

Wildlife Express

VOLUME 38 | ISSUE 10

JUNE 2025

Take Me Fishing

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Fishing is fun!



With summer vacation just around the corner, you may be thinking of things to do in the warm summer sun. How about fishing? Fishing is a great outdoor activity any time of the year, and it can be a blast! Most people remember the first time they caught a fish. The feeling of a fish tugging at the line and jumping in the air is exciting and spine tingling. Fighting a big fish is a feeling most people remember for a long time. Even catching small fish can be thrilling, but catching a fish isn't the only thing that makes fishing fun.

If you ask a fisherman why they like to fish, catching a fish may not be the first thing they mention. Fishing is about experiencing the great outdoors and all the wonderful things that it has to offer. It is refreshing and calming to be outside. When fishing, you get to feel the warm sun on your face and listen to the sounds of trickling water.

How great does it feel to dip your feet in a stream or lake on a hot day? You can't do that while playing video games in your house! Even if you are in the worst of moods, sitting outside, streamside with a fishing pole in your hand can make all those bad feelings go away.

You don't need a lot of money to fish. If you live in Idaho and are under 14 years of age, fishing for you is **FREE!** All you need is a pole, reel, hooks and bait. Catching the bait can be just as fun as fishing! Try digging up worms and catching the grasshoppers around your house.

So, if you are looking for fun this summer, dig up some worms, grab your pole and head to the water. You may be lucky enough to catch a fish, but you also might experience something even greater. You may be refreshed and inspired by the natural world around you.

Where are the Fish?

Have you ever been fishing and just seemed to have no luck? No matter how hard you tried, a fish just would not grab your hook? Well, it probably wasn't all the fish's fault.

To catch fish, you need to know a bit about their watery habitat and think like a fish. Idaho has 26,000 miles of streams and rivers and all are special in their own way.

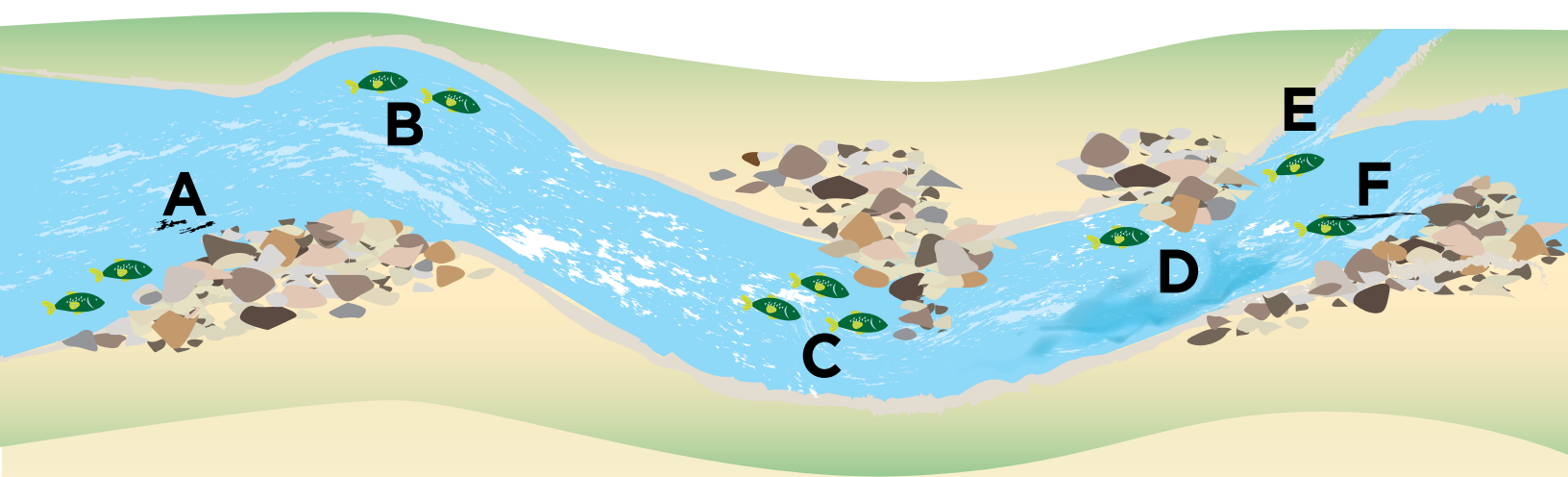
Here are some things to keep in mind when fishing in streams. There is less current in a river near the bottom of the streambed. In a straight stretch of river, the deepest and fastest water will be in the middle of the river. When a river makes

