



# Channel Catfish Species Information

---

**Scientific Name:** *Ictalurus punctatus*

**Family:** Ictaluridae

**Description:** Informally known as channel cat, channel catfish are very common in North America. This very popular recreational fish ranges from Canada to Mexico and have been introduced to landlocked areas in Europe and Malaysia. Channel catfish have a very keen sense of smell and taste. They have taste buds distributed over the surface of their entire body and use their whiskers to navigate. They can grow up to thirty inches in length, weigh between forty and fifty pounds, and live up to twenty years. They spawn in late spring or early summer in hollow cavities, logs, or rock ledges. The male will make and guard the nest until the young are old enough to venture out on their own.

**Status:** The channel catfish is neither federally listed nor imperiled.

**Native Area:** The channel catfish was originally found in the Gulf States, the Mississippi valley north to the Canada prairies, and Mexico. Because it has great commercial value for sport fishing it has since been introduced throughout the United States and the world.

**Additional Comments:** The National Fish Hatchery System propagates the species for state partnering efforts and recreational fishing.



*Information and photo provided by Uvalde National Fish Hatchery*

<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/ualde/index.html>