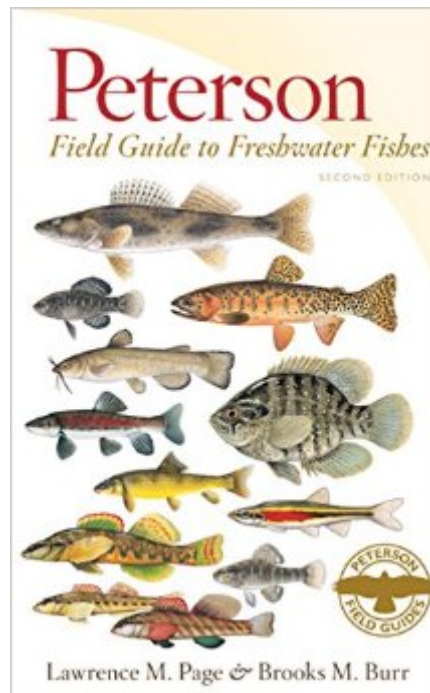


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Peterson Field Guide To Freshwater Fishes, Second Edition (Peterson Field Guides)



Synopsis

There are nearly 1,000 species of freshwater fishes in North America alone, and identifying them can sometimes be a daunting task. In fact, in just the twenty years since publication of the first edition of the Peterson Field Guide to Freshwater Fishes, the number of species has risen by almost 150, including 19 marine invaders and 16 newly established nonnative species. This second edition incorporates all of these new species, plus all-new maps and a collection of new and revised plates. Some of the species can be told apart only by minute differences in coloration or shape, and these beautifully illustrated plates reveal exactly how to distinguish each species. The guide includes detailed maps and information showing where to locate each species of fish—whether that species can be found in miles-long stretches of river or small pools that cover only dozens of square feet. The ichthyologic world of the twenty-first century is not the same as it was in the twentieth, and this brand-new edition of the definitive field guide to freshwater fishes reflects these many changes.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This guide is a great go-to book to identify nearly any freshwater fish you would come across in North America. That is the main purpose of this guide and it does it very well. It is not overly geared for ichthyologists although a lot of the descriptive terminology is not in everyone's vocabulary, there is a glossary to define these terms used, so you can always find out exactly what a "caudal fulcrum" or any other term you are unfamiliar with means. It is set up for people interested in fish that want to know what they are. The plates are organized with similar looking species together and short

descriptions and arrows are used to show you what to look for to separate the different species. If you have narrowed it down to a couple of possibilities but still not quite sure, you can go to the page with more complete descriptions for each species and it tells you morphological characteristics, range maps, habitats, and similar species so you can be more sure of your identification. It also has more detailed pictures of certain parts to look for if two or more fish are very similar in appearance. I can not think of a better way for such a complete guide to be organized. The plates do what they are intended to do, and that is to give you a visual guide to identification in one place, so you don't have to flip through 600 pages of descriptions for each species with a picture next to each one. This book is useful to everyone from the professionals to a kid who netted his first darter out of a stream and wonders what it is.

I have owned Peterson Field Guides since being an outdoors kid roaming the mountains, waters and forests of Eastern Washington. They have been my constant companions whether I was trying to identify a bird I had never seen before or figure out what kind of insect that was that just bit me. I was happy to find after purchasing this guide that not only did the guide include all information, descriptions and illustrations I loved as a kid but they have organized it in a more efficient and user friendly format.

If you need a book for fishing this is not it. The information is just too general per species to aid in fishing. For example if you want to catch some bass and you live in upstate New York you probably want to know what kind of bass (if any) there are around, and most importantly what those bass eat so you know what kind of lure to use, right? This book has small color pictures in the front of the book and when you search it in the book you'll find a description (which if the pictures were larger wouldn't be necessary) and it tells you where in the US this species can be found but just too general. It also tells you if they prefer muddy water or rivers or gravel etc... which isn't bad. For reference for the photos I'm a petite woman so don't let the size of my fingers fool you, I got this for my dad and he will probably have to wear his glasses to read it.

I'm rather disappointed in this book. The very first fish I looked up was a channel cat. The index says pages page 24 and 342. Page 24 has pictures of minnows and 342 had a description of the channel cat with no picture. After digging through this book I finally found pics on page 48 and put a memo in the back of the book myself. It also had other problems on pan fish. While the pictures that are correct are clear, it's a bit hard to have to search through this book and find so many mistakes.

It's difficult to figure out what you caught unless you have good knowledge of what family it's in and hope you can find the correct page with the picture. I would not buy this as your only guide book for fish. You'd think a second edition book would be better than this.

I am a big fan of Peterson field guides and especially the art that goes into the color plates illustrating the various species. When this volume first came out back in 1991, I was very excited to finally see any guide, but especially a Peterson guide, covering all the freshwater fishes of North America, but also was awed by the incredible variety of species within certain groups of small, colorful fishes like shiners and darters. When this later version came out, I was even more awestruck by the fact that many new species had apparently been discovered, bringing for example just the number of species of darters of the genus *Etheostoma* up to an incredible 144. The range maps are now presented in color and next to each species account, a major improvement, and show the watersheds in detail. Additionally, a number of species (although not all) that were previously illustrated in black and white are now shown in vivid color. For some reason this edition is apparently only available in paperback, which I find slightly disappointing, but the binding is of quite good quality. A must-have for the library of any nature lovers interested in our native North American freshwater fish fauna.

Peterson's Field Guides are known to be authoritative and comprehensive. This one, on freshwater fishes of North America North of Mexico, is no exception. There is much information here that will benefit would be ichthyologists. This is a seriously scientific text. For the rest of us, however, this guide is less than accessible and could be more user friendly. In particular, the separation of the plates from the species account text makes for a confusing read with lots of flipping back and forth. Peterson bird guides are not organized in this manner; they have descriptive species text opposite the relevant plate. I'm not sure why the fish guide took the direction it did, but for me its usefulness is somewhat compromised as a result.

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