



**TEXAS**  
**PARKS &**  
**WILDLIFE**

# **Fishes of Central Texas**

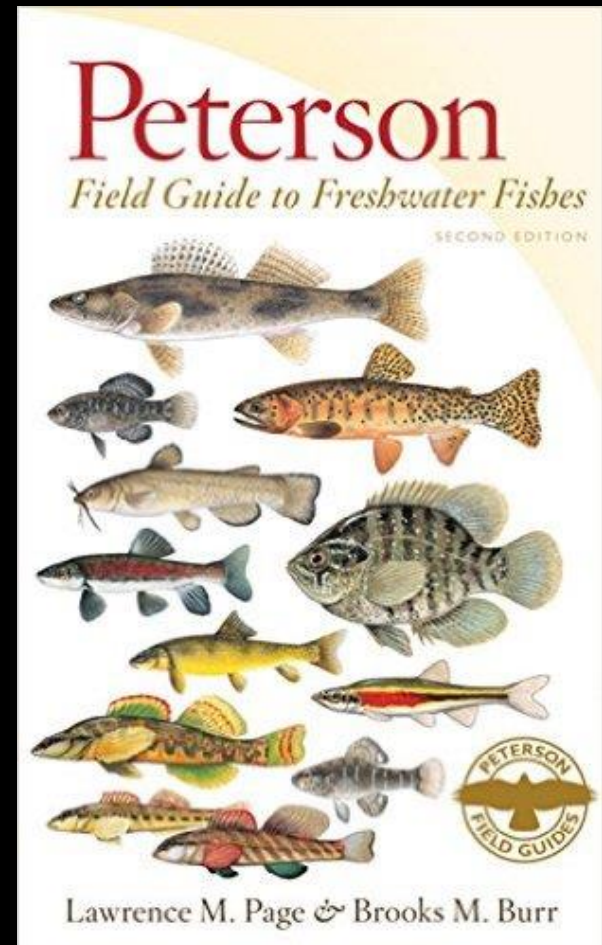
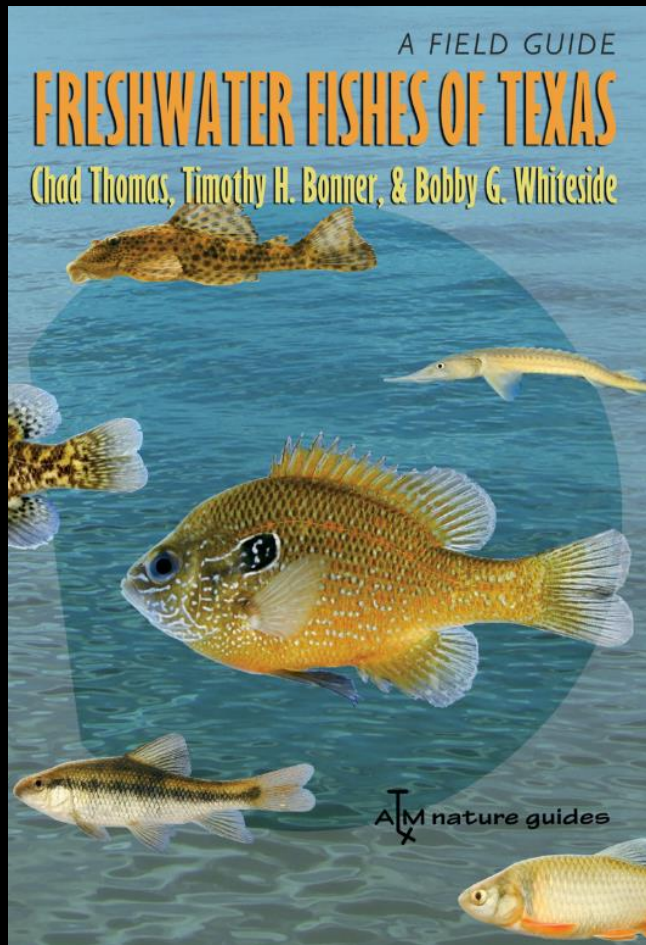
**Stephen Curtis, Sarah Robertson & Gordon Linam**  
**River Studies Program**



# Fish Identification

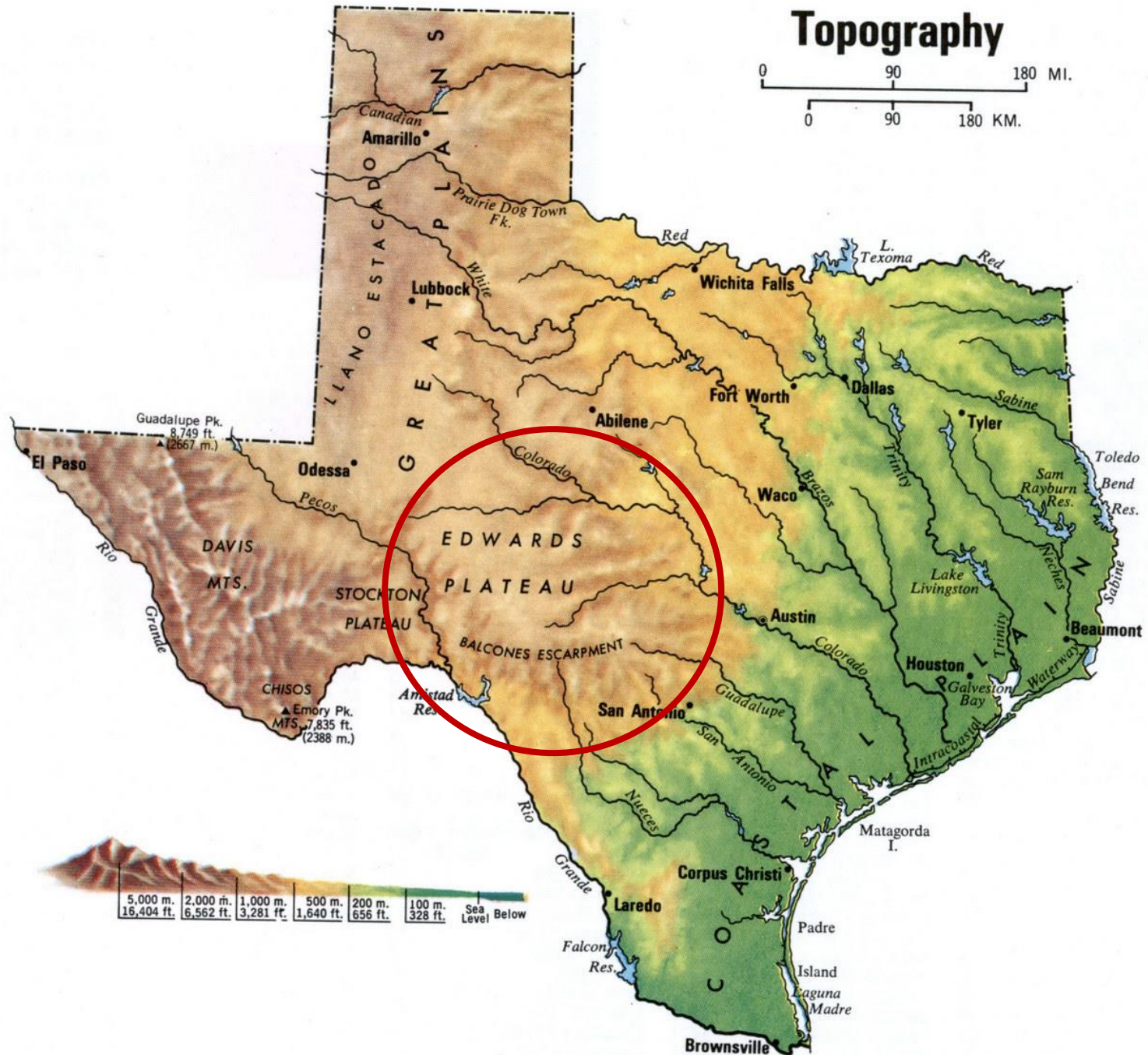
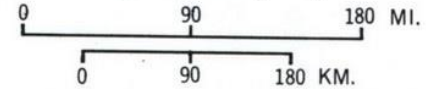


