

Here a Bass, There a Bass

Did you know that smallmouth bass and all Pennsylvania black bass species are in the same family as bluegills? They are in the **sunfish** family, or as scientists call it, the Centrarchidae family. Several kinds of bass from the sunfish family can be found in Pennsylvania:

Smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, spotted bass, and rock bass. The white bass and striped bass are temperate basses in the Moronidae family.

Largemouth bass can grow to more than 25 **inches** long. Smallmouth bass can grow to about 20 inches long. The mouth of the largemouth bass extends past the eye. Its large mouth allows it to eat bigger food.



Another way to tell the difference between a smallmouth bass and a largemouth bass is to look at their dorsal fins, the ones that are on their backs. The smallmouth bass has a **shallow** notch that separates its dorsal fins. The largemouth has a deeper notch.

The spotted bass is uncommon in our state. It can sometimes be found in the Ohio River near Pittsburgh and in the Beaver River. It looks like a cross between a smallmouth bass and a largemouth bass.

The smallmouth bass has a shallow notch that separates its dorsal fins.

Look at the pictures below and use what you have learned, so far, to figure out which bass (smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, or spotted bass) each sentence describes. When you think you have the right answer, draw a line from the sentence to the picture of that fish.

1. This fish likes to live in deep, moving water.
2. The mouth of this fish extends farther than its eye.
3. Which fish has diamond-shaped spots along its sides?
4. This fish has eight to 15 broken lines that run up and down along its sides.
5. Because it can eat large-sized food, this fish is nicknamed "bucketmouth."
6. This fish is silver-green.
7. This fish is nicknamed "bronzeback."
8. This fish is not commonly found in Pennsylvania.
9. This fish is Pennsylvania's largest member of the sunfish family.

smallmouth bass



largemouth bass



spotted bass

