

Fish and Plant Matching Game

Learn how to identify a few plants and fish that live in the St. Joseph River. How many of them can you spot at a fishing pier near you?



Ages 6 years and up

Location Play the matching game at home, then grab your pole and head to a St Joseph River fishing location. See the additional resources below.

Materials Needed

Pencil and the pages below for the matching game

Fishing license if you are 18 years old or older in Indiana, or 17 years old or older in Michigan, except on designated free fishing weekends

Fishing pole/reel, fishing line, hooks, sinker, bobber, and bait to go fishing

Did You Know?

On Free Fishing Days designated by the Department of Natural Resources, adults of any age do not need a license.

2021 dates:

Indiana May 2, June 5-6, Sept 25

Michigan June 12-13



Background/Quick Facts

The St Joe River is home to many kinds of aquatic life including fish and plants. Throughout the river some plants and fish are more common than others with a few requiring very specific conditions to grow or survive. Several of the plant and fish species have a positive “symbiotic relationship” meaning they help each other to stay healthy along the river. The plants produce oxygen and provide habitat for fish, while fish provide waste and carbon the plants can use to grow. This activity showcases a few species you might spot together along the river.

Instructions

On the page below, draw a line to hook the fish or plant with its description. Then next time you’re fishing along the St. Joseph River, use these descriptions to help you identify some of the fish and plants around you.

Additional Resources

Family Friendly Fishing Waters Michigan:

<https://midnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e847f371787f40029172a72b2b9cda8a>

Fishing Sites in Indiana:

<https://indnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=79b2d75076774c248adcd918f699753e>

Find places to fish and boat in your area:

<https://www.takemefishing.org/where-to-fish-and-boat/>

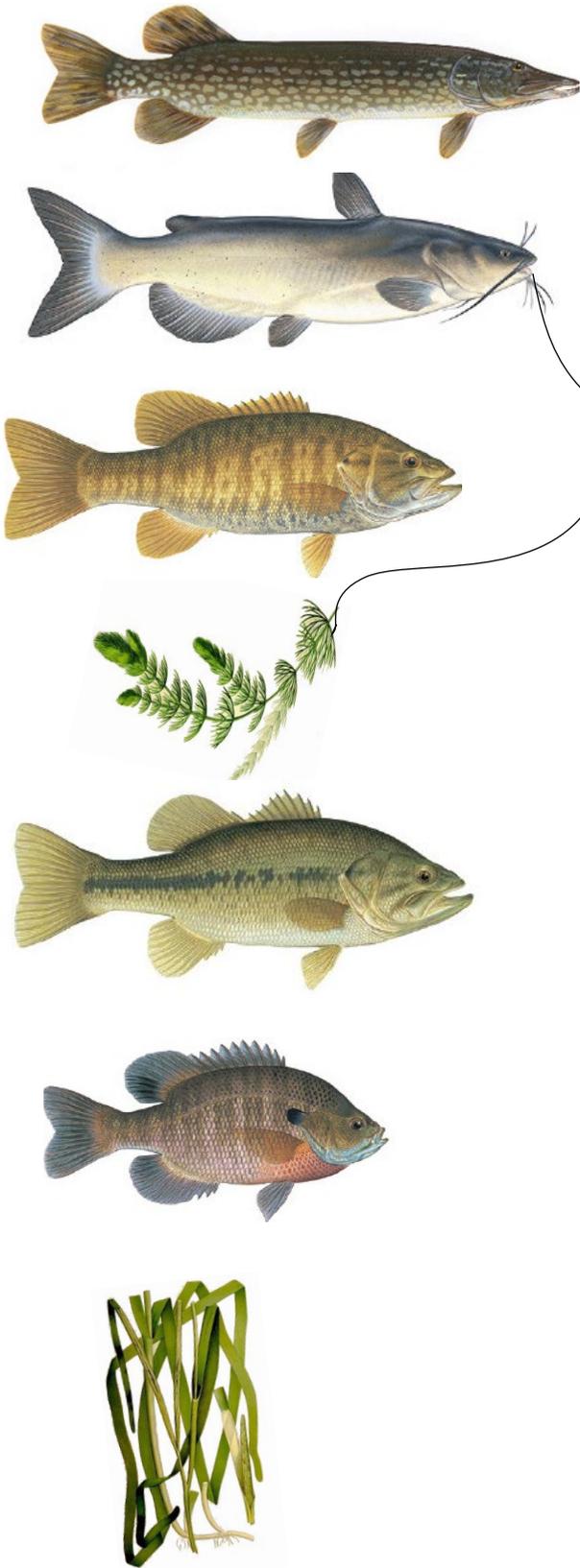
Activity provided by:



Share a pic on social media when you do this activity!
#CelebrateTheStJoe

Catch the Fish or Plant!

Draw a line from the pole to the fish or plant that matches the description.



Northern Pike

This torpedo shaped fish with light colored spots can be found throughout the St Joseph River. It prefers areas with lots of aquatic plants.

Coontail

This plant is named for the bushy tips on the end. Coontail grows completely underwater making it great habitat and food for different aquatic animals.

Channel Catfish

Channel catfish have 2 barbels (fleshy whiskers) on their top and bottom jaws which they use to feel for food at the bottom of the river. They also have sharp barbs on the side of their mouth, so be careful if you catch one of these!

Bluegill

A member of the sunfish family, identify this one by looking for the bluish/black gill flap.

Eelgrass

The long narrow leaves of this plant may look like they could use a good mowing, but it is great habitat for fish and macroinvertebrates of the St Joseph River.

Smallmouth Bass

This fish has red eyes and brownish green body covered in darker vertical bars on its side. The upper jaw on the smallmouth bass doesn't extend past the middle of the eye.

Largemouth Bass

Look for a "large mouth" or an upper jaw that extends past the fish's eye. This olive-colored fish also has a black, blotchy horizontal line on its sides.