Fish of Dumfries

A checklist of the fish recorded in and around Dumfries · 37 species

☐		**Allis Shad** *Alosa alosa*	The rarer of our two shads — usually just one dark shoulder spot, and very few left anywhere.
☐		**Arctic Charr** *Salvelinus alpinus*	An ice-age relic marooned in deep, cold lochs when the glaciers left — and each loch's fish are their own.
☐		**Atlantic Salmon** *Salmo salar*	Leaves the Nith as a fish the length of your hand and comes back years later from Greenland.
☐		**Brook Lamprey** *Lampetra planeri*	Spends its whole life in one burn, never feeds as an adult, and dies within weeks of spawning.
☐		**Bullhead** *Cottus gobio*	All head and no tail, wedged under a stone — and the male guards the eggs himself.
☐		**Chub** *Squalius cephalus*	Big-mouthed, thick-set and famously wary — it will eat almost anything that falls in.
☐		**Common Bream** *Abramis brama*	Deep, slab-sided and bronze, and coated in a slime that comes off on everything.
☐		**Common Carp** *Cyprinus carpio*	Farmed by monks, moved around Europe for centuries, and capable of living for decades.
☐		**Common Dab** *Limanda limanda*	Rough as sandpaper to the touch, with a sharp kink in the lateral line above the pectoral fin.
☐		**Common Goby** *Pomatoschistus microps*	The tiny fish in the rockpool that vanishes the instant your shadow falls on it.
☐		**Dace** *Leuciscus leuciscus*	A slim silver dart of the fast water, with concave fins and a yellow eye.
☐		**Eel** *Anguilla anguilla*	Every eel in the Nith was born in the Sargasso Sea, and every one will go back there to die.
☐		**Flounder** *Platichthys flesus*	The flatfish that comes up the river — you can catch one in fresh water miles from the sea.
☐		**Grayling** *Thymallus thymallus*	'The lady of the stream' — and that huge sail of a dorsal fin is unmistakable.
☐		**Gudgeon** *Gobio gobio*	A small bottom-hugging fish with a barbel at each corner of the mouth and a row of dark blotches.
☐		**Lesser-spotted Catshark** *Scyliorhinus canicula*	A small shark, and the 'mermaid's purse' on the strandline is very likely one of its eggcases.

☐		**Minnow** *Phoxinus phoxinus*	The shoal of little fish darting over gravel in the shallows — and the males turn scarlet in May.
☐		**Nine-spined Stickleback** *Pungitius pungitius*	Slimmer and shyer than its three-spined cousin, and the breeding male goes black, not red.
☐		**Northern Pike** *Esox lucius*	Built as an ambush weapon — a long green torpedo lying still in the weed until it isn't.
☐		**Perch** *Perca fluviatilis*	Tiger-striped, red-finned and spiky-backed — one of the handsomest fish in the region's lochs.
☐		**Plaice** *Pleuronectes platessa*	The orange spots give it away — the only Solway flatfish marked quite like that.
☐		**Rainbow Trout** *Oncorhynchus mykiss*	A North American Pacific fish, stocked into fisheries here and almost never breeding wild.
☐		**River Lamprey** *Lampetra fluviatilis*	A jawless fish older than dinosaurs, with a rasping sucker instead of a mouth.
☐		**Roach** *Rutilus rutilus*	Red eye, reddish fins, silver flank — the fish that taught most anglers to fish.
☐		**Rudd** *Scardinius erythrophthalmus*	Golden-flanked with blood-red fins, and an upturned mouth built for feeding at the surface.
☐		**Sand Eel** *Ammodytes tobianus*	Dives into wet sand to hide — and half the seabirds in the Solway depend on it.
☐		**Sand Goby** *Pomatoschistus minutus*	Almost invisible against clean sand — and a critical link in the estuary food chain.
☐		**Sea Lamprey** *Petromyzon marinus*	The largest of our lampreys, marbled like old stone, and a sight that stops people mid-walk.
☐		**Sea Trout** *Salmo trutta*	The same species as the brown trout — it simply chose to go to sea and came back bigger.
☐		**Sparling (Smelt)** *Osmerus eperlanus*	Smells unmistakably of cucumber, and the Nith holds one of only three spawning runs left in Scotland.
☐		**Stone Loach** *Barbatula barbatula*	Six barbels around the mouth, and a habit of spending the entire day underneath a stone.
☐		**Tench** *Tinca tinca*	Olive-green, thick-set and red-eyed, with fins so rounded they look padded.
☐		**Thick-lipped Grey Mullet** *Chelon labrosus*	Grazes algae off harbour walls, and is notoriously difficult to persuade to take a bait.
☐		**Thornback Ray** *Raja clavata*	Covered in curved thorns along the back and tail — and it hunts by detecting electric fields.

☐		**Three-spined Stickleback** *Gasterosteus aculeatus*	The fish everyone catches first — and one of the most studied animals in all of biology.
☐		**Twaite Shad** *Alosa fallax*	A sea-going herring relative that comes into fresh water to spawn — and spawns noisily, at night.
☐		**Whiting** *Merlangius merlangus*	A slimmer cod relative with no chin barbel and a black smudge at the base of the pectoral fin.

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