



How to Externally Sex Surfperch, *Embiotocidae*

Surfperch of the family Embiotocidae which includes species such as barred, redbtail, walleye, calico, and silver surfperch, can be sexed externally by noting the number of openings between the anal and pelvic fins: males show two while females show three. To clarify, males have three openings; however, the genital and urinary openings appear as slits and the genital opening is obscured.

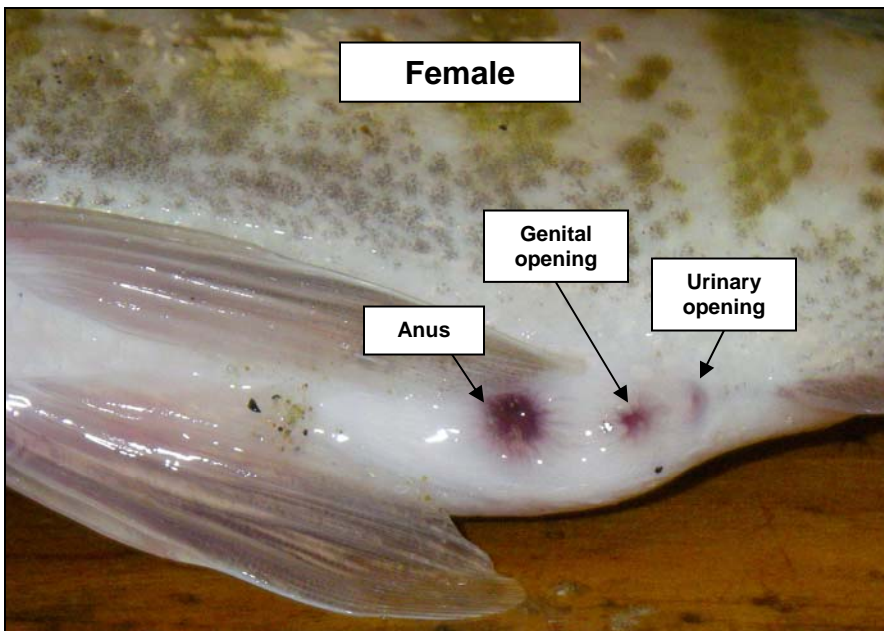


Figure 1. Ventral view of a female barred surfperch.

Pictured above and below are ventral views of a female barred, male redbtail, and male barred surfperch, respectively. The anal, genital, and urinary openings appear as purplish “spots” in the female barred surfperch shown in Figure 1 above. Male surfperch possess a genital organ and modified anal fin ray as shown below in Figure 2.

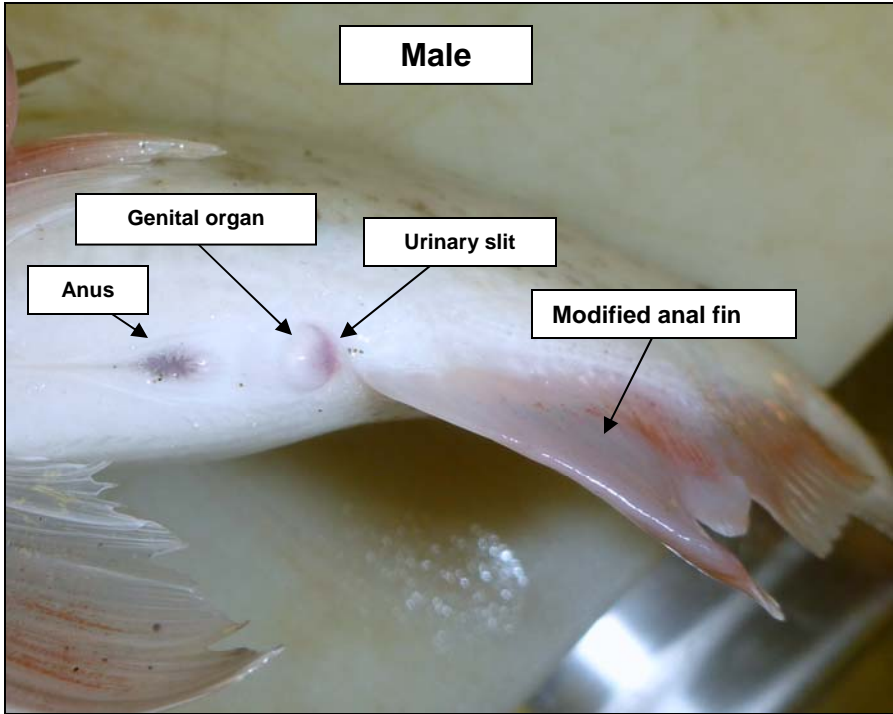


Figure 2. Ventral view of a ripening male redbtail surfperch, male, exhibiting bulbous genital organ and modified anal fin.

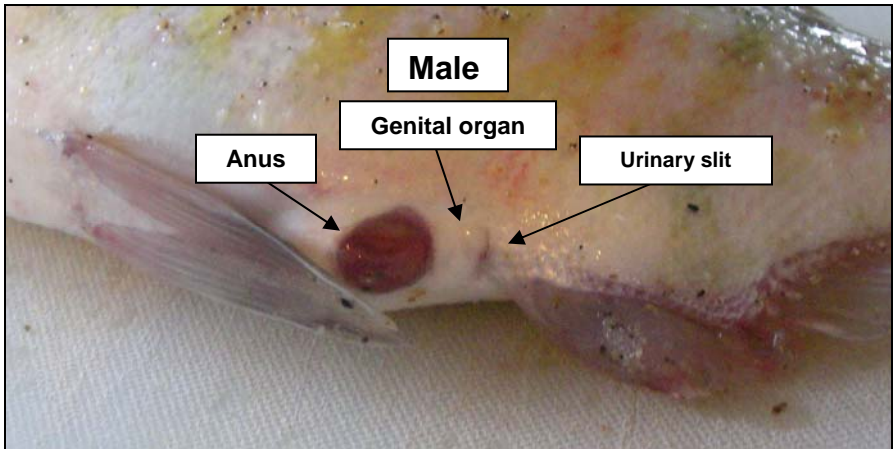


Figure 3. Ventral view of a non-ripe male barred surfperch.

Male barred surfperch taken during the non-mating season genital organs are not bulbous as shown in Figure 3 above.

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