

WARMOUTH

Scientific Name:

Lepomis gulosus

Other Names:

goggle-eye, red-eyed perch

Identification:

Similar in appearance to the Rock Bass and sunfish, the Warmouth has a thick, oblong body, which varies from brassy to dark olive-green. It has broad, irregular dark bars that give it a mottled appearance. It is easily identified by red eyes and a large mouth, which is similar to a bass. Its upper jaw extends to or beyond the middle of the eyes. Three or four conspicuous dark stripes radiate back from the eyes across to the cheek and gill cover. The soft-rayed portions of the dorsal and anal fins are marked with rows of dark spots. The anal fin on the warmouth has three spines compared to the Rock Bass, which has six anal spines.



Habitats and Habits:

Warmouths inhabit swamps, marshes, shallow lakes, slow-moving streams and canals with soft, muddy bottoms. They prefer to stay around aquatic vegetation, stumps and snags, and under the banks of streams and ponds. They have more tolerance for muddy water than most species.

They feed mostly in the morning on crayfish, shrimp, insects and small fishes.

Fishing Techniques:

Anglers can use a variety of small artificial baits, as well as worms, small crayfish and minnows.

Good Places to Fish:

Warmouths are most prevalent from the middle of the state eastward. They are found from the southern parts of the Catawba and the Yadkin-Pee Dee basins and all of the Lumber, Cape Fear, Roanoke, Neuse, Tar-Pamlico, Chowan, Pasquotank and White Oak river basins. Warmouth have also been found in western parts of the state, scattered and in very limited numbers

Other Information:

NCARP Minimum Requirements: 1 pound or 11 inches

State Record: 1 lb., 13 oz., from McLeod's Pond in Richmond County, May 7, 1976