# References



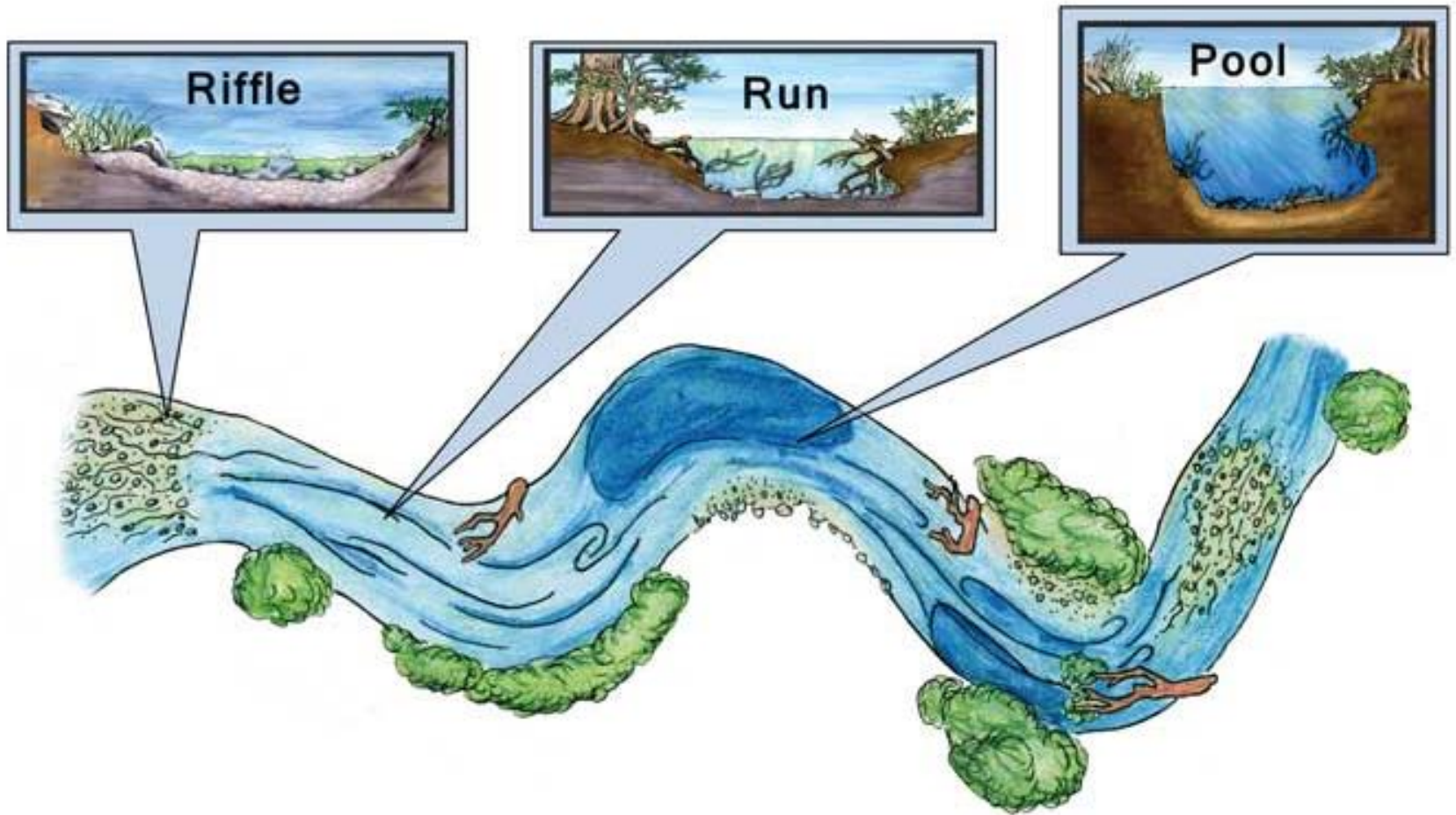


# Topography



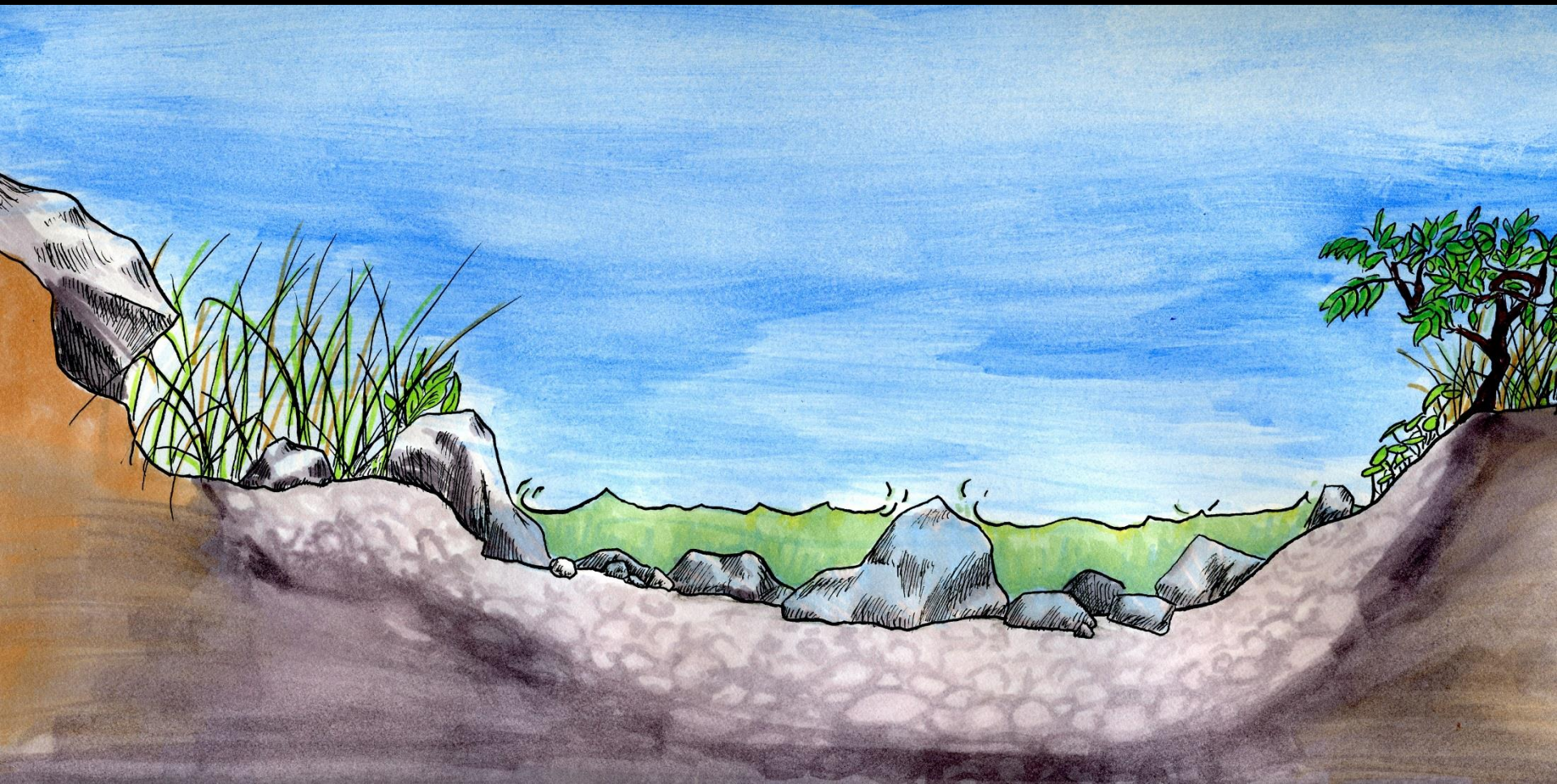


# Rivers & Streams – Habitat Types





# Riffles





# Minnows

## Central Stoneroller



- Long, mottled body with lateral stripe
- Large fleshy mouth; tubercles on head & body

# Suckers

## Blue Sucker



- Elongate body w/small head
- Long dorsal fin; inferior mouth
- Rio Grande & Colorado River

(State Threatened)





