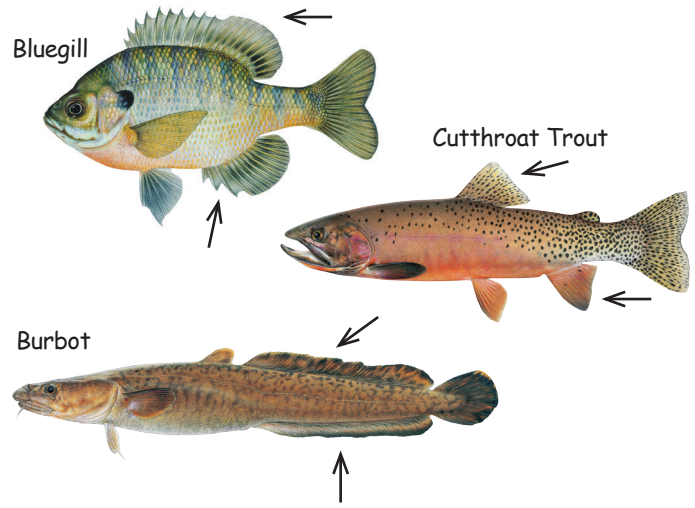


## Types of Fins

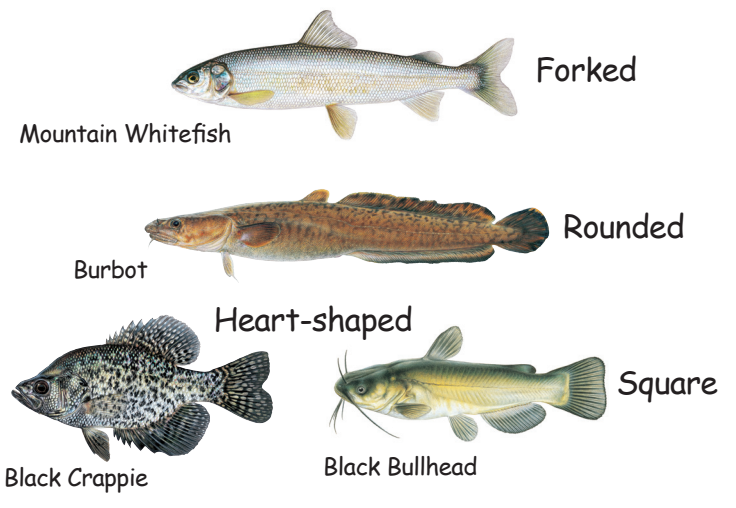
### Dorsal and Anal Fins

The dorsal and anal fins help a fish turn and keep a fish upright when turning abruptly. The dorsal fin is located on the top of a fish along the back between the head and tail. A fish may have a single dorsal fin or two connected or unconnected fins. The anal fin is located on the underside of the fish in front of the tail fin by the anus or vent. The anal fin helps to stabilize a fish like the keel on the bottom of a boat. Deep-bodied or laterally compressed fishes, like bluegill, require more stability to keep upright in the water and have longer dorsal and anal fins. Burbot and eel-like fishes also have long dorsal and anal fins to assist in swimming.



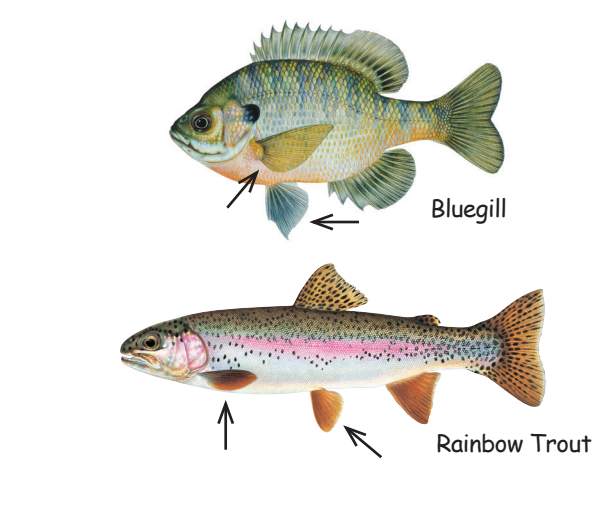
### Caudal Fin

The caudal fin, or tail fin, is located at the end of a fish and provides the power to move a fish forward. It also acts like a rudder to help a fish steer. Caudal fins come in a variety of shapes - forked, heart-shaped, square or rounded. The shape corresponds to the cruising speed of the fish. Fish that spend most of their time cruising and searching for prey have forked caudal fins. A forked tail has less drag. When a fish locates a potential meal, a quick flick of the tail will give a sudden burst of speed. A fish with a rounded tail is going to be the least speedy.



### Pelvic and Pectoral Fins

Pelvic and pectoral fins are usually paired. Pelvic fins, located on the bottom of a fish in front of the anal fin, help balance the fish, keep it level and prevent it from rolling from side to side. Fish sometimes rest by sitting on their pelvic fins. Pectoral fins are located on either side of the fish near the gills. These fins do everything that pelvic fins do and also help steer and control depth. Trout have pelvic and pectoral fins separated widely on their bodies and attached horizontally. Other fish, like bluegill or crappie, have pelvic and pectoral fins located closer together and vertical to one another. The pectoral fins are higher on the body close to the gill covers with the pelvic fins below the pectoral fins on the bottom of the fish. The fins are closer to the fish's center of gravity and often have a wrist-like function. The fins offer greater maneuverability traveling through plants. They also help the fish remain stationary to pick insects off plants.



### Adipose Fin

Fish in the salmon and catfish families have an adipose fin between the dorsal and caudal fins. This fin is soft and fleshy, like an earlobe. The function of the adipose fin is being studied by biologists. It is thought that this fin helps reduce drag and improves swimming efficiency.