a sharp bend, the strongest current and deepest water will be at the outside edge of the bend.

Deeper, slow-moving water is called a pool. Shallow, fast-flowing water is called a riffle.

In rivers and streams, fish tend to stay in slow moving water. This way they do not need to swim and use as much energy, but they want to be near some riffles.

Fish in streams often sit and wait for the water current to bring food to them. In streams, look for fish in deep river bends, undercut banks, pools below riffles and in areas behind sand or rock bars. These places give fish some safety, but they



In Rivers Look For Fish Near:



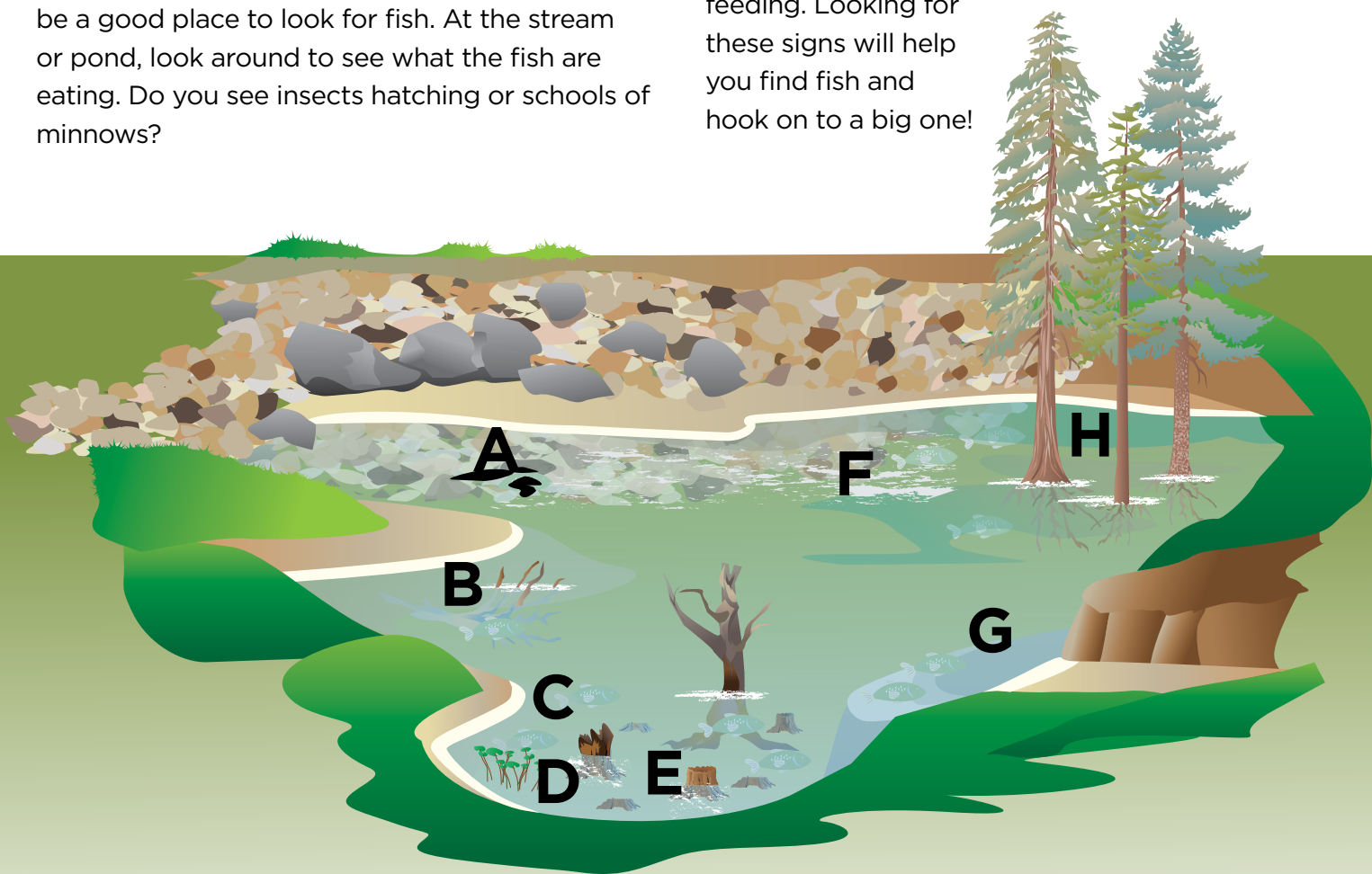
- A.** Rocky banks
- B.** Deep river bends
- C.** Behind rock and sand dams
- D.** Places where the bottom of the pond changes depths
- E.** Where small streams flow into the river
- F.** Eddies (swirling bodies of water)

