

# FISHING ON THE ELEVEN POINT RIVER

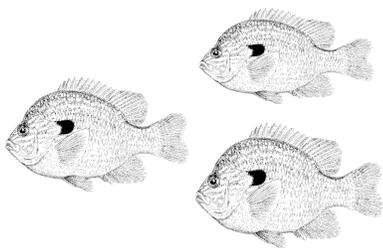


Fishing the **Eleven Point National Scenic River** is a very popular recreation activity on the Mark Twain National Forest. The river sees a variety of users and is shared by canoes and boats, swimmers, trappers, and anglers. Please use caution and courtesy when encountering another user. Be aware that 25 horsepower is the maximum boat motor size allowed on the Eleven Point River from Thomasville to "the Narrows" at Missouri State Highway 142. Several sections of the river are surrounded by private land. Before walking on the bank, ask the landowners for permission. Many anglers today enjoy the sport of the catch and fight, but release the fish un-harmed. Others enjoy the taste of freshly caught fish. Whatever your age, skill level or desire, you should be aware of fishing rules and regulations, and a little natural history of your game.

## The Varied Waters

The Eleven Point River, because of its variety of water sources, offers fishing for both cold and warm-water fish. Those fishing the waters of the Eleven Point tend to divide the river into three distinctive areas. Different fish live in different parts of the river depending upon the water temperature and available habitat.

The upper river, from Thomasville to the Greer Spring Branch, is good for smallmouth bass, longear sunfish, bluegill, goggle-eye (rock bass), suckers, and a few largemouth bass. This area of the river is warmer and its flow decreases during the summer.



The river and fish communities change where Greer Spring Branch enters the river. The spring more than doubles the volume of the river, adding millions of gallons of clear, cold spring water each day. This cold water makes it possible for Rainbow Trout to do well in this part of the river. **Five and one-half (5-1/2) miles of river between the Greer Spring Branch and Turner Mill South Access is a Blue Ribbon Trout Area.** From Turner Mill to Riverton the water stays cold and is managed as a White Ribbon

Trout Area. Twelve inch (average) trout are stocked in the White Ribbon Trout Area by the Missouri Department of Conservation from March to October. From Greer to Arkansas stateline you will also find smallmouth bass, goggle-eye, suckers, longear sunfish, chain pickerel (pike) and an occasional walleye.

## Baits and Tackle

Fish in the Eleven Point River are caught with a wide variety of tackle and with various baits. Worms, salmon eggs, cheese, canned corn, plugs, soft plastic lures, hard lures, grasshoppers, and artificial flies have all been used for fishing. Other types of live bait may be used for fishing. When taking live bait, special rules, limits, and capture methods also apply. Game fish or their parts may not be used as bait. **In the Blue Ribbon Trout Area only flies and artificial lures may be used.** Natural bait, scented bait, and soft plastic cannot be used in this area.

## Rules and Regulations

To protect and manage Missouri's fine fish populations, rules and regulations (the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*) have been enacted to insure that future generations will be able to enjoy the outdoor world. However, be aware that regulations may change each year. To prevent illegal fishing practices and possible citations, review and study the latest fish and game regulations published by the Missouri Department of Conservation. As of this writing, the following rules and regulations apply to the Eleven Point River.

1. All persons are required to have in their possession a valid Missouri fishing license. Except that, Missouri residents 65 years of age or older and those 15 years of age and younger (resident and non-resident) are not required to have a permit, but proof of age may be required.

2. All persons, regardless of age, possessing and transporting trout must have a valid trout permit.

3. The following limits of size and numbers apply to the Eleven Point River:



Fish Species	Daily limits	Minimum Size in inches
Largemouth (Black Bass)	6*	12"
Smallmouth (Black Bass)	1*	15"
Sunfish (Longear and bluegill)	50	none
Rock Bass (Goggle-eye)	15	8"
Suckers	50**	none
Drum	50**	none
Walleye and Sauger	4	18"
Chain Pickerel (Pike)	6	none
Rainbow Trout (White Ribbon Trout Area)	4	none
Rainbow Trout (in Blue Ribbon Trout Area)	1	18"

\*Note 1: you may take a total of 6 Black Bass daily, but only one may be a Smallmouth Bass.