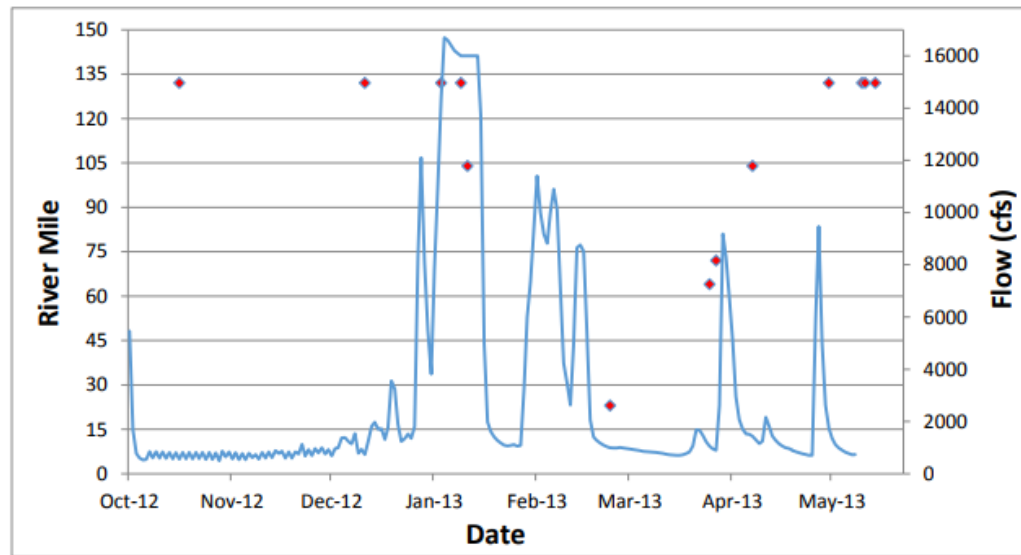


# Blue Sucker: Spawning





# Blue Sucker Tracking



# Darters





# Etheostoma

Orangethroat Darter

♂ MALE



♀ FEMALE



Greenthroat Darter



★ NATIVE  
TEXAN



Rio Grande Darter



★ NATIVE  
TEXAN



# Percina

Texas Logperch



- Conical snout; vertical bars on body

