What to Do If You Think You Have Found an Asian Carp

Step 1: Asian Carp Identification

There are seven species of carps native to Asia that have been introduced to the United States, but only four types that are considered a threat to the Great Lakes: bighead, silver, black and grass.

Think you may have found an Asian carp that needs to be reported? Follow these helpful identification tips before calling state personnel.

Identification Tips:

- Make sure you have the right carp! There is also common carp which is not currently threatening the Great Lakes. The common carp is not an Asian carp. They have a small mouth relative to body size and are brown in color with large scales. If in doubt, call your state personnel!

- Grass carp closely resembles black carp in form (see picture). The major difference is grass carp are nearly white in color.

- Look for hybrids, fish that might exhibit characteristics of both the silver and bighead species, and report them.

Bighead Carp

- Dark blotches along the back (dorsal) region
- Silver in color
- No scales on head
- Keel extends partway along belly
- No barbels on nose, unlike common carp
- Downward slanting mouth (frown)

Silver Carp

- Small scales
- Silver in color
- No scales on head
- Keel extends to throat
- No barbels on nose, unlike common carp
- Downward slanting mouth (frown)
- Low set eyes

Black Carp

- Large scales
- Darker color
- No scales on head
- Pointy shaped face
- Teeth that look like human molars

Want more information? Go to http://www.AsianCarp.org