to gray blotches; large individuals dark gray above. No teardrop. Has 16-19 branchiostegal rays; 6-10 submandibular pores; 130-167 lateral scales. Can be as large as 2 meters.

**Lakes caught in:** Brown, Tenderfoot, Birch\*  
**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets

**Northern Pike** (*Esox lucius*)

**Identification:** Partly scaled opercle; fully scaled cheek. Rows of yellow bean-shaped spots (on adult), yellow to white wavy bars (on young) on green back and side; large individual dark gray above. No teardrop. Usually black spots on dusky green, yellow, or red fins. Has 13-16 branchiostegal rayts; 5-6 submandibular pores; 105-148 lateral scales. Can be as large as 142cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Brown, Morris, Tenderfoot, Birch\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets

**Pumpkinseed** (*Lepomis gibbosus*)

**Identification:** Bright red or orange spot, light-colored edge on black ear flap. Many bold dark brown wavy lines or orange spots on second dorsal, caudal, and anal fins. Wavy blue lines on cheek and opercle of adult. Long, pointed pectoral fin usually extends far past eye when bent forward. Small mouth, upper jaw not extending under eye pupil. Olive back and side, many gold and yellow flecks; adult blue-green, spotted with orange; dusky chainlike bars on side of young and adult female; white to red-orange below. Short ear flap; stiff rear edge on gill cover (excluding ear flap). Complete lateral line. 25-47 lateral scales; usually 12-13 pectoral rays, 10 anal rays. Can be as large as 40cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Bay, Bolger, Brown, Crampton, Hummingbird, Morris, Paul, Peter, Tenderfoot, Ward, Helmet\*, Red Bass Lake\*, Big Arbor Vitae\*, Erickson\*, Birch\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets, minnow traps

**Rock Bass** (*Ambloplotes rupestris*)

**Identification**: Adults has rows of brown-black spots along side, largest and darkest below lateral line. Young has brown marbling on gray side. Light green above, brassy yellow flecks on side; about 5 wide dark saddles over back and down to midside; white to bronze breast and belly; black edges on dorsal, caudal, and anal fins of adult. Has 36-47 lateral scales; usually 7-8 scales above lateral line, 21-25 scale rows across breast from pectoral fin to pectoral fin; usually 11-13 dorsal spines, 10-11 anal; rays. Can be as large as 43cm.

**Lakes caught in**: Brown, Tenderfoot, Big Arbor Vitae\*, Erickson\*, Birch\*

**Can be caught with**: Fyke nets

**Shiner**

**Identification:** “Shiner” is a common term to refer to several genera of small fish. They tend to be silver in color with forked tails. Shiners in this category haven’t been identified by us (Jones lab and friends) to species. Wide range of sizes.

**Lakes caught in:**Bolger, Crampton, Hummingbird, Morris, Tenderfoot, Tuesday, Ward, Big Arbor Vitae\*, Erickson\*, Birch\*, Red Bass Lake\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets, minnow traps

**Smallmouth Bass** (*Micropterus dolomieu*)

**Identification:** has 8-16 dark brown bars, bronze specks, on yellow-brown to olive green side; red eye; yellow-white below. Young has 3-colored (yellow, black, white edge) caudal fin. Large male is green-brown to bronze with black mottling on back, bars on side. Large mouth; upper jaw extends under eye. Usually no patch of teeth on tongue. Unbranched pyloric caeca. Usually 69-77 lateral scales, 29-32 scales around caudal peduncle. Can be as large as 69cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Bay, Brown, Big Arbor Vitae\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets, minnow traps

**Walleye** (*Sander vitreus*)

**Identification:** Huge mouth extends beyond middle of eye; large canine teeth. Opaque, silver eye. Large black spot (on adult) on rear of first dorsal fin. Long, slender body; long pointed snout; forked caudal fin. Yellow-olive to brown above, dark green vermiculations; brassy yellow-blue side; 5-12 dusky saddles extend onto side as short bars (faint on adult); wavy dark brown bands on yellow fins; white tips on anal fin, lower lobe of caudal fin. Has 77-104 lateral scales; usually 19-22 dorsal rays, 12-14 anal rays; 3 pyloric caeca. Can be as large as 91cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Brown, Tenderfoot, Red Bass Lake\*, Birch\*, Deadwood\*, Big Arbor Vitae\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets, minnow traps