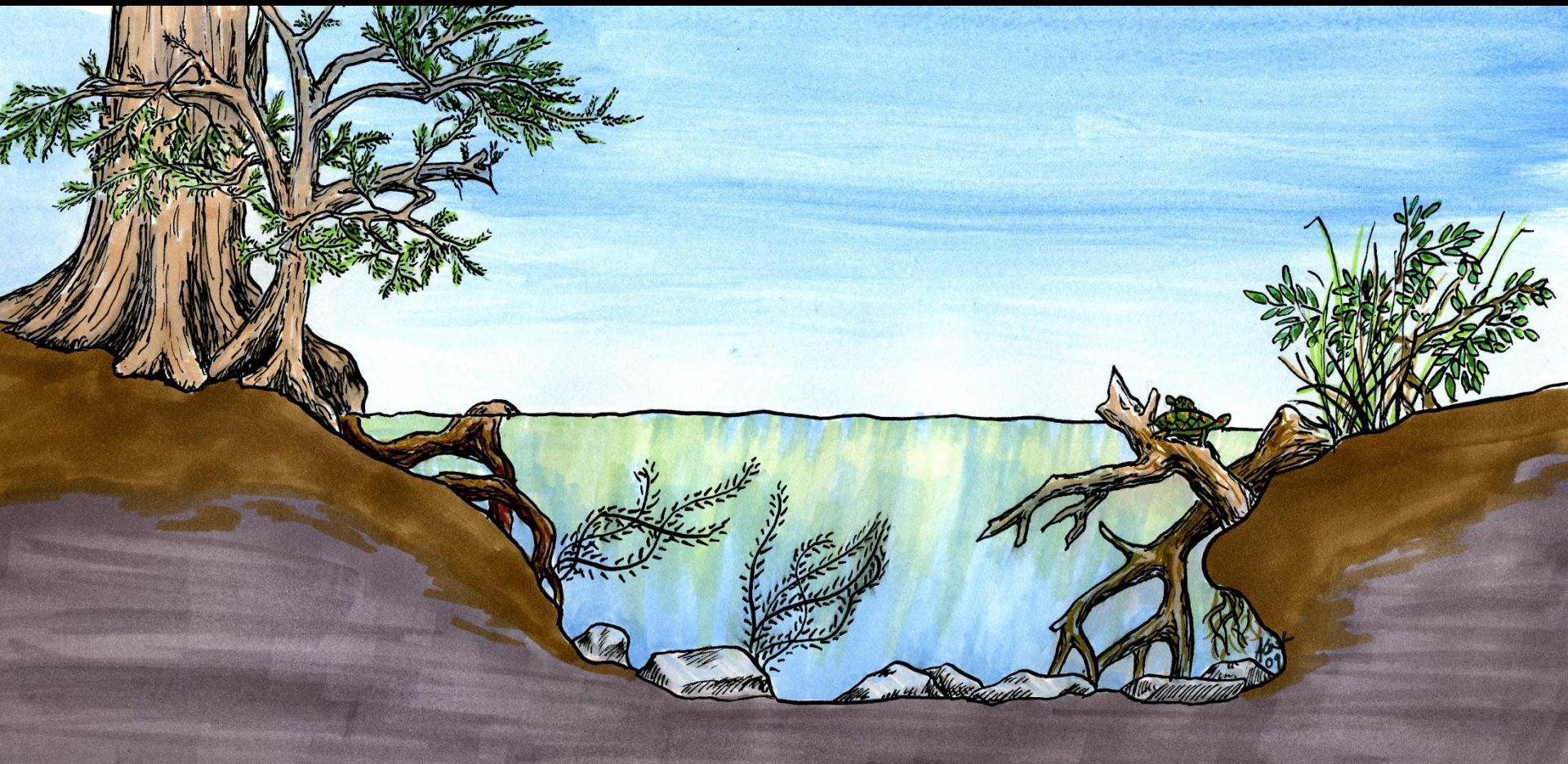
Guadalupe Darter



- Dark rectangular/round lateral blotches



# Runs





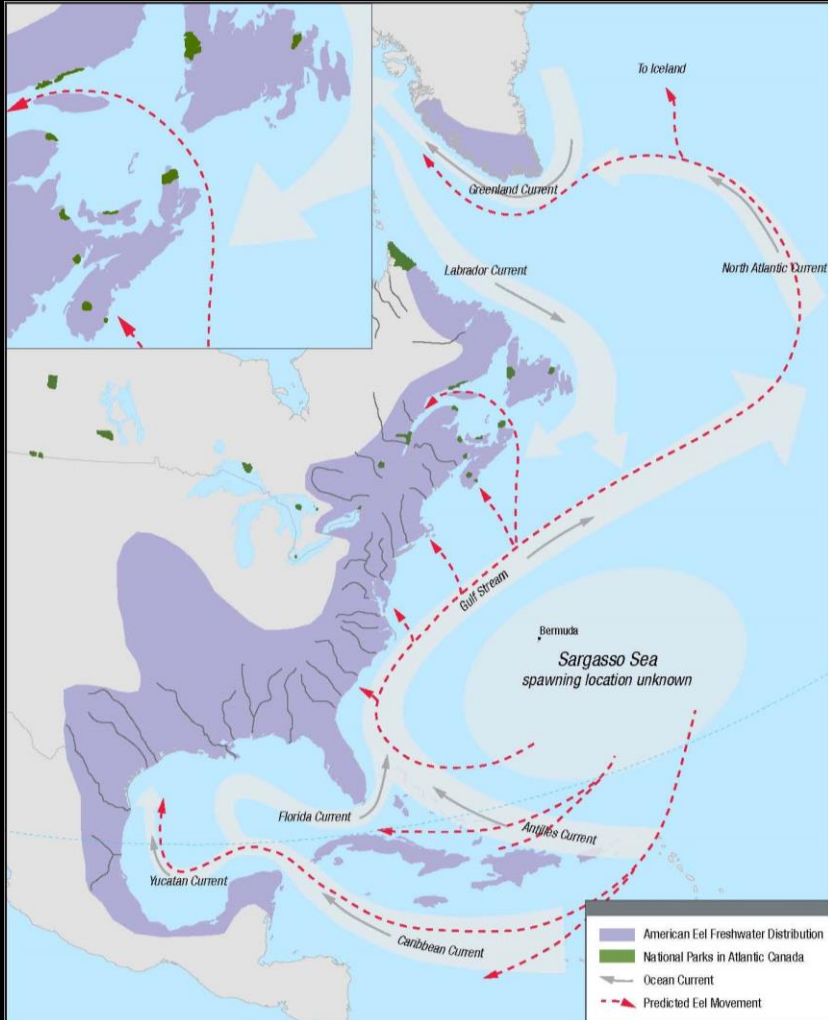
# American Eel



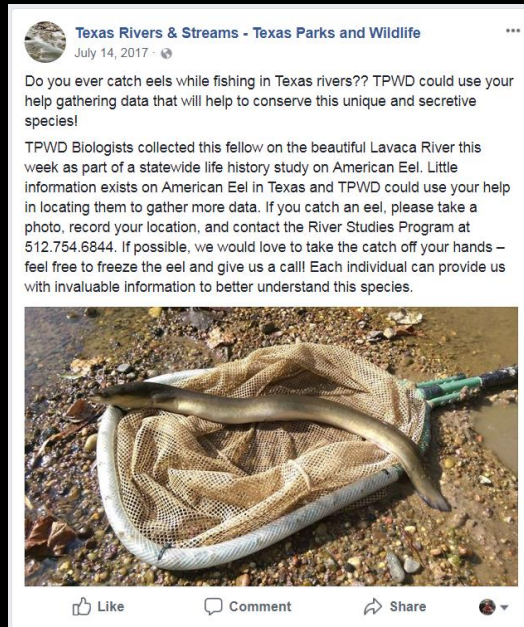
- Long cylindrical, snake-like body
- Utilize structure in fast flowing water