can still see food float by. In lakes and ponds, fish tend to gather around cover. Cover can be anything that hides and protects a fish. Fallen trees, rocks, weeds, docks, and plants along the shore will all give fish places to hide.

Hungry fish seem to like places where the habitat changes. This is why the edge of a drop-off may be a good place to look for fish. At the stream or pond, look around to see what the fish are eating. Do you see insects hatching or schools of minnows?

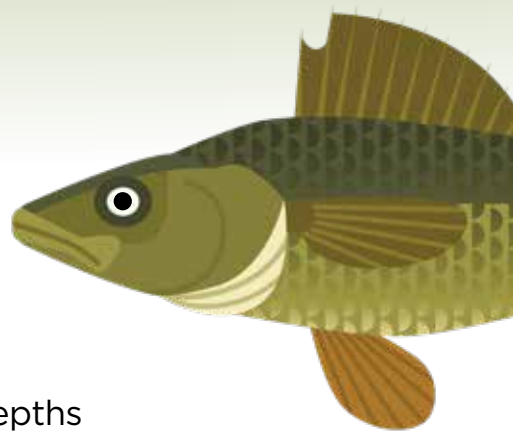
Look for splashing water or rings on the water. These are all signs of feeding fish and good places to cast your line.

Next time you go fishing, think about the habitat of the fish. Are you fishing in a stream or pond? Do you see places where the habitat changes and areas where fish are feeding. Looking for these signs will help you find fish and hook on to a big one!



In Ponds Look For Fish Near:

- A.** Rocks
- B.** Sunken cover
- C.** Points where the land extends into the pond
- D.** Weeds
- E.** Sunken stumps
- F.** Places where the bottom of the pond changes depths
- G.** Stair-step along drop-off
- H.** Flooded trees and shade



Know Your Fish

In Idaho, we are lucky to have so many kinds of fish to catch, from huge sturgeon to colorful cutthroat trout. The type of fish you catch will depend on the habitat.

- Trout, salmon and whitefish like colder, fast-moving water.
- Fish like bass, perch, bluegill and catfish can live in water that is warmer and murkier.
- It is fun to imagine the fish you may catch on your next trip!
- It is also important to know the species of your fish so you can follow the rules.

Be sure to read Idaho Fish and Game's fishing regulations to learn about the rules and regulations in the area you want to fish. Sometimes certain areas have special rules.

**On the next page,
see common fish
you may catch in
Idaho.**



You may catch ...



Perch

Body a greenish yellow color with darker bands on the side. Fins are usually orange.



Bluegill

Body color yellowish-olive to olive-green with a blue luster. Blue spot on the gill cover.



Rainbow Trout

Silver body with black spots on the body, back and tail fins. Reddish-pink band along the side of the body.



