

# Wildlife Express!

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Take me Fishing



Photo courtesy Anja Fredericks

# 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 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.

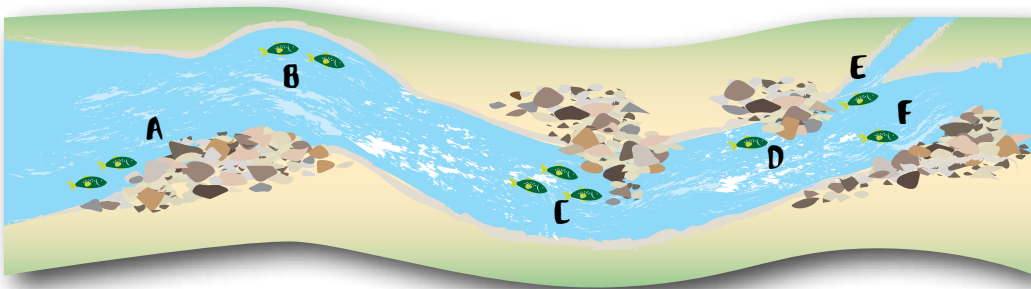
At the stream or pond, look around to see what the fish are eating. Do you see insects hatching or schools of minnows? Look for slashing water or rings on the water. These are all signs of feeding fish and good places to cast your line.

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 into a big one!

## For Rivers

### Look for fish near:

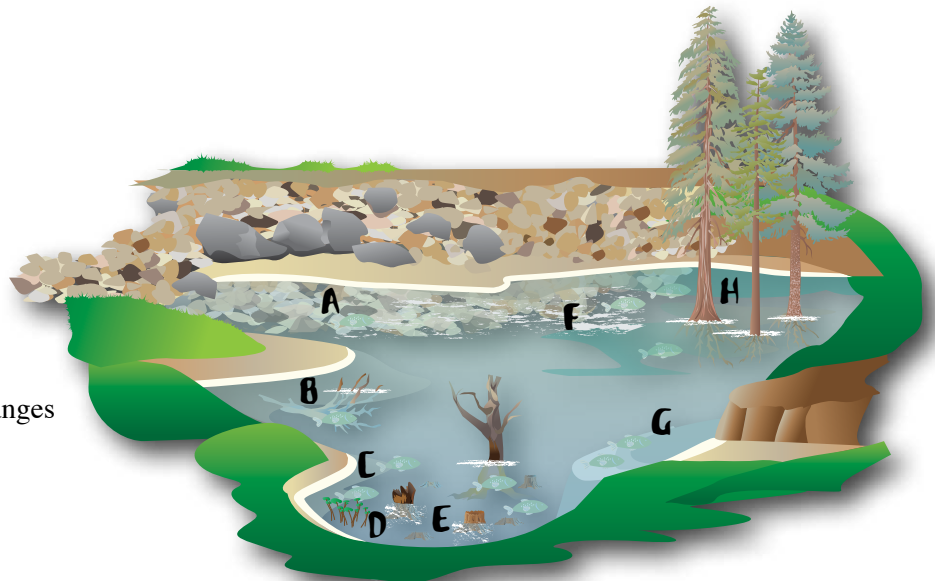
- A. Riprap banks
- B. Deep river bends
- C. Behind rock and sand dams
- D. Holes below riffles
- E. Where small streams flow into the river
- F. Eddies



## For Ponds

### Look for fish near:

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



# Know Your Fish

In Idaho, we are lucky to have so many different 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 learn about the fish you may catch. It is also important to know your fish. In some rivers and lakes, there are special rules or regulations about whether you may keep your fish. Below are some of the more common fish you may catch in a river or pond.

## 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.



## Bluegill

Body color yellowish-olive to olive-green with a blue luster. Blue spot on gill cover. Body is round, like a plate.

