Kansas waters may hold one or more of the black bass species: the largemouth, smallmouth or spotted. All three are native to Kansas, but the largemouth is most common and has been stocked in most reservoirs, lakes and ponds. The spotted bass is native to the streams of eastern Kansas, mainly within the Flint Hills region and is also present in some lakes and reservoirs. The smallmouth bass is native to only a few streams in the far southeast corner of Kansas, but it has been stocked in lakes and reservoirs throughout the state.

It is important that anglers be able to distinguish between these black bass species because length and creel limits may be different. A daily creel limit is counted in aggregate, meaning that it can be single species or combination. Consult the Kansas Fishing Regulation Summary for black bass length and creel limits at your favorite waters.

**LARGEMOUTH**
- Upper jaw extends beyond the eye
- Dorsal fins nearly divided
- Cheek scales the same size as body scales
- Green with dark blotches along lateral line

**SMALLMOUTH**
- Upper jaw does not extend beyond the eye
- Dorsal fins connected, no horizontal blotching
- Cheek scales much smaller than body scales
- Bronze to greenish-brown color with vertical barring sometimes evident.

**SPOTTED**
- Upper jaw does not extend beyond the eye
- Dorsal fins connected, horizontal rows of spots may be evident along lower belly
- Cheek scales much smaller than body scales
- Olive green color with diamond-shaped blotches along the lateral line.