Cutthroat Trout

Body a greenish-gold color. Black spots are found mostly on the tail end and upper half of the body. Has a bright red-orange stripe under the jaw.



Mountain Whitefish

Body a silvery-white color with light tones of bronze, gray, green or blue. No spots. Small mouth with no teeth.



Largemouth Bass

Dark green on back and sides. White belly. Mouth extends past the eye.



Smallmouth Bass

Body a dark olive-brown and bronze with dark vertical stripes. White belly. Reddish colored eyes. Mouth does not extend past the eye.

Fishing Supplies You'll Need



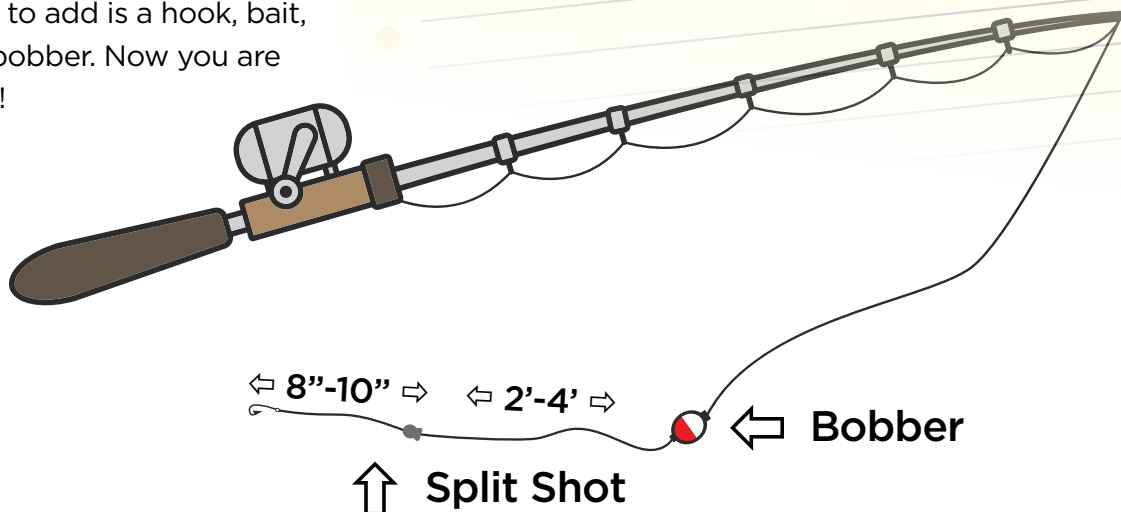
Fishing Supplies Check List

- Pole Setup
- Bait
- Pliers for getting hooks out of fish
- A knife to clean fish
- A ruler to measure fish
- Fingernail clippers for clipping line
- Stringer or bucket of water to keep fish cold and fresh while fishing
- Cooler with ice to keep fish cold during the trip home

You don't need anything fancy to go fishing. Here is a simple and inexpensive pole setup that works great when fishing along the shoreline of a pond. We recommend starting with a five to six foot rod and reel combination.

A closed- faced reel with a thumb button to release and stop the line is easy to use. Most rod and reel combinations will already have fishing line on the reel.

All you need to add is a hook, bait, weight and bobber. Now you are ready to fish!

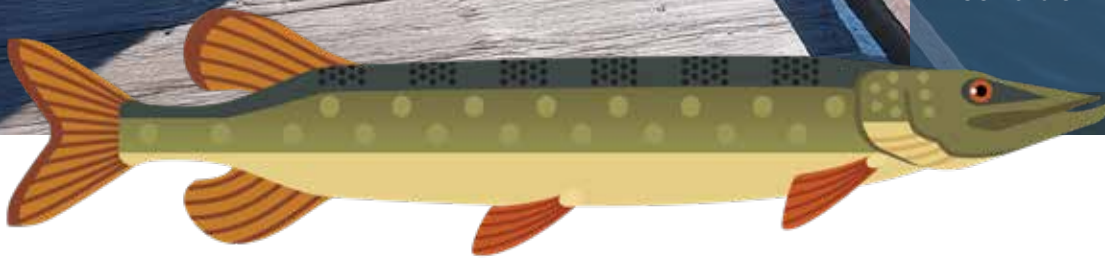


Keeping and Cleaning Your Fish



Planning to bring your catch home for a delicious dinner? Awesome! Remember to quickly check the Idaho Fish and Game regulations to ensure you're clear on species and limits – happy, legal fishing makes for the best meals!

