

DON'T SPREAD THESE FISH AROUND!

Remember snakeheads and the concerns over their impact on other fish species?



The Department of Natural Resources is concerned that this carnivorous invader will be detrimental to resident species. Aggressive nonnative fish can compete for preferred forage, nesting habitat or actually prey on native fish. Laws now make it illegal to import, transport, or introduce any live snakeheads or viable eggs into Maryland waters.

Other species can cause similar damage!

The snakehead is not the only fish species that can reduce or significantly alter resident fish in our waters. Two additional species of concern are **blue catfish** and **flathead catfish**. When they have been introduced outside of their native range, they have reduced native fish. Both of these catfish are found in some Maryland waters, and anglers must be careful not to spread them to other waters.

Blue catfish

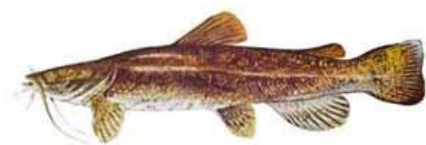


Blue catfish were transplanted into the lower/tidal Potomac River and have become the dominant catfish species. Resident species impacted include sunfish, bass, eels, clams, white catfish and channel catfish.

Fish artwork by Duane Raver/USFWS

Blue catfish may be confused with channel catfish. Blue catfish have a long, straight anal fin with more than 30 fin rays and no body spots, while channel catfish have a shorter, rounded anal fin with fewer than 30 rays and may have dusky spots on the body in adults.

Flathead catfish



Flathead catfish have moved down the Susquehanna from a Pennsylvania stocking into the Susquehanna Flats. Preferred food for flatheads include bullheads, catfish, sunfish, bass, shad, herring, clams, eels, sturgeon and crabs.

Courtesy USFWS

Maryland has laws and regulations to protect our waters from these invaders.

- It is illegal to transport live blue and flathead catfish in Maryland and put them in other tidal and nontidal waters. Permits will not be issued for either of these species.
- A permit is needed to stock any fish that is not indigenous to Maryland into tidal waters.
- A permit is needed to stock any fish other than bluegill sunfish, fathead minnows, golden shiners and channel catfish into Maryland nontidal waters. Since channel catfish may be mistaken for blue catfish, we encourage anglers to not move any catfish from one area to another and to become familiar with the difference between these species.

All anglers need to act as stewards to preserve and protect our waters and their resident populations. Moving fish from one area to another damages the population balance and may introduce disease problems.

You hold the power to preserve fish and fishing for yourself and future generations. If you have any questions about fish species, management and laws and regulations, contact Department of Natural Resources at 1-877-620-8DNR. For questions about blue catfish, contact Mary Groves at (301) 888-2423, for flathead catfish contact Paul Piavis at (410)643-6776 x2110, or Butch Webb at (410)643-6776 x2111. More information on Invasive Species can be found at <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/invasives/index.asp>