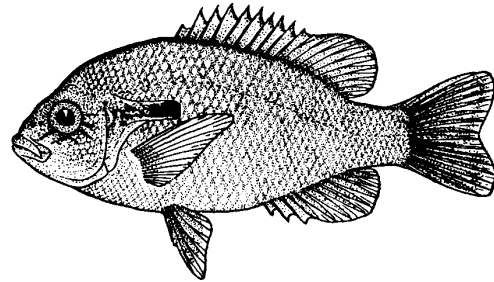


Redbreast Sunfish (*Lepomis auritus*)

General Information

Differentiated from the bluegill and pumpkinseed by its long opercular flap and bright red breast, the redbreast sunfish is found throughout the state amid a vast array of environmental conditions.



Native Range

Occurs only in Eastern North America. Its range extends from New Brunswick south, east to the Appalachian Mountains, to central Florida, west of the Apalachicola River, apparently not in Mississippi but introduced into Texas and Oklahoma (Scott and Crossman 1973)

Habitat Description

Lake: deeper water over bottoms of sand and mud with abundant vegetation, remain independent during the warm months but form dense hibernating schools when temperatures reach below 5°.

River: High gradient to low gradient streams, in streams with high gradients reside in slower deeper areas with rock and gravel substrate, will reside in waters with salinities up to 8‰

Optimum Habitat Requirements

Dissolved Oxygen	
Temperature	
pH	4.8 - 8.4
Turbidity	
Current	

Diet

Fry	zooplankton and insects
Juveniles	insects, crustaceans, some fish
Adults	insects, crustaceans, some fish
Notes:	

Growth (mm)

Age	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
.	60	91	106	127	142	---	---

Notes: No size differentiation between sexes. Growth data taken from a summary of lake inventories 1990 - 1997.

Reproduction

Time of Year	June - August	Age Males Mature	II
Temperature Range	20° - 29° C	Age Females Mature	II
Water Depth	6 - 18"	Nest Builder	Male
Substrate	sand, fine gravel	Egg Type	Adhesive
Time of Day		Parental Care	Male
Critical pH		Days to Hatching	
Vegetation		Stable Water Level	Critical

Comments: Nests are built close together and in the open, will use unoccupied nests of other centrachids. In high gradient streams nest are built on the downstream sides of protective rocks and logs. Habitat and reproductive information is taken from Scott and Crossman, 1973 and Carlander 1977.