**White Sucker** (*Catostomus commersonii*)

**Identification:** Deep median lower lip notch; 0-3 rows of papillae at middle of lower lip; 2-6 rows of papillae on upper lip, lower lip about twice as thick as upper lip. Caudal peduncle depth more than half dorsal fin base. No membrane connecting pelvic fin to body. Olive-brown to black above, often dusky-edges scales; clear to dusky fins. Breeding male is gold above, has scarlet stripe along side in most populations; turbercles on anal and caudal fins, caudal peduncle. Pale to slightly speckled peritoneum. Usually 10-12 dorsal rays, 53-74 lateral scales, 8-11 scale rows above lateral line. Can be as large as 64cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Tenderfoot, Helmet\*, Big Arbor Vitae\*, Big Muskellunge\*, Birch\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets

**Yellow Perch** (*Perca flavescens*)

**Identification:** Fairly deep, compressed body; forked caudal fin. Green above, 6-9 green-brown saddles extend down yellow side (often as triangular bars); black blotch at rear (and often another at front) of dusky first dorsal fin; yellow to red paired fins. Large mouth extends to middle of eye; no canine teeth. Has 52-61 lateral scales; 12-14 dorsal rays; 6-8 anal rays. Can be as large as 40cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Bay, Brown, Crampton, Hummingbird, Morris, Tenderfoot, West Long, Red Bass Lake\*, Helmet\*, Birch\*, Big Arbor Vitae\*, Deadwood\*

**Can be caught with:** Fyke nets, minnow traps

Minnows

**Blacknose Shiner:** (*Notropis heterolepis*)

**Identification**: Black stripe along side and around snout, but barely onto upper lip and absent from chin; black crescents within stripe. Rounded, somewhat elongated snout; small, nearly horizontal, subterminal mouth; round eye. Slender, slightly compressed body; dorsal fin origin slightly behind pelvic fin origin. Olive to straw colored above; often a faint streak in front of dorsal fin; scales darkly outlined except above dark stripe along silver side. Incomplete lateral line; 32-29 lateral scales; 13 or more predorsal; 8 anal rays. Can be as large as 9.8cm.

**Lakes caught in**: Ward

**Can be caught with**: Minnow traps

**Bluntnose minnow** (*Pimephales notatus*)

**Identification**: Blunt snout overhanging small, subterminal, horizontal mouth. Slender body nearly square in cross section, with top of head and nape flattened; round eye on side of head. Dorsal fin origin slight behind pelvic fin origin. Light olive to tan abovem, scales darkly outlined (often with crosshatched appearance), black streak along back; dusky to black stripe around snout and along silver side to conspicuous black spot on caudal fin base; fins clear except for dusky to black blotch at front of dorsal fin (about midway). Breeding male black with silver bar behind opercle, about 16 large tubercles in 3 rows on snout, large gray fleshy pad on nape. Complete lateral line; 39-50 lateral scales; 7 anal rays. Can be as large as 11cm.

**Lakes caught in**: Bolger

**Can be caught with**: Minnow traps

**Brassy Minnow**: (*Hybognathus hankinsoni*)

**Identification:** Rounded dorsal fin. Stout, brassy yellow body; moderately compressed, deepest and widest in front of dorsal fin. Moderately small eye (about ¼ head length). Dusky olive above, wide dusky to yellow-green stripe along back; often with thin lines along upper side. Brassy yellow side; diffuse dusky stripe best developed on rear half of side. Has 13-15 pectoral rays. Basioccipital process straight or barely concave posteriorly. Can be as large as 9.7cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Ward

**Can be caught with:** Minnow traps

**Brook Stickleback** (*Culaea inconstans*)

**Identification:** Has 4-6 short dorsal spines. Deep, compressed body; no large bony plates on side (small plates on lateral-line pores). No keel on short caudal peduncle. Branchiostegal membranes joined to one another but free of isthmus. Pelvic fin with 1 spine and 1 ray. Olive above with pale green flecks, dark green mottling; often a pale stripe along side; silver white to light green below. Breeding male is dark green to black, sometimes with red on pelvic fins. Can be as large as 8.7cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Bolger, Tuesday

