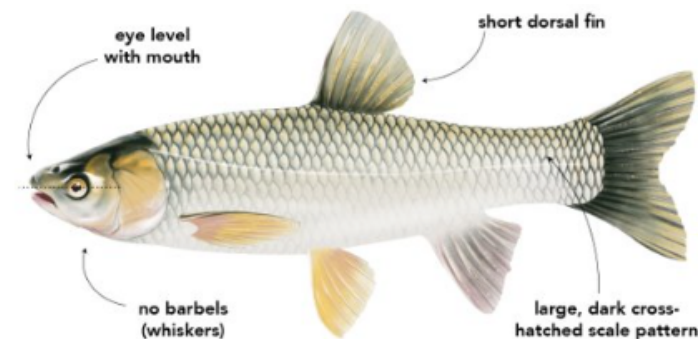


The Threat of Grass Carp to the Great Lakes

GRASS CARP

Grass Carp is one of the four species of invasive Asian carps that spread throughout the U.S. due to stocking to control aquatic vegetation. Although Grass Carp are not currently established in Canadian waters, they are a significant threat to the ecological and socio-economic balance of the Great Lakes Basin. Their voracious appetite negatively impacts biodiversity, angling, wetlands, and much more.



Credit: Invasive Species Centre

IDENTIFICATION AND BIOLOGY

- Can consume up to 40% of their body weight a day in aquatic vegetation.
- Mature in 2 years with a maximum size of more than 80 pounds and 5 feet in length.
- Prefer large, slow flowing bodies of water.
- Spawn in large rivers with moderate currents.
- Egg survival and larval development is best in waters at 17.8°C.
- Adults can tolerate water temperatures from 0-37.8°C.

IMPACTS OF GRASS CARP

Ecological

- Poor water quality due to undigested plant matter.
- Increased pressure on wetlands and the species that depend on them for food and habitat.
- Negative impacts are predicted to affect 33 species, including Smallmouth Bass, Largemouth Bass, Muskellunge, Northern Pike, Walleye, and Yellow Perch.

Social

- Negative impacts on recreational, commercial, and subsistence fishing.
- Impacts on recreational activities such as wildlife viewing, hunting, boating, and beachfront and lakefront use.

Economic

- The Great Lakes are worth \$13.8 billion annually and would experience severe economic impacts if Grass Carp were to establish.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Do not dump your bait! You may never know what species are in your bait bucket.
- Download the [Grass Carp Identification and Reporting Guide](#).
- If you are positive you have captured a Grass Carp, take a photo and [report it to Fisheries and Oceans Canada \(DFO\)](#). If you can't reach anyone, kill the fish without damaging the head or eyes and keep the fish in a cooler with head above ice. Do not release it; the DFO will collect the fish.
- Read more about the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's [Great Lakes eDNA Monitoring Program](#).
- Watch '[Carp Confusion: The Story of Asian Carps](#)' to learn more about the history and impacts of Asian Carp species.
- Report invasive species sightings to the [Invading Species Hotline](#), [EDDMapS website](#), or the EDDMapS App.

Join the free Freshwater Stewardship Community!
watersheds.ca/freshwater-stewardship

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