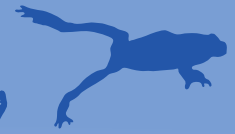


# NORTHERN SNAKEHEAD SPOTTED IN B.C.?

Biologists are investigating a pond in Burnaby, B.C., this week after the alleged spotting of a suspected snakehead fish dubbed the Frankenfish for its monstrous ability to decimate native species and slither onto dry land. The fish, native to China and Russia, was first spotted in North America in 2002, in a Maryland lake. Today, the fish are sold at Asian markets around Vancouver. But John Werring, an aquatic habitat specialist with the David Suzuki Foundation, said Tuesday he knows of only one snakehead ever found in Canadian waters, in Ontario.

“Entire waterways have been taken over in the Southern U.S. and local species decimated,” he said. “They can actually take small animals,” he said. “If I had a chihuahua or a small dog I don’t know if I’d want it swimming in the vicinity of that fish.”



**Native Range:**  
China, Russia and Korea

**Identification:** A long, thin fish with a single dorsal fin running the length of the fish.

**Size:** Maximum size exceeds 1.5 metres.



## SNAKEHEAD BACKGROUND

The risk posed by snakeheads is very real. Several of the 36 species have a long history of invasions, and are very hardy. They can even live out of the water for a time - to pursue their prey or find a new home if the former one dries up. On land Snakeheads use a primitive lung above their gills to breathe. They can survive winter under the ice of northern lakes; some have even recovered from being frozen. The Northern Snakehead, in particular, thrives on conditions that are similar to many Canadian waters. It is a voracious predator, and it grows rapidly to an adult length of 1.5 metres or more.

## CONFIRMED SNAKEHEAD SIGHTINGS



## SNAKEHEAD WALKABOUT

The snakehead prefers stagnant shallow ponds, swamps and slow streams with mud. But when their home dries out they have the ability to walk elsewhere. They “walk” by rhythmically moving their fins and coiling their body.

