



Alabama Bass:

KNOW YOUR BASS: PROTECT OUR WATERS FROM INVASIVE FISH



What's The Problem?

Alabama bass (*Micropodus henshalli*) is an invasive species illegally introduced into several Virginia lakes and rivers. These fish can harm existing largemouth and smallmouth Bass populations by outcompeting and reducing overall bass size in fisheries they invade. Luckily, they haven't been found in Maryland yet – and we want to keep it that way!

Current Status and Where It's Been Found

Originally from Georgia and Alabama, Alabama bass have been introduced into these Virginia waters (likely by anglers): Lake Gaston (NC, VA), Claytor Lake (VA), Buggs Island Lake (VA), Martinsville Reservoir (VA), Diascund Reservoir (VA), James River (VA), New River below Claytor Lake (VA), Chickahominy River (VA)

Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources has also shared information to prevent further spread:

<https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/fish/alabama-bass/>

Remember: Alabama Bass has NOT been found in Maryland!

Be on the Lookout

- The jaw of Alabama bass lines up with the middle rear of the eye. The jaw of largemouth bass extends past the eye.
- Alabama bass has a dark, blotchy lateral band from head to tail, and has well-defined rows of spots below this band. Largemouth bass also has a blotchy band, but usually is not as dark and lacks well-defined rows of spots.



Do Not Introduce

- In both Maryland and Virginia, it is illegal to stock fish into a public body of water without a permit from the state.
- It is illegal to purchase or possess Alabama bass in Maryland.
- Wildlife Crime Stoppers: 443-433-4112.

What to Do

If you think you have caught an Alabama bass, please report it with a photo to [Maryland's Invasive Species Tracker](#) or call Ryan Gary at 410-260-8911.

Alabama bass has a jaw that extends to the rear middle of the eye and a blotchy, dark band along their side. Largemouth bass has a jaw that extends past the rear edge of the eye. Images courtesy of iNaturalist and Duane Raver (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).



For questions or comments:

Ryan Gary, Tidal Bass Program Manager,
580 Taylor Avenue, B-2, Annapolis, MD 21401.
Phone: 410-260-8911. E-mail: ryan.gary@maryland.gov.
May 2025.