# American Eel: Spawning & Movement



# American Eel: Public Outreach

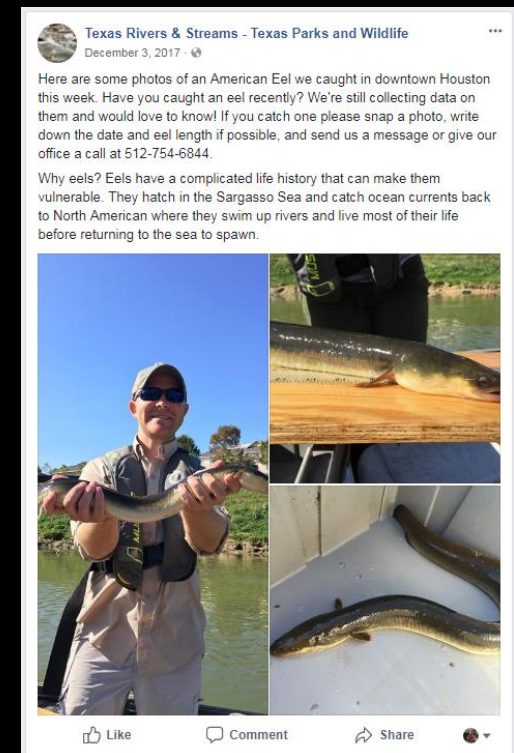


## LOOKING FOR AMERICAN EELS

Please report specimens or observations to Melissa Casarez or Adam Cohen, the Fishes of Texas Project  
[fishesoftexas@gmail.com](mailto:fishesoftexas@gmail.com)  
512-475-8171 (Melissa) / 512-471-8845 (Adam)  
Maintain specimens alive if possible, or put on ice and give us a call. See links below for more information:

 <http://www.fishesoftexas.org>  
 <https://sites.utexas.edu/herpetickslab/>  
 <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/fishes-of-texas>

QR codes for each link are provided below the logos.



## Biologists seek assistance from anglers in tracking American Eel in Texas waterways

AUSTIN — Every now and then, anglers fishing Texas waterways may reel in something unexpected: the slimy, secretive American Eel.

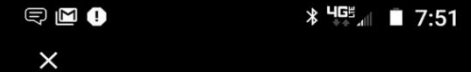
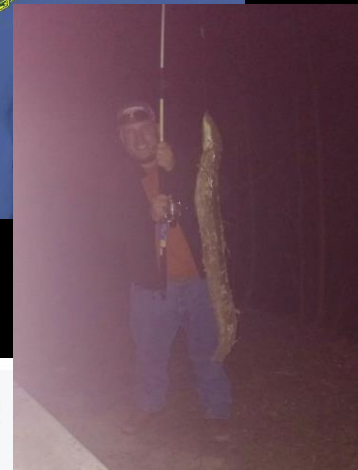
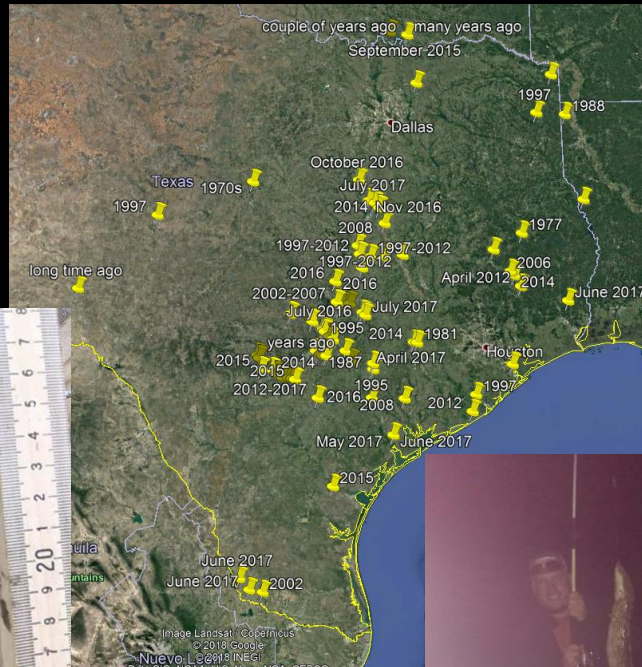
"[The American Eel] is just such a unique species that you don't see that often, and so when you catch one or you see one, you remember it," said Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) aquatic biologist Stephen Curtis. "It's going to leave an impression."



# Public Response



**Doug-Tammy Isaacs** The San Bernard river, upstream of the freshwater dam in Brazoria County is loaded with them.



**Tina Park**  
May 26 at 6:02pm • 🌐

Logan caught an eel!!



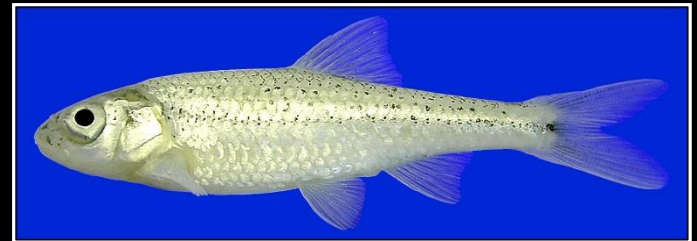
📷 Write a comment... 😊



**Jeff Zeal Stefanoff** Talk to San Marcos city utility crews. They are always getting them.

Like · Reply · Message · 30 mins

# Minnows





# Minnows

**Federally Endangered**



**Federally Endangered**



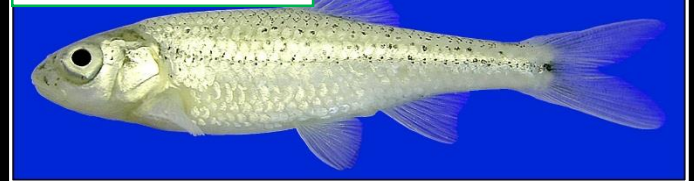
**Federally Threatened**



**State Threatened**



**State Threatened**



**Federally Endangered**



**Federally Threatened**





# Threats Facing Minnow Species



Impoundments



Stream dewatering



Terrestrial  
and  
Aquatic  
Invasive species



# Cyprinella

Red Shiner



Proserpine Shiner



Blacktail Shiner



Plateau Shiner



- Deep body, cross-hatching on scales
- Dark shoulder patch
- Dark pigment between dorsal fin rays



