Sculpin Stampede
Fish identification

- Dorsal Fin
- Soft Rays
- Spiny Rays
- Lateral Line Scales
- Caudal Fin
- Anal Fin
- Pectoral Fin
- Pelvic Fin
- Operculum
- Cheek
- Nostril
Staghorn Sculpin

*Leptocottus armatus*

**LEAR**

- Flattened body; large head
- Large “antler-like” spines in front of gill covers
- Large lobe-shaped pectoral fins with concentric black bands
- Up to 460 mm (~18”)

- Long blunt “bull” head
- Lobe pectorals w/ stripes
- Multi-pronged opercular spines

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**Staghorn Sculpin**

*Leptocottus armatus*

- Long blunt “bull” head
- Lobe pectorals w/ stripes
- Multi-pronged opercular spines

- **No scales on body**
- **Upper preopercular spine shaped like an antler**
- **Pectoral fin with dark bars**
Staghorn Sculpin

*Leptocottus armatus*  
LEAR

- Long blunt “bull” head
- Lobe pectorals w/ stripes
- Multi-pronged opercular spines
Prickly sculpin

*Cottus asper*

COAS

- Similar large, rounded head and flattened body as LEAR
- Short unbranched spines on gill covers
- Circular pectoral fins with sturdy, stippled rays. Often holds dorsal fin erect
- Up to 300mm (~12”)

- Short fat head
- Simple short opercular spines
- Circular pectoral fins with stippled rays

Tall dorsal fin
Prickly sculpin

*Cottus asper*

COAS

- Short fat head
- Simple short opercular spines
- Circular pectoral fins with stippled rays
Prickly sculpin

*Cottus asper*

COAS

- Short fat head
- Simple short opercular spines
- Circular pectoral fins with stippled rays
Tidepool sculpin

*Oligocottus maculosus*

OLMA

- Large head with long slender body
- 2 white saddle patches
  - Behind operculum
  - In front of tail
- Small forked spine on gill cover
- Up to 90mm

- Pointy snout
- Delicate, triangular pectorals
- Clear white saddle patches (2)
Tidepool sculpin

Oligocottus maculosus

OLMA

- Pointy snout
- Delicate, triangular pectorals
- Clear white saddle patches (2)
Padded sculpin

Artedius fenestralis
ARFE

• Short, blunt head, oblong pectorals
• Variable white saddles
  • Back of head (variable), high contrast
  • Behind pectorals (not as much contrast)
  • In front of tail (high contrast)
• Textured/rough scales on dorsal surface
• Ventral surface stippled/spotted

• Stippled ventral side
• Rough scales on dorsal surface
• White saddles
Padded sculpin

**Artedius fenestralis**

ARFE

- Stippled ventral side
- Rough scales on dorsal surface
- White saddles
Padded sculpin

**Artedius fenestralis**

- Stippled ventral side
- Rough scales on dorsal surface
- White saddles
Head Shape

- Long head, wide mouth
- Short wide head
- Short wide head
- Pinched nose

- Short wide head
Pectoral Fins

- Elongate, Lobe-shaped
- Wide concentric black bands

- Oblong
- Alternating light/dark

• Circular shape
• Stippled pattern

• Triangular, *delicate*
• Variable color
Opercular Spines

- Long (especially in large individuals)
- Multipronged

- Bifid
- In front of operculum

- “Simple”, single
- Blunt
- Edge of operculum

- Bifid
Saddle Patches (white)

- Uncommon, more like “splotches”
- Variable location, white patches

- Back of head (if present): points to head, high contrast
- Behind operculum: fainter, variable
- Tail: higher contrast

- Back of head: variable – rare, low contrast, narrow, points toward tail
- Behind operculum: always present, high contrast, sharp edge, points toward tail
- Tail: high contrast