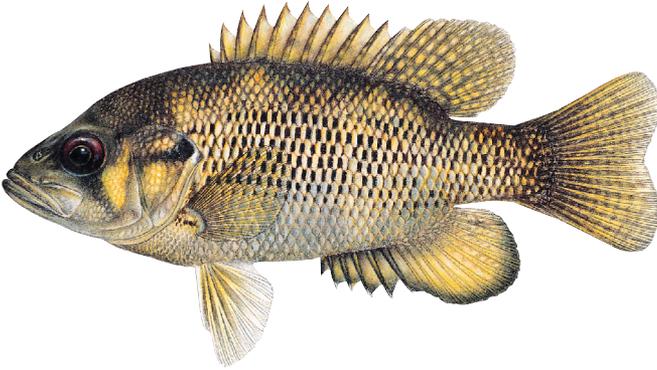


## Rock bass

*Ambloplites rupestris*



**Similar Species:** None in South Dakota

**Identification:** Red eye, six spines in anal fin, brassy color with dark spots forming rows on sides.

Rock bass are widely distributed across the central and northern U.S. and southern Canada. In South Dakota, rock bass are found in the northeastern part of the state and in Sheridan Reservoir and small lakes in the Black Hills. Rock bass inhabit clear-water lakes and streams and spend most of their time around rocks and boulders. A rock bass can camouflage itself by changing color and patterns to match its surroundings. This is why it often has characteristic dark blotches when caught from rocky habitat. In fact, the Greek meaning of the word *rupestris* is “living among the rocks.” Rock bass feed on immature insects, but larger ones may eat small minnows. Rock bass are easily caught by angling and will take a bait at any time of the day. Average adult sizes range from 6 to 10 inches, but individuals have been known to grow to 17 inches and about 3 pounds in Missouri.

