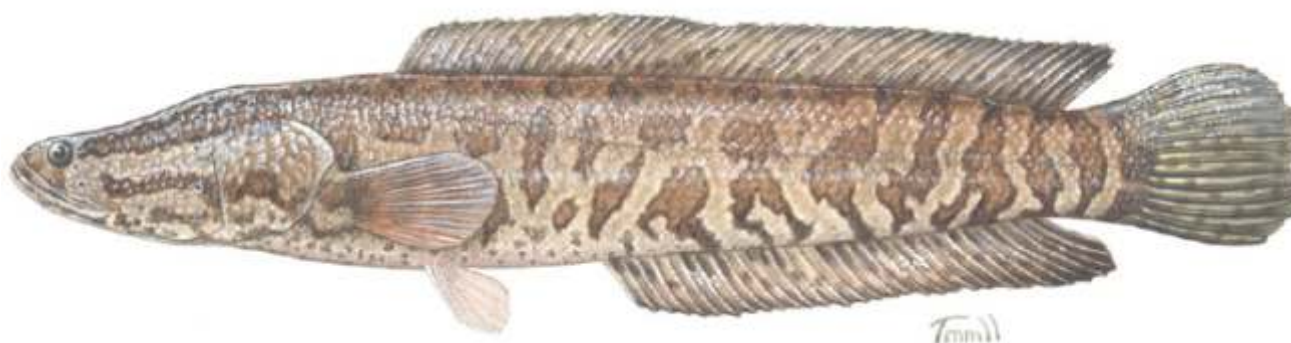


# Stop Aquatic Invasive Species

## Northern Snakehead



### Characteristics

This species is native in rivers of China and Siberia. It prefers relatively low maximum air temperatures (5-18°C) and can tolerate up to 193 annual frost days. They can withstand freezing temperatures by hibernating or remaining dormant in the mud. Adult fish can grow up to 100 cm (1 meter) in length, can live up to eight years, and has no natural predators. Juvenile snakeheads eat zooplankton, insect larvae, small crustaceans, and the fry of other fish. Adult snakeheads feed mainly on other fish, with the remainder of their diet consisting of crustaceans, frogs, small reptiles, and sometimes small birds and mammals.

Northern snakeheads are capable of overland migration using their pectoral fins, are air-breathers, and can live for days out of water. The northern snakehead poses a high risk of establishment and spread across North America because it is adaptable to a wide range of aquatic environments and has a very broad latitudinal range and temperature tolerance.

[saskatchewan.ca/tip](http://saskatchewan.ca/tip)

TIP LINE: 1-800-667-7561

SaskTel Cell: #5555

## Problem for Saskatchewan

If snakeheads become established in Saskatchewan ecosystems, their predatory behavior could drastically affect our native aquatic species. They are very aggressive in their efforts to protect their young and will out-compete other native fish for food and quickly dominate a lake. They have a huge impact on local fish populations through displacement and predation. As a result, they could disrupt the ecological balance and forever change our native aquatic ecosystems.

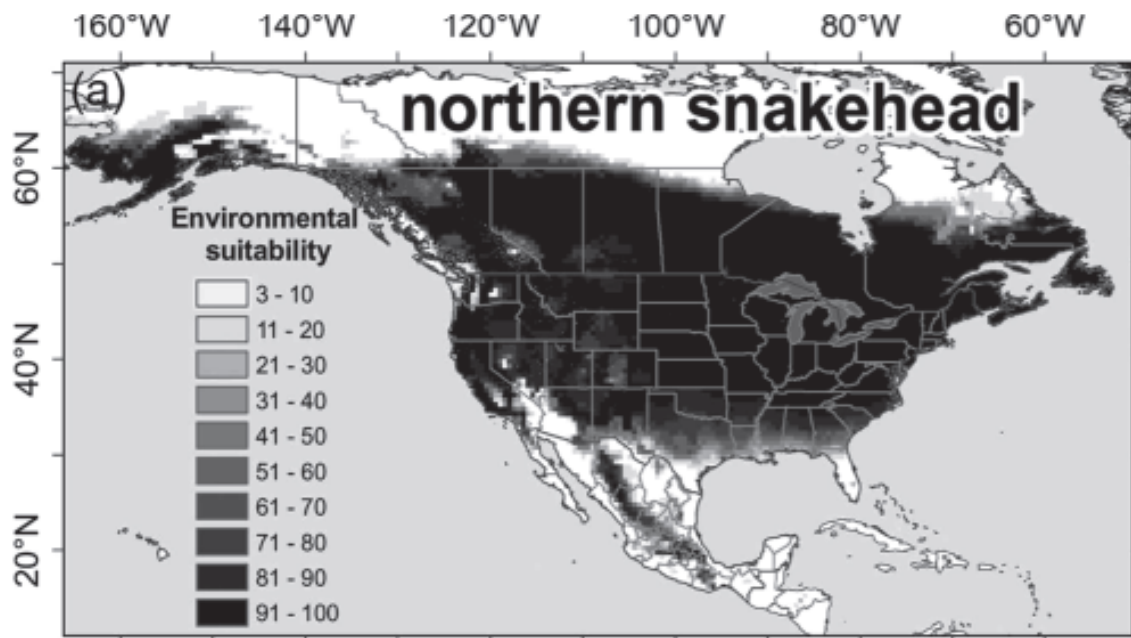
Furthermore, snakeheads carry a disease known as Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome (EUS) or Red Spot Disease which they can transfer to native fish. Over 100 freshwater fish species are susceptible to EUS. EUS is characterized by red spots and ulcers on the skin and causes high mortality rates in various fish species. The overall impact of EUS on wild stocks of fish is uncertain, although high losses of juvenile stocks are known to occur.

