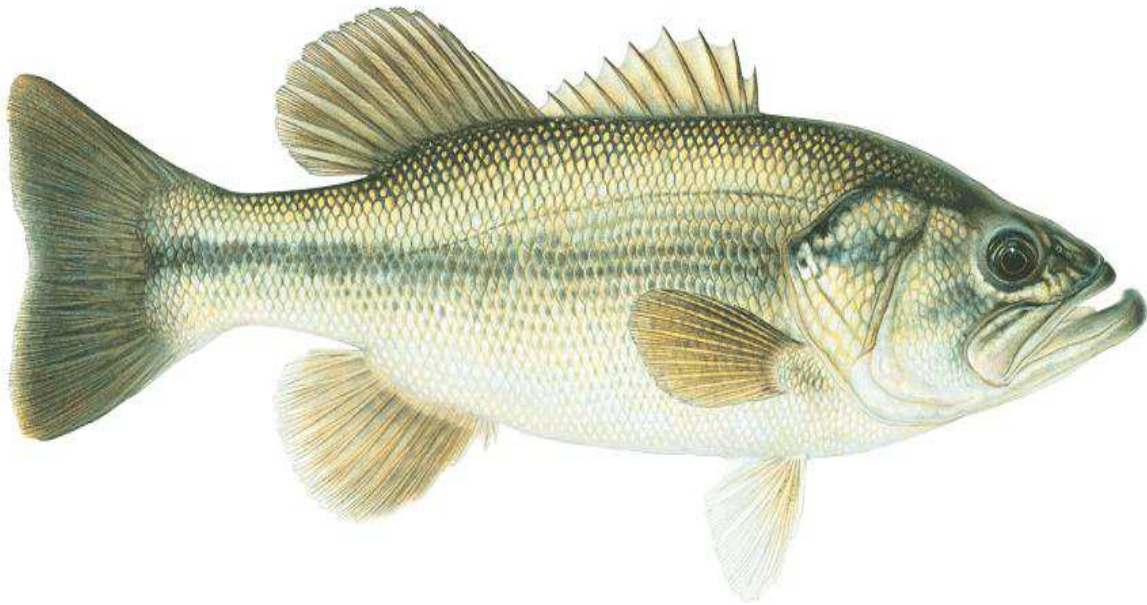


## LARGEMOUTH BASS :



**Features:** Largemouth bass are greenish on the back and sides with a white belly and usually a dark horizontal stripe along the side. They are distinguished from their close cousin, the smallmouth, by a large mouth with the upper jaw extending behind the eye. Largemouth bass in Oregon can exceed 25 inches in length and a weight of 12 pounds.

**Habitats:** Their preferred habitats are shallow ponds and lakes, or the backwater sloughs of rivers where aquatic plants or submerged logs and brush provide abundant cover. Largemouth bass begin life feeding on zooplankton (tiny crustaceans), but soon switch to insects, and then to fish and crayfish.

**Technique:** Largemouth bass may be caught most of the year, but are difficult to catch when the water temperature is less than 50°F. Early in the spring try night crawlers, plastic worms or jigs fished slowly along the bottom around cut banks, channels, rock piles and woody cover. Bass move into shallow water to spawn when the water temperature nears 60°F. They build and actively defend nests and newly hatched fry, and may strike at almost anything that moves near them. As the water warms, largemouth will strike surface (e.g., popper, propeller type bait or darter) or shallow running lures fished around weed beds, docks, pilings, sunken logs, weed lines, and other shoreline cover. Since bass avoid bright light, the best time to fish surface lures is early or late in the day or at night. Surface lures also work best when the water surface is calm. During the hot part of the summer, largemouth seek deeper, cooler water during the bright part of the day where they may be taken on lead-head jigs, plastic worms and deep running plugs. Use pauses and short jerks of the rod tip to give the lure action. When fishing with diving plugs, use a steady retrieve, with speed determining depth of return. Underwater plugs such as crank baits and spinner baits also work well when the water is rough or choppy.