

Fish Stocking

An MDNR permit is required for fish stocking in public waters, in private waters having fish migration from public waters, and in private waters connected by any water route with bodies of water in other ownership. "Private" means that the pond is in single-party ownership. No stocking permits are needed in ponds which are completely landlocked and under single-party ownership.

A state license is also required for anyone who wishes to sell fish for stocking. This is called a "fish breeder's license." A seller of fish must have this license whether or not he or she is the actual breeder of the fish or just a dealer for fish that someone else has bred.

Tight regulation of fish selling and stocking is needed to control fish diseases and to prevent entry of certain kinds of fish into waters where they might be harmful. Importation of fish into Michigan from other states or Canada needs a further special permit.

For stocking the kind of pond that needs a fish stocking permit,

contact the nearest MDNR District Fishery Biologist (list in Appendix). There is no application fee. Apply at least a month in advance. Helpful advice on how best to stock the pond may be gained in the process.

Introducing Exotic Fish

Exotic is the term applied to kinds of fish not native to an area. Fishes exotic to Michigan may not be brought in **or possessed** here without a special permit from MDNR. No permits will be issued for importation of any exotic species until it has been proved that such an introduction would not cause harm. Much environmental degradation has been caused by exotics introduced in the past. The common carp is an example.

The recently much publicized Asiatic grass carp (white Amur) and various kinds of tilapia fishes are exotics often suggested as aids in pond weed control or food production. Present policy forbids issuance of permits for them. Their harmless-

ness hasn't been proved, and there is much reason to suspect that the grass carp would damage lake and pond habitat for fish, waterfowl, and other valued animals. Don't purchase or accept gifts of grass carp or other exotics.

Fishing Regulations

A current Michigan fishing license is required for all persons of 17 years or older when fishing on ponds that are public or have a connection through which fish may enter **from** public waters at some time of the year. In such ponds, statewide fishing seasons, size and creel limits apply.

In landlocked ponds with single ownership of the banks, statewide fishing laws don't apply, and no fishing license is needed. Anglers taking trout, bass, or other game or panfishes from such ponds during closed seasons or in numbers or sizes at variance with state law should obtain written verification that the fish were taken from private waters before transporting them on a public road or highway.