# Macrhybopsis

Peppered Chub



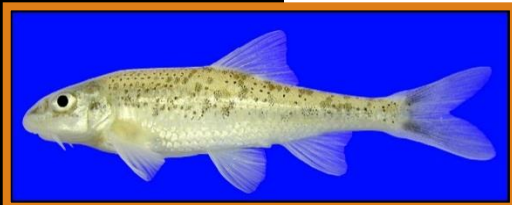
Prairie Chub



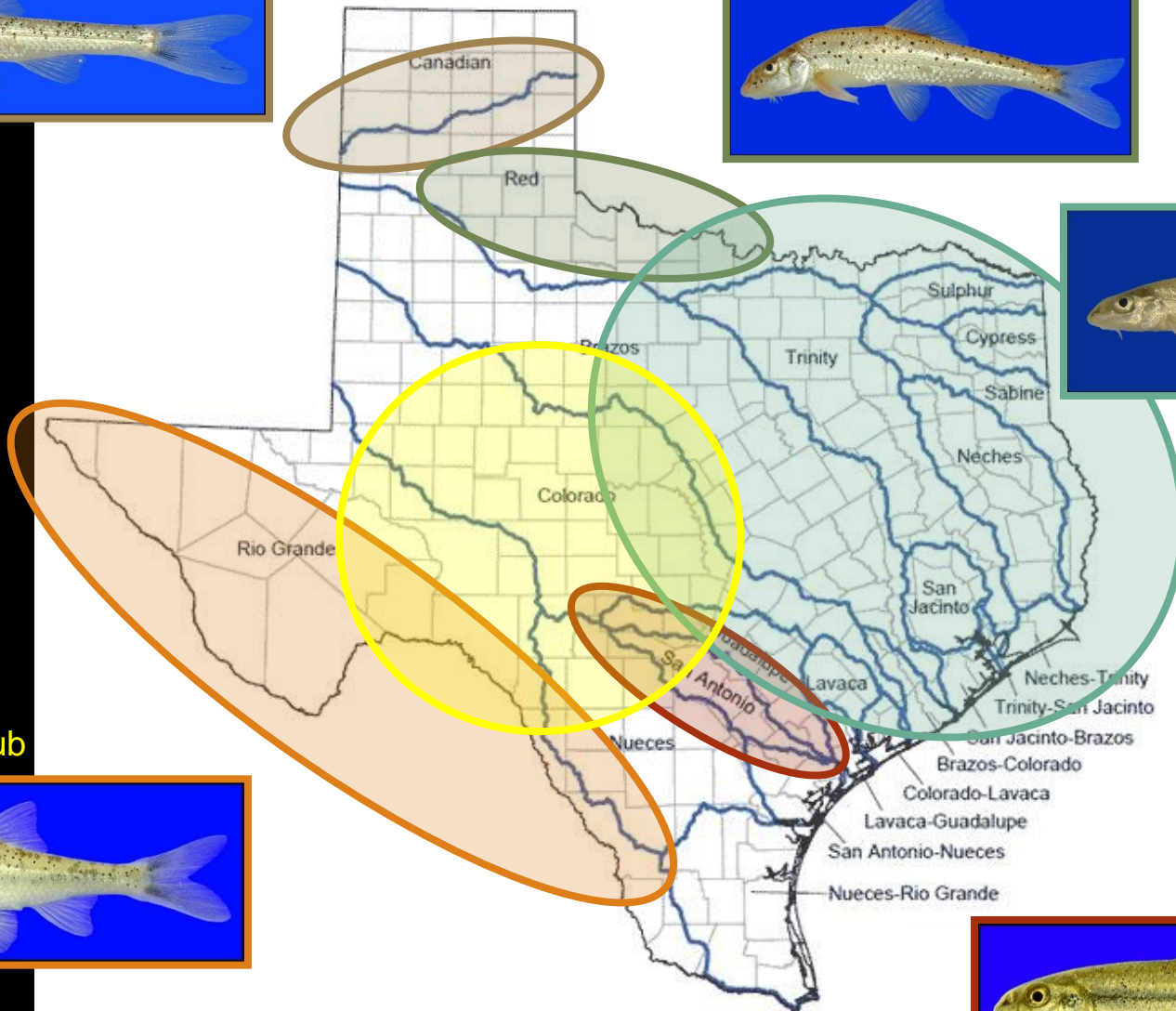
Shoal Chub



Speckled Chub



Burrhead Chub





# Notropis



*Texas Shiner*



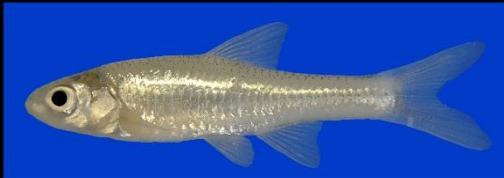
*Tamaulipas Shiner*



*Ironcolor Shiner*



*Weed Shiner*



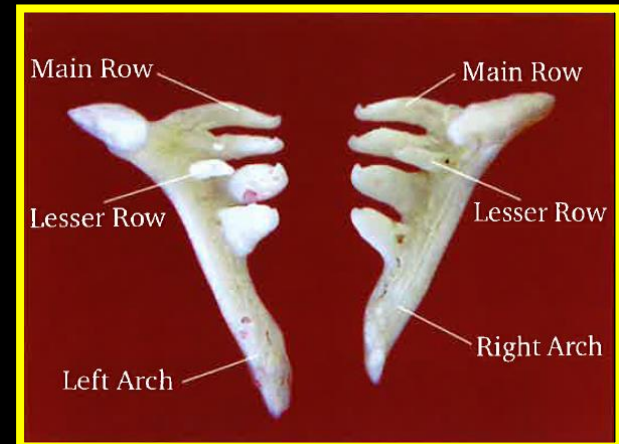
*Ghost Shiner*



*Sand Shiner*



*Mimic Shiner*



- Typically slender-bodied, silver minnows

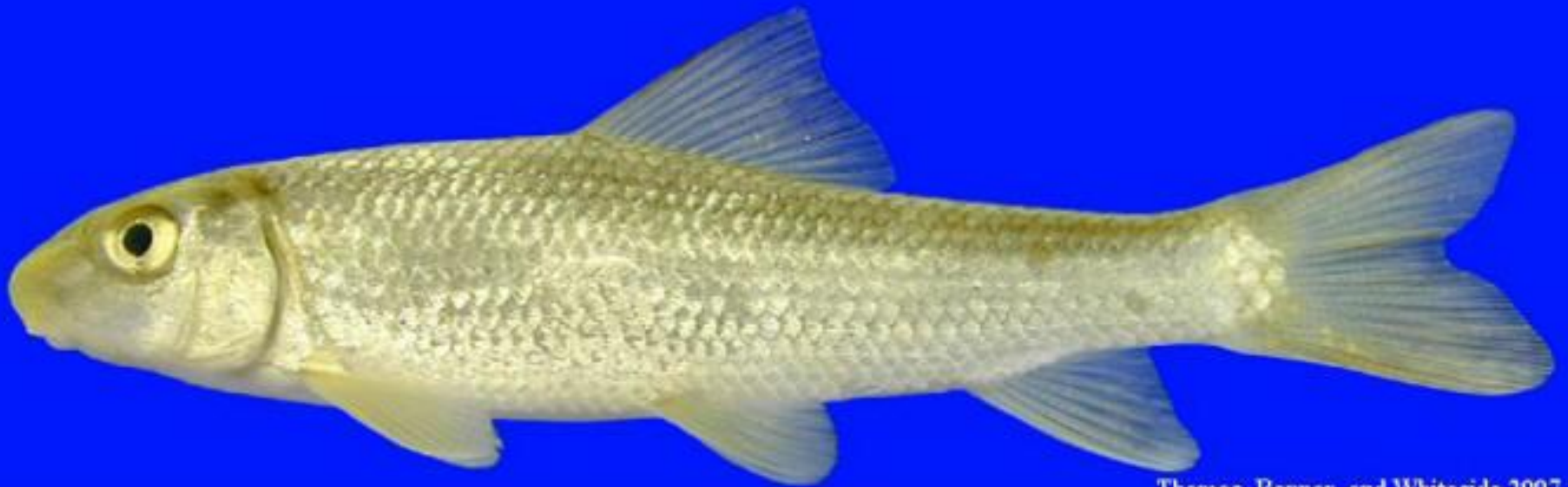
# Minnows: Spawning





# Sucker

## Gray Redhorse

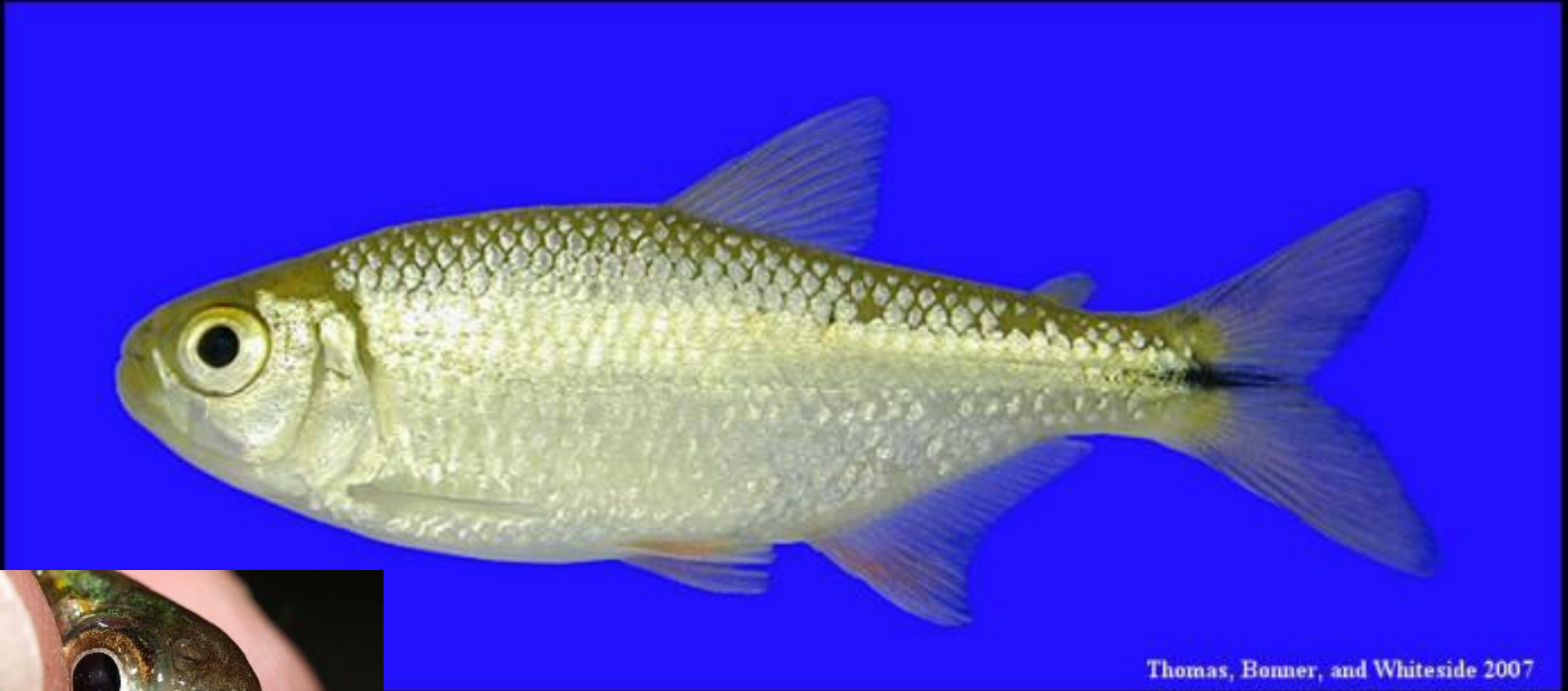


Thomas, Bonner, and Whiteside 2007

- Elongate body w/short dorsal fin
- Little to no coloration; up to 1.7 ft

# Tetras

## Mexican Tetra



Thomas, Bonner, and Whiteside 2007



- Blunt snout w/sharp pointed incisors
- Open water schooling fish
- Introduced outside of the Rio Grande



# Suckermouth Catfishes



© University of Florida

- Body covered in hard bony plates; unique color patterns
- Inferior mouth with sucking disk
- Primarily utilize springs and spring runs
- Native to South America

(Non-Native)

# Black Bass

Guadalupe Bass



Spotted Bass



- Dorsal fins w/shallow notch
- Rows of spots on belly
- Mouth doesn't extend past eye in adults
- Tooth patch on tongue
- Differentiate based on location

