

# Alosa spp.

Shad  
River herring

Native to Maine

Freshwater & Coastal  
Ponds, Lakes, Rivers, and Streams

## Body Shape, Size, and Color



Zach Whitener, GMRI

PERMITTED USE

Look for a fish with a sharp edged "keel" or belly. Dark stripe color can be blue to green-brown colored. Sometimes a row of dark spots is seen behind the eye.

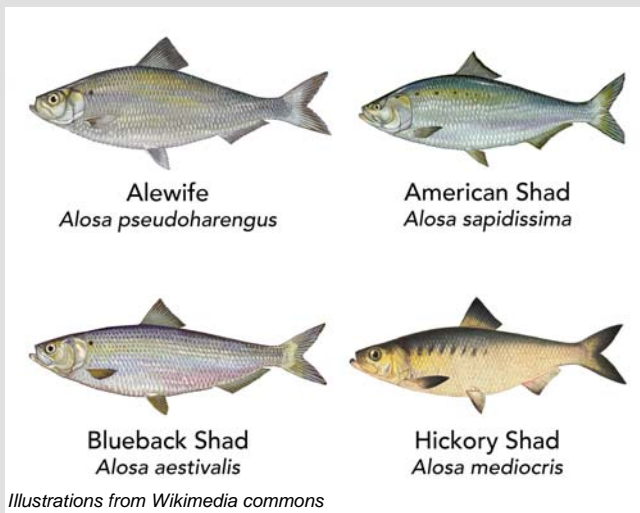
## Full View



Pat Shepard, GMRI

PERMITTED USE

Look for a 5-25cm long silver fish with a dark back and a flat body. Shad have a deep, round belly and a straighter back.



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## Fin Shape and Placement



Don Flescher

pd

Look for a fish with small, thin fins. Shad fins lack spines and are soft and flexible. The tail fin (caudal) is deeply forked. Pelvic fins are well behind the side (pectoral) fins.

## Teeth and Mouth



GMRI

PERMITTED USE

Look for a fish with a 'bulldog' like lower jaw and very tiny teeth. Shad feed on plankton with small barbs in the back of their throat called gill rakers.

## Similar Species

There are several shad species found in Maine including American shad, Alewife, Hickory shad, and Blueback shad. It can be difficult to tell these species apart without dissecting them, especially as juveniles. Atlantic herring are similar but lack the sharp keel that shad have.

## Did You Know?

A full grown American Shad can weigh up to 8lbs! Shad, like other members of the herring family, eat mostly plankton. Just like salmon they spawn in rivers and then live their adult lives in the ocean.

Researched by

Help us improve this species card! Contact us with your updates.



Gulf of Maine  
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