

Keep, Cool, Call

What to do if you capture a black carp

Scientists and fisheries managers from U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and other agencies would like your help in locating invasive black carp and in providing carcasses for research. If you capture a black carp, you may be eligible for a \$100 per carcass bounty. This bounty program is funded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and administered by Tetra Tech, Inc.

Program updates

The program has historically been available for fish captured in Illinois and adjoining states, and has provided many of the known black carp records to date. Starting in 2021, black carp captures in watersheds upstream from Cairo, Illinois (including all of Illinois waters), specifically in the Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, Cumberland, and Mississippi rivers and their tributaries, may be eligible for reimbursement.

Reimbursements will be limited to 10 awards per person per month, subject to funding availability.



Black carp

Photo: USGS

If you capture a black carp

Keep

Use the information in this handout to verify the identity of the fish. Grass carp, another non-native fish, are the most commonly misidentified species. If you believe your fish might be a black carp, keep the fish and make note of the location, preferably by taking GPS coordinates of the capture location. Cell phone photos of head/mouth and total length of fish are helpful for identification. Please note the type of fishing gear and bait you used, and if possible, habitat conditions such as substrate, depth, water temperature, and flow.

Cool

Humanely kill the fish and keep it cool on ice. Live possession of black carp is illegal. Do not freeze the carcass unless necessary.

Call

Find contact information by state and river basin of capture in the "Contacts by state and river basin" table.

Black carp and other commonly misidentified species

Black carp and grass carp look similar, but can be differentiated easily as black carp possess a longer and narrower head, darker external coloration (ranging from black to blue grey), a nearly straight lateral line with slight decurvature mid-body, and when viewed from the top down the upper jaw is not visible. The upper jaw on a grass carp is prominent and visible from the top down and the lateral line initially declines near the length of the pectoral fin then continues straight along the body. Grass carp are olive, silvery white, or olive brown, but coloration should not be used as a primary method of identification because color of fish can vary. For more information on black carp identification, visit <http://www.asiancarp.us/Documents/BlackGrassCarpIdentification.PDF>.

Common carp are a non-native species that possess a single barbel at each corner of the mouth and a stockier less elongate body than black carp. Common carp are distributed through the requested reporting range. Darker colored common carp have been mistaken for black carp previously.