To keep your prized catches fresh until you head back, consider using a stringer. Once a fish is dispatched, a stringer threaded through the gills is an efficient way to keep them together. Letting them rest in the cool water on the stringer helps maintain their freshness naturally. It's a simple and effective way to ensure your hard-earned dinner stays in top condition for the trip home.



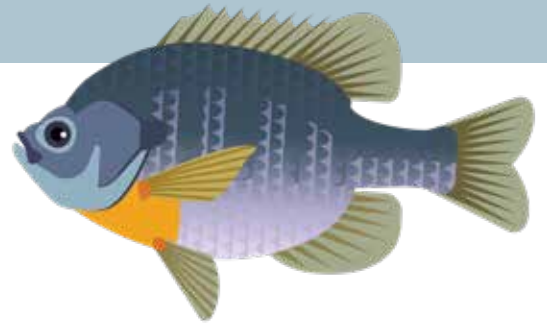
- Keep fish cool on ice or in the water on a stringer until ready to clean.
- Hold fish with the belly up, on a cutting board.
- Insert knife tip into the fish's anus. Make a shallow cut upward along belly to the head.
- Make a cut under the jaw. Use the lower lip as a handle to pull organs down and out.
- Scrape out dark line (kidney) along backbone with a spoon or thumbnail.
- Rinse with clean water.
- Eat fish within 2 days or freeze in baggies filled with water.



Catch and Release

- Use barbless hooks. You can press the barb down with pliers.
- Land fish quickly. Leave fish in the water if possible.
- Never hold a fish by the gills or squeeze the belly.
- For lip-hooked fish, hold the hook with pliers and pull backwards with a gentle shake.
- If the hook is swallowed or difficult to remove, cut the line as close to the hook as possible. Most hooks dissolve.
- Gently place the fish in the water supporting it above the tail and under the belly until recovered and able to swim off on its own.

How to cast a spincasting reel



1



2



1

Hold rod with reel on top. Locate the thumb button.

2

Bring rod back to your ear.
Push and hold down button.

3

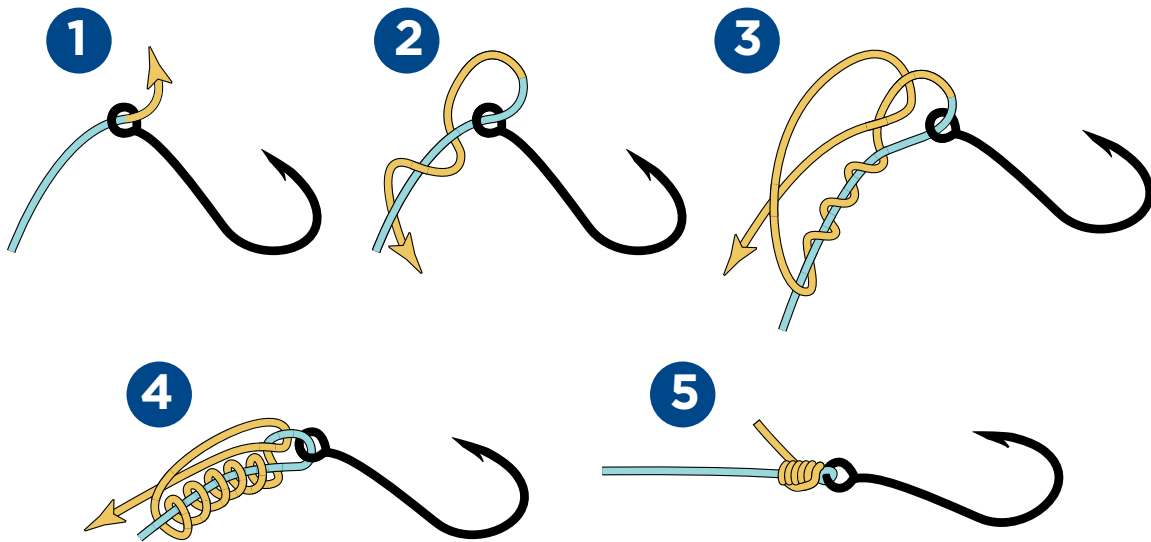
Bring the rod forward. Release the button on the reel at the same position you would throw a ball. Reel in the line until you hear a click.