## How it enters our waters

Aquarium owners buy these fish when they are small, underestimate the size they can grow to and the amount of food that they will eat, and then release them into a local waterbody to get rid of them.

## Control

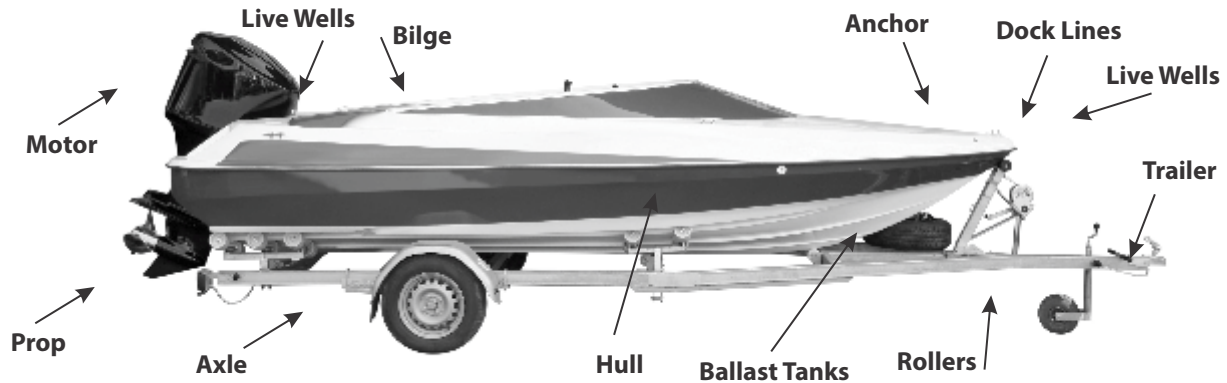
Though rotenone can be used to eradicate northern snakehead from lakes and ponds, it is not a viable solution. This chemical treatment is expensive to obtain and will kill non-target fish species including walleye, northern pike and lake trout. Rotenone is not necessarily effective on the targeted species because snakeheads can migrate on land.



## Predicted Suitable Environment for Northern Snakehead.

Source: Herborg, Leif-Matthias, Nicholas E. Mandrak, Becky c. Cudmore, and Hugh J. MacIsaac. 2007. Comparative distribution and invasion risk of snakehead (Channidae) and Asian Carp (Cyprinidae) species in North America. *Can. J. Aquat. Sci.* 64: 1723-1735.

# CLEAN + DRAIN + DRY YOUR BOAT



## Current Saskatchewan Regulation

*The Fisheries Regulations* prohibit Saskatchewan residents and visitors from importing, possessing, transporting or selling aquatic invasive species that are considered to be a significant risk to Saskatchewan waters.

For a complete list of prohibited species, [click here](#)

## Report Sightings

Report any sightings to the nearest Ministry of Environment office or call the TIP line.

## Need more information or have questions?

Call 1-800-567-4224 (in North America) or email [centre.inquiry@gov.sk.ca](mailto:centre.inquiry@gov.sk.ca).

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