Black carp

Photo: USGS



Grass carp

Photo: USGS



Common carp

Photo: USGS



Common carp barbel

Photo: USGS



Blue sucker

Photo: USGS



Bigmouth buffalo

Photo: USGS



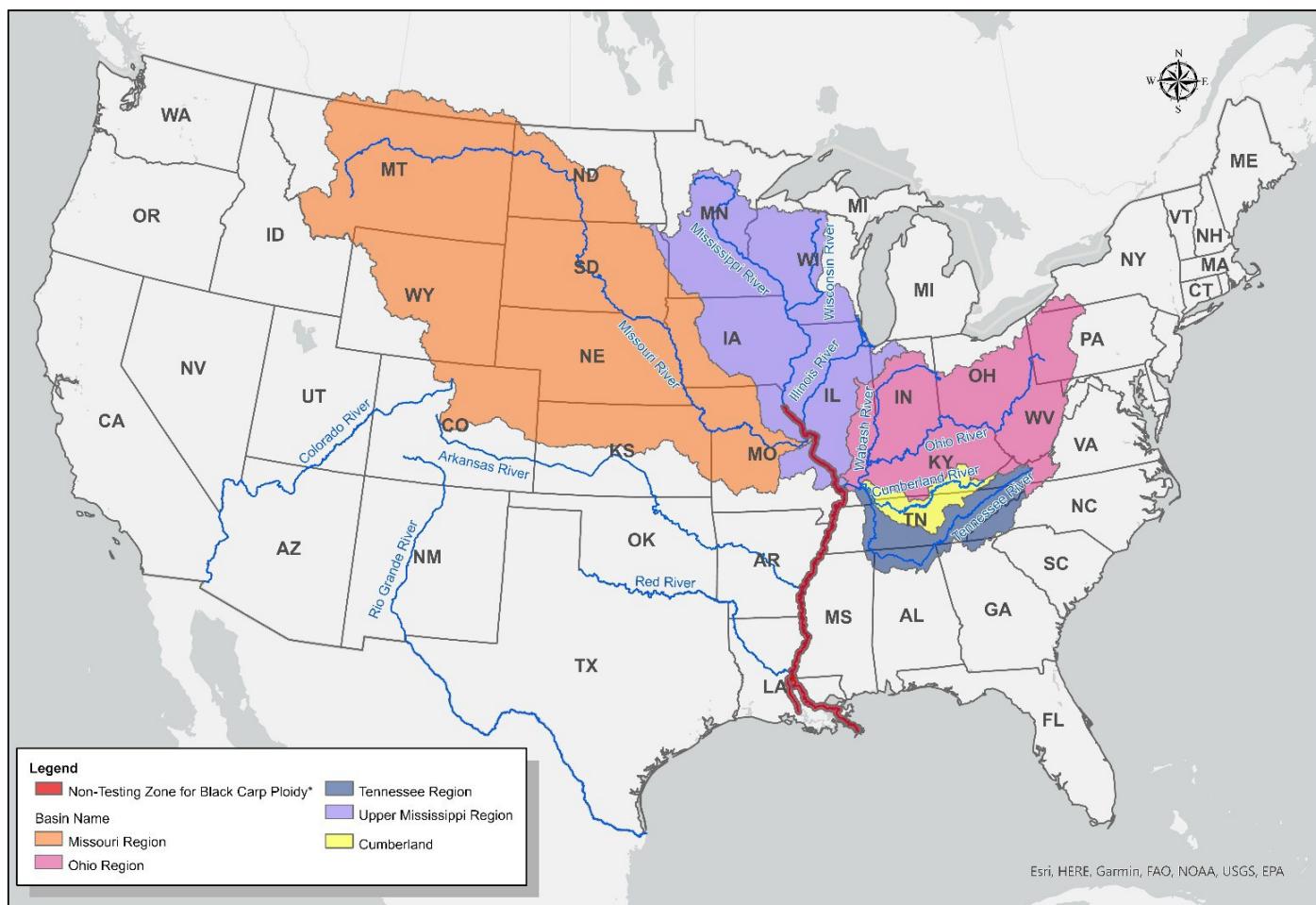
Smallmouth buffalo

Photo: USGS

Potentially mistaken native species

Blue suckers are a native fish species protected in some waters, take care to identify and release blue sucker alive. Blue suckers are identifiable by the long dorsal fin as pictured, elongate body, and bottom oriented or sucker mouth.

Native species of buffalo, such as the smallmouth buffalo and bigmouth buffalo pictured, possess large scales and individual's coloration may be similar to black carp. The bodies of these fish are stockier than the more elongate black carp.



Bounty range map

Bounties of \$100 are available for black carp captures in these watersheds upstream from Cairo, Illinois, including all of Illinois waters; specifically in the Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, Cumberland, and Mississippi rivers and their tributaries, may be eligible for reimbursement. **Reimbursements will be limited to 10 awards per person per month, subject to funding availability.** Captures can be from commercial fishing activities or sportfishing sources (e.g., hook and line or bowfishing). Report catches immediately to your local resource agency.

Contacts by state and river basin

Immediately contact the appropriate agency personnel for the state and river basin where the fish was collected. Provide a picture of the captured fish to local biologists or the state invasive species coordinators listed in the table below for your respective state or location of capture if a local biologist can not be reached.

If an email address is provided, email a photograph of the fish in question as well as call.

Alternative contacts

U.S. Geological Survey

(573) 540-8434; (573) 875-5399

Tetra Tech, Inc.

(217) 969-2045

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

dnr.ans@illinois.gov

State	Basin(s)	Contact	Email	Phone
Alabama	Tennessee and Cumberland	Dave Armstrong	dave.armstrong@dnr.alabama.gov	(251) 331-7050
Colorado	Missouri	Robert Walters	robert.walters@state.co.us	(303) 291-7833
Georgia	Tennessee and Cumberland	Jim Page	Jim.Page@dnr.ga.gov	(912) 285-6485
Illinois	Upper Mississippi	Sara Tripp	sara.tripp@illinois.gov	(618) 444-3078
Illinois	Ohio	Jana Hirst	jana.hirst@illinois.gov	(618) 889-4373
Indiana	Ohio	Craig Jansen	CJansen1@dnr.IN.gov	(812) 789-2724
Iowa	Missouri and Upper Mississippi	Kim Bogenschutz	Kim.Bogenschutz@dnr.iowa.gov	(515) 290-0540
Iowa	Missouri and Upper Mississippi	Jason Euchner	Jason.Euchner@dnr.iowa.gov	(515) 230-4789
Kansas	Missouri	Chris Steffen	Chris.Steffen@KS.GOV	(785) 230-2033
Kentucky	Ohio, Tennessee and Cumberland	Jessica Morris	jessica.morris@ky.gov	(270) 226-4192
Minnesota	Upper Mississippi	Heidi Wolf	heidi.wolf@state.mn.us	(651) 259-5152
Mississippi	Tennessee and Cumberland	Dennis Riecke	Dennis.Riecke@wfp.ms.gov	(601) 432-2207
Missouri	Missouri	Kasey Whiteman	Kasey.Whiteman@mdc.mo.gov	(816) 271-3111 ext. 1426
Missouri	Upper Mississippi	Joe McMullen	joe.mcmullen@mdc.mo.gov	(314) 301-1506 ext. 4215
Montana	Missouri	Eileen Ryce	ERyce@mt.gov	(406) 444-2449
Nebraska	Missouri	Kristopher Stahr	ngpc.ais@nebraska.gov	(402) 471-7602
North Carolina	Tennessee and Cumberland	Doug Besler	doug.besler@ncwildlife.org	(828) 803-6032
North Dakota	Missouri	Ben Holen	bholen@nd.gov	(701) 368-9117
Ohio	Ohio	John Navarro	John.Navarro@dnr.ohio.gov	(614) 265-6346
Pennsylvania	Ohio	Sean Hartzell	sehartzell@pa.gov	(814) 933-4471
South Dakota	Missouri	Tanner Davis	Tanner.Davis@state.sd.us	(605) 367-5244
Tennessee	Tennessee and Cumberland	Cole Harty	Cole.R.Harty@tn.gov	(629) 702-0324
Virginia	Ohio, Tennessee and Cumberland	Jeff Williams	jeff.williams@dwr.virginia.gov	(276) 783-4860
West Virginia	Ohio	Katherine Zipfel	Katherine.J.Zipfel@wv.gov	(304) 420-4550
Wisconsin	Upper Mississippi	Greg Sass	gregory.sass@wisconsin.gov	(715) 891-1875
Wyoming	Missouri	Reed Moore	reed.moore@wyo.gov	(307) 290-2828