3



Improved Clinch Knot

Without a good knot you could lose your gear or your fish. The improved clinch knot is a good knot for beginning anglers. It is strong and easy to learn. The line coming from the reel is the standing line (blue). The end of the line is the tag end (yellow).



- 1 Pass line through the eye of the hook.
- 2 Make 5 turns around the line above the hook.
- 3 Pass line through the “tear drop” loop above the hook eye.
- 4 Pass line through the “big loop” you made when putting the line through the tear drop.
- 5 Moisten line and pull the knot tight against the hook eye.

Catch One Of Our Fishing Trailers

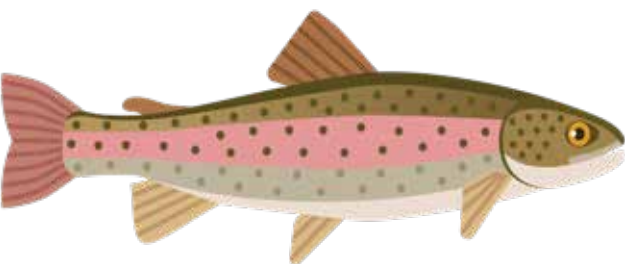


Now that we have you excited about fishing, you may be asking yourself, “How do I get started?”

You can join in the fun at one of our many “Take Me Fishing” trailer events planned this spring and summer.

It's free!

We supply everything you will need. Just show up and have fun! At each event, we have fishing poles and bait available at no charge. If you are new to the sport, don't worry about not knowing how to fish. There are angler experts on hand to teach you casting and knot tying. They will give you tips on everything from reeling in your catch to cleaning a fish. Both adults and kids can join in the fun.



If you sign-in at the trailer, you do not need a fishing license to fish at the event. Mom, dad, older brothers and sisters, even grandma and grandpa can fish for free at the event as long as they sign-in. Events are planned across the state. Most are held at fishing ponds in or close to towns and cities. After the event finishes, normal Fish and Game fishing license rules and regulations apply.

To find where the fishing trailers will be, look on Idaho Fish and Game's website at **www.idfg.idaho.gov**. Click on the Fishing tab and then click the Learn to Fish tab. Under this you will find a link to the Take Me Fishing Trailer page. Here you will find a list of all the places the trailer will be this spring and summer.

Have fun fishing!

Fishing for Words!

Find these “fishy” words in the puzzle:

Bait, Bass, Bluegill, Bobber, Cover, Current, Cutthroat, Fishing, Fun, Hook, Knots, Perch, Pole, Pond, Pool, Rainbow, Reel, Riffle, Stream, Whitefish

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V	S	Z	Q	T	W	H	B	C	K	Z	A	F	Y	E
C	Y	U	U	M	C	Y	N	X	E	S	I	A	Q	L
V"	O	S	W	H	I	T	E	F	I	S	H	S	R	F
Z	O	V	K	D	B	L	G	L	H	A	B	E	F	F
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P	G	B	X	H	G	G	A	T	W	P	Z	S	L	L

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Volume 38 • Issue 10

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June 2025

Wildlife Express is published by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Editors: Lori Wilson, Riley Calhoun

Layout: Nancy Jasper



WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

If you have a letter, poem or question for Wildlife Express, it may be included in a future issue!

Send it to: lori.wilson@idfg.idaho.gov

or

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