\*\*Note 2: the limits are 20 fish total while gigging.

The head and tail must remain attached to the fish while you are fishing on waters where length limits apply.

5. In the Blue Ribbon Trout Area (from the Greer Spring branch to Turner Mill) only flies and artificial lures may be used. Natural bait, scented baits and soft plastic lures are **prohibited for all fishing**. Gigging and the possession of giggered fish is prohibited in the wild trout area and the possession of trout less than 18 inches, regardless of where taken, is also prohibited.

6. You are responsible to know all of the rules and regulations in the area in which you are fishing. They vary from area to area within the state. You are responsible for measuring and then releasing those fish which are too small to keep. You are also responsible to know your fish species. Consult publications produced by the Missouri Department of Conservation or one of the many books available on fish identification.

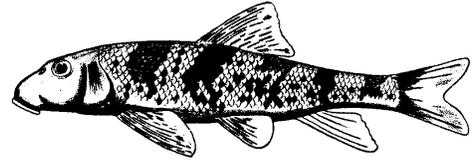
## Gigging

Gigging for fish is a time honored activity in the Ozarks that dates back to a time when good fishing equipment was not available. Hand made gigs for fishing are still made today. Suckers are the fish most often giggered. Gigging has certain seasons and limits. Some areas are also closed to gigging year round. Consult the latest copy of the *Wildlife Code of Missouri* if you wish to try your hand with this specialized type of fishing.

## We All Live Here

These are the species of fish that you will encounter in the Eleven Point River in order of most to least common:

Longear Sunfish *Lepomis megalotis* Sunfish Family  
Rock Bass (Goggle-eye) *Ambloplites rupestris* Sunfish Family  
Bluegill *Lepomis macrochirus* Sunfish Family  
Black Redhorse Sucker *Moxostoma duquesnei* Sucker Family  
Northern Hog Sucker *Hypentelium nigricans* Sucker Family  
Rainbow Trout *Salmo gairdneri* Trout Family  
Smallmouth Bass *Micropterus dolomieu* Sunfish Family  
Chain Pickerel *Esox niger* Pike Family  
Largemouth Bass *Micropterus salmoides* Sunfish Family  
Walleye *Stizostedion vitreum vitreum* Perch Family  
Freshwater Drum *Aplodinotus grunniens* Drum Family



**Northern Hog Sucker**

## PLEASE - Handle With Care

All fish that do not meet the legal size limit, and those you do not intend to eat, should be released unharmed immediately. Please follow these guidelines to enhance fish survival:

1. Minimize the time that you play a fish.
2. Handle fish gently and release them as quickly as possible. Holding the fish out of water may reduce their survival rate. If you must handle the fish, cradle the fish upside down in the palm of your hand while the hook is removed, make certain not to squeeze or drop the fish. Never put your fingers in the gills or eye sockets of the fish.
3. Use needlenose pliers or hemostats to back the hook out of the fish's jaw. Never pull the hook from a deeply-hooked fish that you intend to release. If the fish is deeply hooked, cut the line and leave the hook in the fish. The hook will eventually dissolve. Barbless hooks or hooks with the barb squeezed flat make releasing fish easier and quicker.
4. If the fish appears exhausted, hold it in the water facing upstream until it swims out of your hands.

## Remember -- it's their home, too!

Many plants and animals use the river as a source of food and drink. They live on the banks and in the water. Their home is as important to them as your home is to you. Please help keep the river and banks clean. Pack out your trash, don't wash in the river, put out your fires, don't cut living vegetation. Leave the river as clean and untouched as you have found it. Report any problems to the U.S. Forest Service.

## For Additional Questions or Maps Contact:

### Mark Twain National Forest Eleven Point Ranger District

#4 Confederate Ridge Road  
Doniphan, Missouri 63935  
(573) 996-2153

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/mtnf>

### Missouri Department of Conservation

551 Joe Jones Blvd.  
West Plains, MO 65775  
(417) 256-7161

<http://mdc.mo.gov/>

### To Report a fish or game violations

Telephone toll free: 1-800-392-1111



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