

Pumpkinseed

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Species Description

Scientific name: *Lepomis gibbosus*

AKA: Pond-perch, Common sunfish, Yellow sunfish, Sun bass, Sun perch

Native to: Eastern North America

Habitat: Wide variety of slow-moving vegetated water bodies, large rivers, lakes, ponds, canals, backwaters and estuaries.

Pumpkinseed is a distinctive and colourful freshwater fish which is unlikely to be confused with any other freshwater fish in Northern Ireland. Grows to an average length of 10-15 cm and a maximum weight of 300g. It has a deep laterally compressed body, with great colour variation; green-bronze back, gold to turquoise-blue sides mottled with darker patches and a yellowish belly.

The most likely pathway for introduction of Pumpkinseed into Northern Ireland is from aquarium trade, through escapes or releases from collections. Contaminated fish stocking is also a possible pathway. Pumpkinseed are highly territorial and feed on a wide variety of insects, aquatic invertebrates, fish eggs and larvae; large specimens can also become piscivorous (feeding on fish). Where populations become established they can compete for available food and habitat with native species and predate upon them.

Under the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019 it is offence to intentionally keep; breed; transport to, from or within Northern Ireland, use or exchange Pumpkinseed; or to release it into the environment.

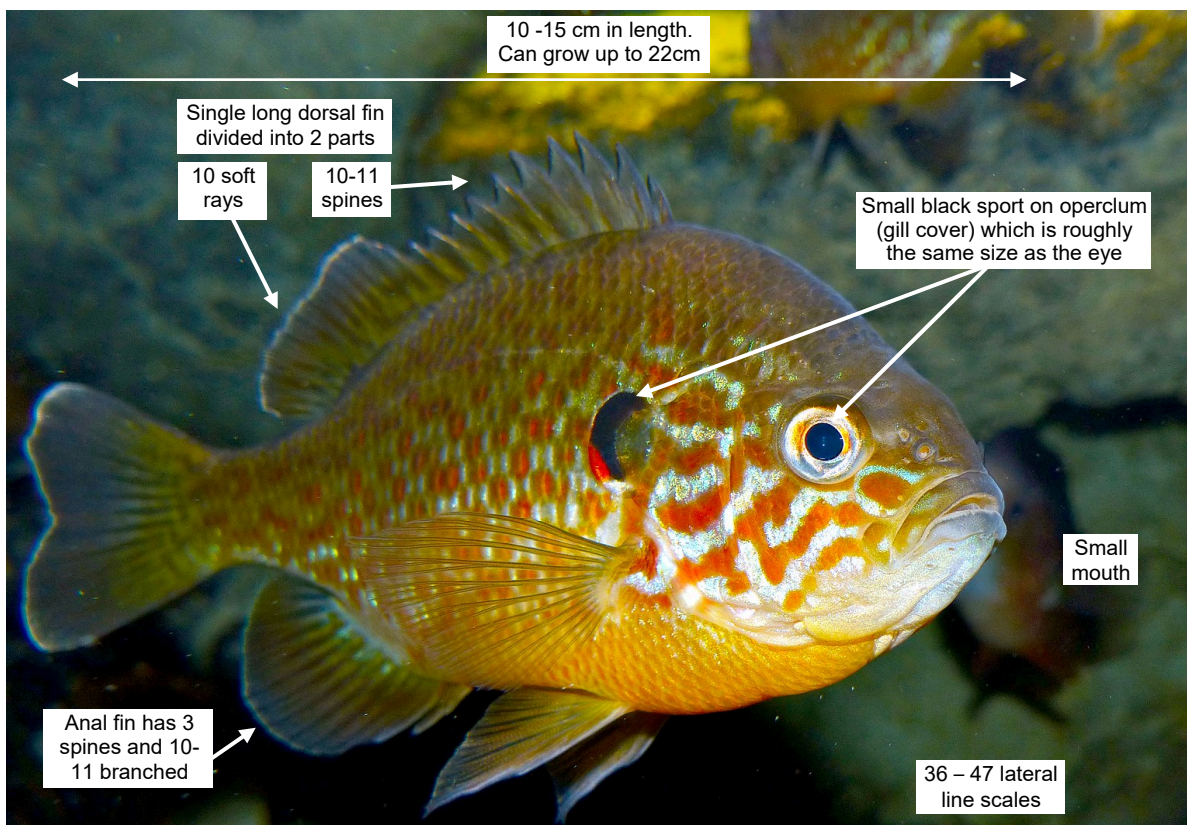


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Key ID Features



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Report any sightings via; CEDaR Online Recording - <https://www2.habitas.org.uk/records/ISI>, iRecord app or Invasive Species Northern Ireland website - <http://invasivespeciesni.co.uk/report-sighting>

Similar Species

Due to the striking and distinctive strong colouration, Pumpkinseed is very unlikely to be confused with any other freshwater fish in northern Europe. Some common similarly sized fish include;

Roach
Native
(*Rutilus rutilus*)



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Rudd
Native
(*scardinius erythrophthalmus*)



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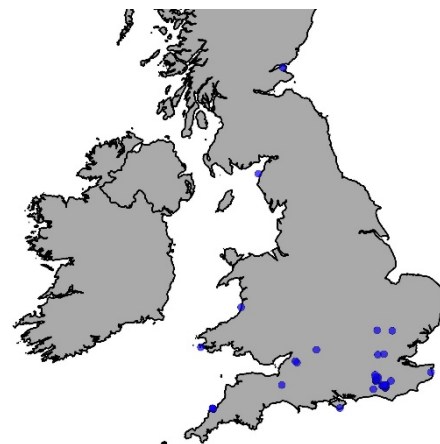
Perch
Native
(*Perca fluviatilis*)



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Distribution

Not present in Northern Ireland. Several well established populations in still waters southern England.

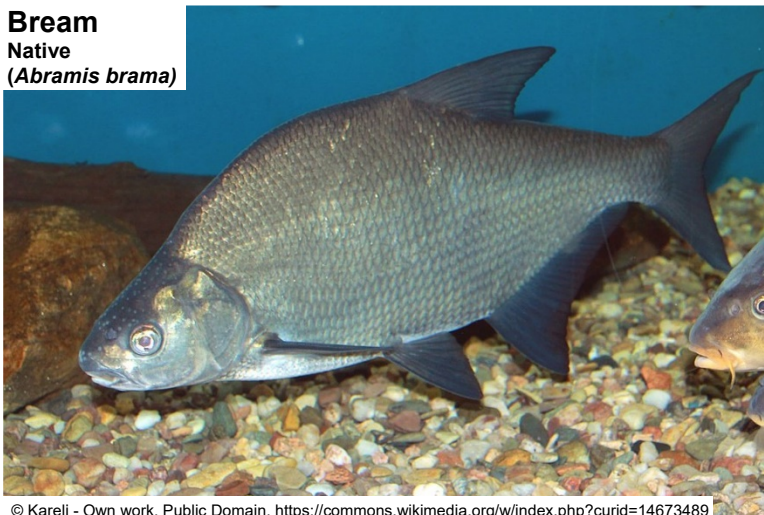


Source NBN Atlas –

<https://species.nbnatlas.org/species/NHMSYS0000544687>

Check website for current distribution

Bream
Native
(*Abramis brama*)



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References and further reading:

CADI *Lepomis gibbosus* (Pumpkinseed) data sheet - <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/77080>

Booy O., Wade M. and Roy H. 2015. Field Guide to Invasive Plants and Animals in Britain. Bloomsbury. London.

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