**Can be caught with:** Minnow traps

**Central Mudminnow** (*Umbra limi*)

**Identification:** Black bar on caudal fin base. Dorsal fin origin far in front of anal fin origin. Anal fin base about half as long as dorsal fin base. No lateral line. Rounded caudal fin. Small pelvic fins, 6-7 rays. Fairly small pectoral fins, 11-16 rays. Green to brown-black above and on side; white to yellow below; up to 14 dark brown bars on side; no spots on dusky brown fins. Breeding male has iridescent blue-green anal and pelvic fins. Fairly large (30-37) lateral scales. Has 13-17 dorsal rays; 7-10 anal rays. Can be as large as 15cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Bolger, Brown, Cranberry, Hummingbird, Northgate, Tuesday, Ward

**Can be caught with:** Minnow traps

**Fathead Minnow** (*Pimephales promelas*)

**Identification**: Deep, compressed body; head short, flat on top. Herringbone lines on upper side. Blunt snout; terminal, oblique mouth; round eye on side of head. Dorsal fin origin over pelvic fin origin. Dark olive above and on side, dusky stripe along back, dusky stripe along side; dull yellow to white below with black peritoneum visible; fins clear except often a dusky to black blotch at front of dorsal fin (about midway). Breeding male has dark black head, 2 broad white to gold bars on side (1 behind head, 1 under dorsal fin); black fins; large gray fleshy pad on nape, about 16 large tubercles in 3 rows on snout. Can be as large as 10cm.

**Lakes caught in**: Bolger, Tuesday, Ward

**Can be caught with**: Minnow traps

**Finescale Dace** (*Chrosomus neogaeus*)

**Identification:** Dark brown to gray “cape” on back and upper side. Body profusely speckled with black. Dark olive to gold stripe along side, light olive between cape and stripe; silver white below; usually a black caudal spot; clear to yellow fins. Large male has red along side. Large head; large terminal mouth extends under eye; rounded snout. Has 63-92 lateral scales. Can be as large as 11cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Ward

**Can be caught with:** Minnow traps

**Golden Shiner** (*Notemigonus crysoleucas*)

**Identification:** Extremely compressed body; strongly decurved lateral line; scales keel along belly from pelvic to anal fin. Small, upturned mouth on pointed snout; dorsal fin origin behind pelvic fin origin. Silver in clear and turbid water; gold side and fins in coffee colored water. Dusky stripe along side, herringbone lines on upper side of young. Has 44-54 lateral scales; 7-9 dorsal rays; 8-19, usually 11-14 anal rays; 17-19 rakers on first gill arch. Can be as large as 32cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Tuesday

**Can be caught with:** Minnow traps

**Iowa Darter** (*Etheostoma exile*)

**Identification:** Slender body; long, narrow caudal peduncle. Tan above; dark brown mottling, often short bars on side. Black teardrop. Blue edge and base, middle red band on first dorsal fin (faint on female). Breeding male has orange belly, alternating blue and brick red bars on side. Incomplete lateral line, 19-34 pores; often arched near front. Has 45-69 lateral scales. Can be as large as 7.2cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Ward

**Can be caught with:** Minnow traps

**Johnny Darter** (*Etheostoma nigrum*)

**Identification:** Dark brown X’s and W’s along side, wavy brown lines on upper side. Light brown above, 6 dark brown saddles; black preorbital bar extends onto upper lip. Breeding male has black head and anal and pelvic fins; black spot at front of first dorsal din; often has white knobs on tips of pelvic spine and rays. One anal spine, no premaxillary frenum, interrupted infraorbital and supratemporal canals, narrowly joined branchiostegal membranes, moderately blunt snout, slender caudal peduncle. Complete lateral line; 35-56 lateral scales. Can be as large as 7.2cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Bay, Peter, Ward

**Can be caught with:** Minnow traps

**Northern Redbelly Dace** (*Chrosomus eos*)

**Identification:** Rounded, short snout with chin in front of upper lip. Large males may have red or yellow belly, head, and fins. Has 70-90 lateral scales. Can be as large as 8cm.

**Lakes caught in:** Bolger, Tuesday, Ward

**Can be caught with:** Minnow traps