

Rock Bass

Contributed by Administrator

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The rock bass is the chameleon of the fish world, being able to change its color to match its surroundings. Catch on from dark water and it may look almost black, with light mottled blotches. In clear water or when brought to hand, they become brassy in color. The rock bass is a stout, heavy-bodied sunfish with a large mouth, which extends beyond mid-eye when the mouth is closed. Body color is olive with brassy reflections and dark mottlings along the sides.

The rock bass is a seldom-pursued fish. In certain areas it may be very abundant, but its tendency to attack baits designed for larger fish has not endeared it to some anglers. Rock bass are willing biters and scrappy fighters on light tackle, good for a fun day of panfishing. Their eating qualities, like all the panfish, are superb. Rock bass are also called goggle-eye, green sunfish, branch perch, redeye, rock sunfish, and redeye bass. This fish uses many of the the same habitats as smallmouth bass, and their food habits are quite similar, except smallmouth are far more apt to eat baitfishes. Young rock bass feed on zooplankton, but as they grow larger in size more aquatic insects show up in their diet, supplemented with minnows and other small fish. The rock bass is mainly a sedentary and secretive fish spending much of its activity passively hiding in the shadows of underwater structures.

Rock Bass can be caught on a wide variety of small baits and lures, but their large mouth means they can take lures up to 3 or 4 inches long! The crayfish is undoubtedly the best bait for Rock Bass. You can use small crayfish whole, or use just the tail of larger ones. Other baits to consider are minnows, leeches, worms, hellgrammites, crickets and grasshoppers. Rock bass strike quickly and fiercely, often dashing back to cover after the attack. You have to put pressure on them immediately in these situation to avoid having your line tangled in the rock bass's rocky or brushy home. The best areas to fish for them are shallow areas in and around logs, brush, large rocks, and other thick cover. They also can be caught through the ice in some areas, using the same tactics one would use for walleyes and yellow perch.

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[Back to Panfish Page](#)

[Back to Species Group Page](#)