

BLACK CRAPPIE, A NON-NATIVE TO LAKE GEORGE, IS PART OF THE SUNFISH FAMILY

BLACK CRAPPIE

Black Crappie (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*) is part of the sunfish family and has the same general shape as other sunfish. It is an introduced, non-native species to Lake George, but has become an important prey species for large mouth bass and yellow perch. Crappie are excellent eating and its aggressiveness allows for a fast and furious fight for anglers. Crappies are an indicator species; they are intolerant of silt and turbidity, and are only be found in clean waters.

Crappies are pale silvery white on the belly and sides, with dark green dorsally. A dark vertical bar can be seen through the eye region. They have a high compressed, diamond shape body, like other species in the sunfish family. Crappies have more than three anal spines, a short dorsal fin with 6-8 spines, and a long dorsal fin. They have been known to hybridize with white crappie in bodies of water where their populations overlap. Crappies



Found in clean bodies of water with abundant vegetation, black crappie are not commonly found within the water bodies of the Adirondacks.

are not common in the Adirondacks.

Crappie can be found in clean bodies of water where there is abundant vegetation. Most often, they school near underwater structures such as logs, stumps, and rocks. During hot summer days they move into deeper waters or into shaded areas near shore that have adequate riparian vegetation. In winter they move out to deeper water.

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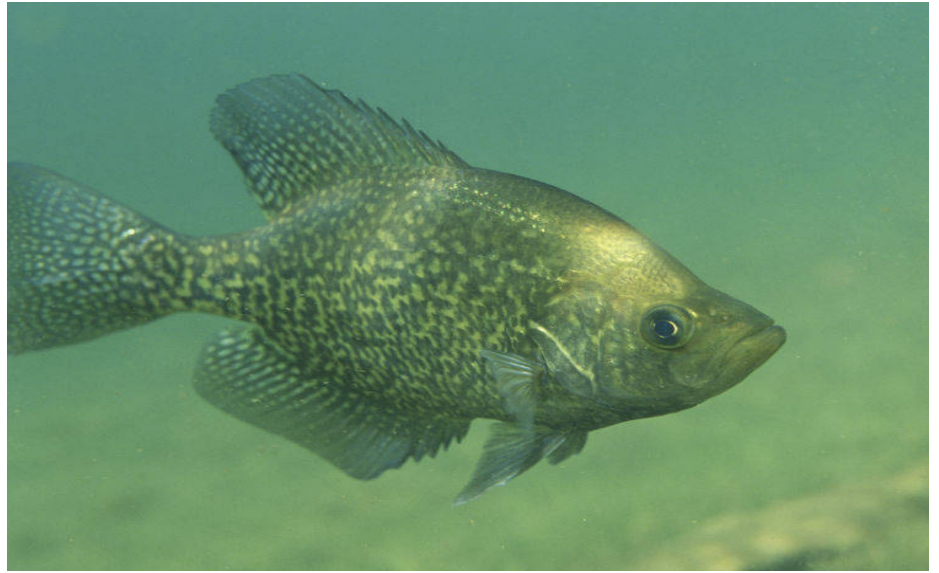
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Black Crappie

LAKE GEORGE FACT SHEET

Spawning takes place in May - July when the water temperatures are higher than 68 degrees F. Just prior to spawning, crappie will school in large groups in the shallow water. Nests that are 8-9 inches in diameter are constructed by fanning depressions in the water that average between 10 inches to 2 feet deep. They are usually built in the sandy bottom of weedy areas in water 3-8 feet deep. Females lay up to 60,000 eggs. They may spawn several times each spring after reaching sexual maturity at age 2-3 years. Eggs are less than 1 mm in diameter and will hatch in 3-5 days. After the female lays the eggs, she swims away and the male guards the eggs; he will stay with the young until they are able to feed. Crappie can live as long as 10 years and can get as big as 16 inches.

As fingerlings crappie are a prey species for many other animals such as, perch, bass, pike, great blue herons, mergansers, snapping turtles, otter and mink. Young crappie feed on plankton, the fingerlings of other fish species, and mature fish feed on insects. They will generally eat anything they can fit into their mouth. Crappie primarily feed at night and they are most active during the evening hours.



Black crappie generally feed and are most active in the evening. Easily caught in the spring prior to spawning, it's an excellent game fish.

Black crappie is an excellent game fish, which are highly regarded by bait fishermen and artificial lure anglers. They are easily caught in the spring when schooling prior to spawning. Crappie can be fished all year long. The minimum length that can be kept is 9 inches; the daily limit is 25 fish. The New York State record is a 3 pound 12 ounce crappie caught in Duck Lake.

For additional information on fishing regulations in New York State please visit the website of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (www.dec.ny.gov).

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