



## **Fish-Match Mixer**

By Ron Bacon

**Best Time:** First meeting of the group, repeated whenever the group needs to be divided into pairs.

**Best Location:** Wherever the group meets

**Time Required:** 10-15 minutes, depending on the size of the group.

**Objectives:** Participants will

1. Learn characteristics about indigenous fish species.
2. Learn name and something new about their partner
3. Practice communication skills
4. Experience system that divides group into pairs.
5. Have an enjoyable and social experience.

**Youth Development Objectives:**

1. Develop interpersonal communication skills
2. Increase self-esteem.

**Evaluation:**

1. Do participants have enough basic knowledge to “match” their fish picture?
2. Can the group be divided in an effective and timely manner?

**Materials:** Individual color plates (pictures) of fish indigenous to the area. Different species for every 2 participants. Each fishplate (to be cut in half) should be large (8 ½ x 11”) in size and laminated for repeat use.

**Narrative:** This lesson has 3 basic purposes:

1. Serving as a group social mixer, allowing participants to meet one another.
2. Divide group into pairs for future instructional purposes.
3. Learn specific information on local fish species.

Randomly pass out the one-half color plates to the group (one per participant) with instructions that they need to find their other half (match). When they find their match, quickly have them introduce themselves to one another. They should tell their new partner something that can be used to introduce them to the group. Discuss your “fish” and be ready to give one or two characteristics of the fish to the rest of the group.

When it appears that the matches are made, introductions and fish discussion are complete, call the group to order. By pairs, have each fish team member introduce their other half by name, and one or two particulars

on the person and a characteristic of their fish. Once the entire group has spoken, you now have teams for the first paired activity.

The mixer can be repeated every time you need to divide the total group into pairs. At the end of 5 or 6 paired activities, most participants will know the names and have some background on the other members of the group as well as be familiar with different fish species.

If you need to create groups of 4 or more, you can group according to families such as sunfish, trout and salmon, catfish, pike, etc.

**Alternate to the verbal explanation.** The specific characteristics of each fish could be listed on sticky label attached to each ½ of the fishplate. Each time a match is made, write down a new characteristic. At the end of the day(s), the participants should have a thorough description of that particular species of fish.