## Perch

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



## Smallmouth Bass

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

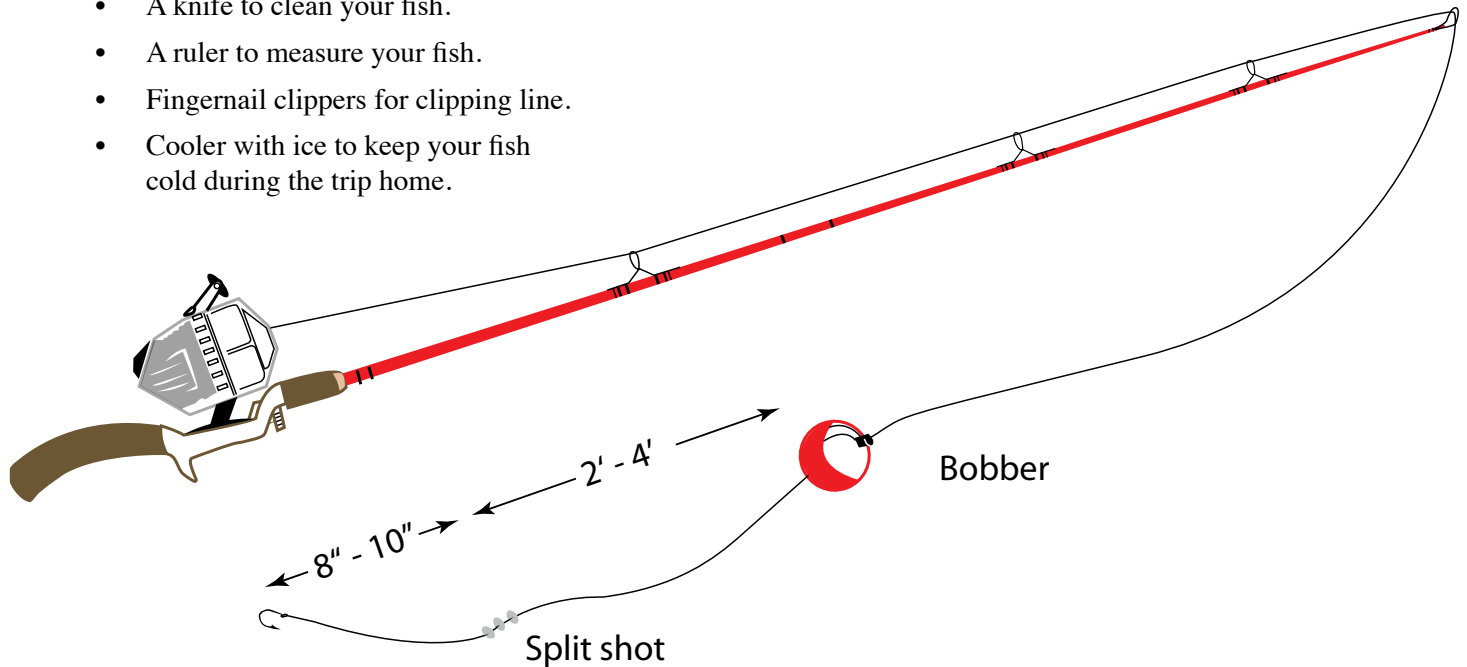
## Largemouth Bass

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



# Fishing Supplies You'll Need

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



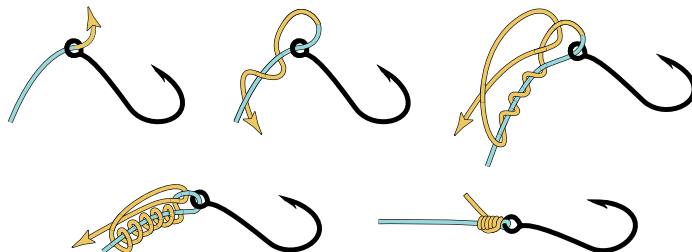
## Basic Pole Setup

You don't need anything fancy to go fishing. Here is a simple and inexpensive pole setup that works great when fishing from the shoreline. 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, weight and bobber, and you are ready to fish!

## Know Your Knots

Without a good knot you could lose your gear or your fish. The simple 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 five turns around the standing end of the line.
3. Pass the tag end through the "tear drop" loop above the eye.
4. Pass the tag end through the "big loop".
5. Moisten line and pull knot tight against the eye. Clip tag end.





# 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. Feeling 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 a small fish can be thrilling, but catching a fish is just one thing that makes fishing fun.

You may have heard the saying “There is more to fishing than catching a fish.” This saying is so true. If you ask someone who fishes a lot why she likes to fish, catching a fish may not be the first thing she mentions. 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 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, along a stream with a fishing pole in your hand can melt all those bad feelings 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! You can dig up worms and catch 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 have the thrilling experience of catching a fish, but you might experience something much more. You may also be refreshed and inspired by the natural world around you.

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## Catch 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. Your parents do not need to call, 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. As long as 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. Before and after the event, a fishing license is required for anyone 14 years and older.

Over two-hundred events are planned across the state. Most are held at fishing ponds in or close to towns and cities. To find where the fishing trailers will be, look on Idaho Fish and Game’s website at [www.fishandgame.idaho.gov](http://www.fishandgame.idaho.gov). Click on the Fishing tab, then click the Learn to Fish tab, and then the “Take Me Fishing” Trailer schedule. 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 below:

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

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

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