

Examples of Adaptations in Fish

ADAPTATION	ADVANTAGE	EXAMPLES
Mouth		
sucker shaped mouth	feeds on very small plants and animals	Sucker, carp
elongate upper jaw	feeds on prey it looks down on	spoonbill, sturgeon
elongate lower jaw	feeds on prey it sees above	Barracuda, snook
duckbill jaws	grasps prey	Muskellunge, pike
extremely large jaws	surrounds prey	bass, grouper
Body Shape		
torpedo shape	fast moving	trout, salmon, tuna
flat bellied	bottom feeder	Catfish, sucker
vertical disk	feeds above or below	Butterfish, bluegill
horizontal disk	bottom dweller	Flounder, halibut
hump backed	stable in fast moving water	sockeye salmon, chub, razorback
Coloration		
light colored belly	predators have difficulty seeing it from below	most minnows, perch, tuna, mackerel
dark upper side	predators have difficulty seeing it from above	Bluegill, crappie, barracuda, flounder
vertical stripes	can hide in vegetation	Muskellunge, pickerel, bluegill
horizontal stripes	can hide in vegetation	yellow and white bass, snook
mottled coloration'	can hide in rocks and on bottom	trout, grouper, rockbass, hogsucker.
Reproduction		
eggs deposited in bottom	hidden from predators	trout, salmon, most minnows
eggs deposited in nests	protected by adults	Bass, stickleback
floating eggs	dispersed in high numbers	striped bass
eggs attached to vegetation	stable until hatching	Perch, northern pike, carp
live bearers	high survival rate	guppies

Adapted from: "Fashion a Fish" in Project Wild Aquatic Education Activity Guide. The Council for Environmental Education