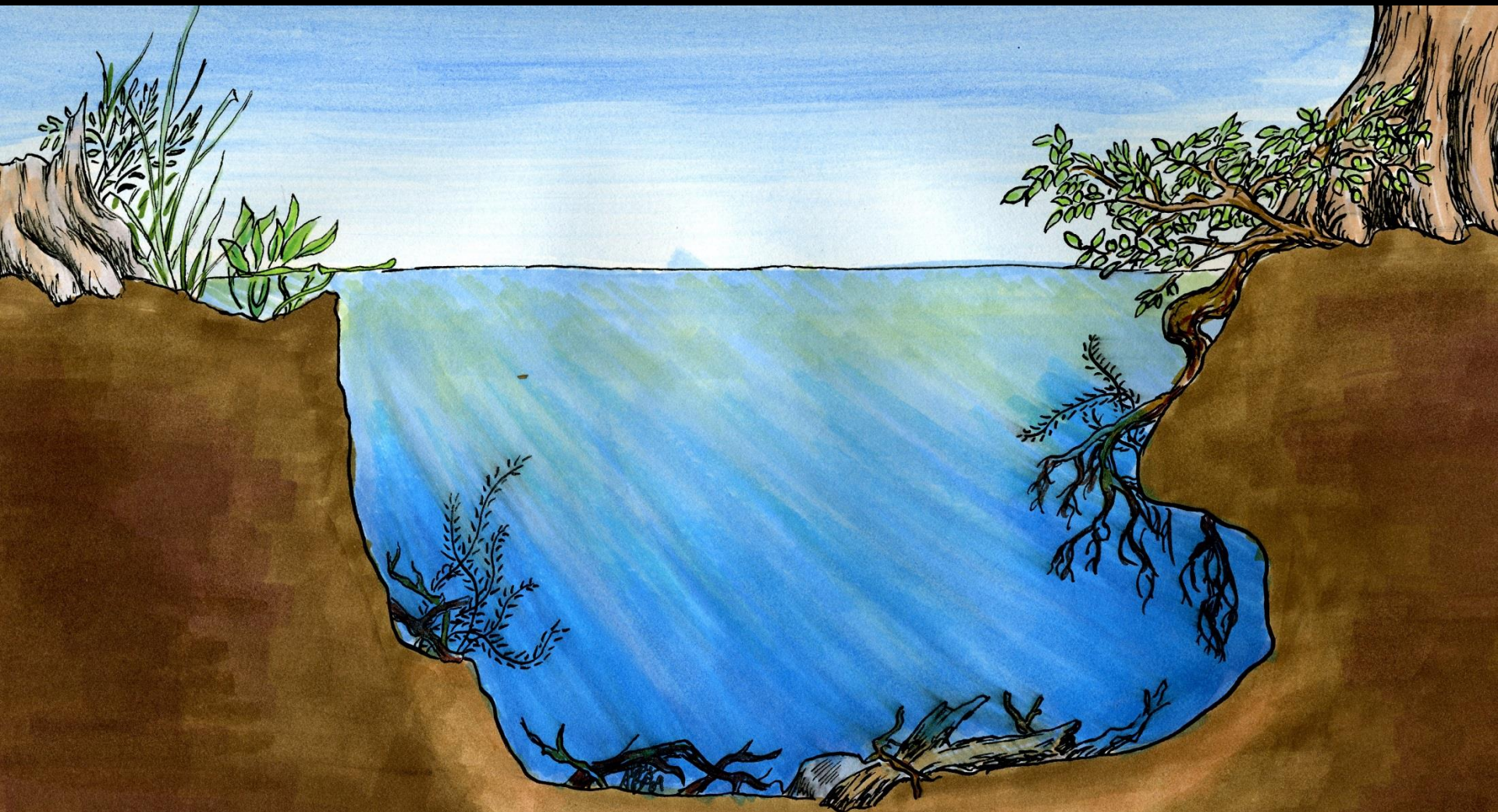


# Guadalupe Bass Restoration





# Pools





# Gar



## Spotted Gar



- Short snout

## Longnose Gar



- Long and narrow snout

# Gar

## Alligator Gar



- Short blunt snout; base of snout very wide
- Body spotted on posterior end
- 2 rows of teeth





*Trinity River*



*Lower Brazos River*



*Lower Guadalupe River*



# Gar: Spawning





# Gar: Spawning





# Shads

## Gizzard Shad



- Blunt rounded snout
- Large shoulder spot

## Threadfin Shad



- Angled mouth
- Small shoulder spot



# Carps

## Common Carp



- Deep elongate body w/large scales
- Long dorsal fin; 2 pairs of barbels

(Non-Native)

# Carps

## Grass Carp



- Long slender body w/large scales
  - Blunt head
  - Used to control aquatic vegetation
- (Non-Native)



# Suckers

## Smallmouth Buffalo



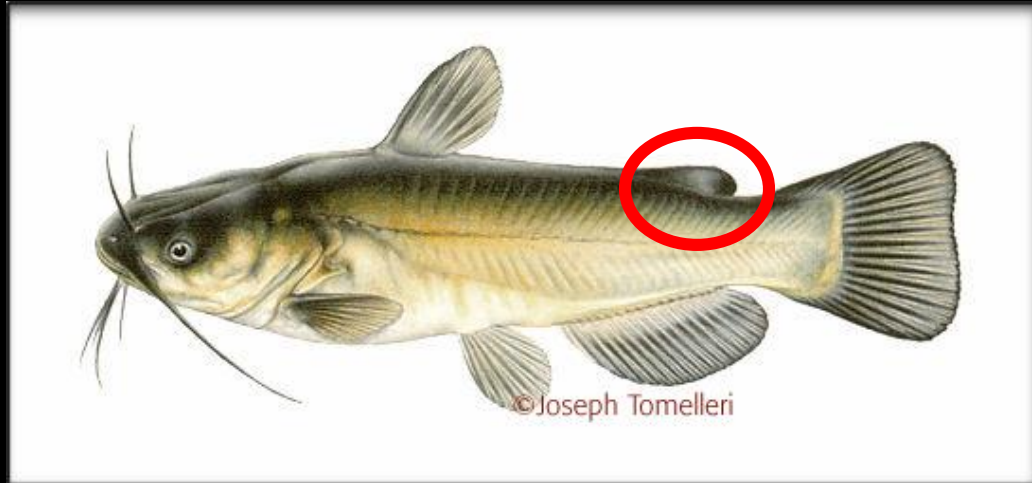
- Deep elongate body w/long dorsal fin
- Bottom dweller

# Catfishes

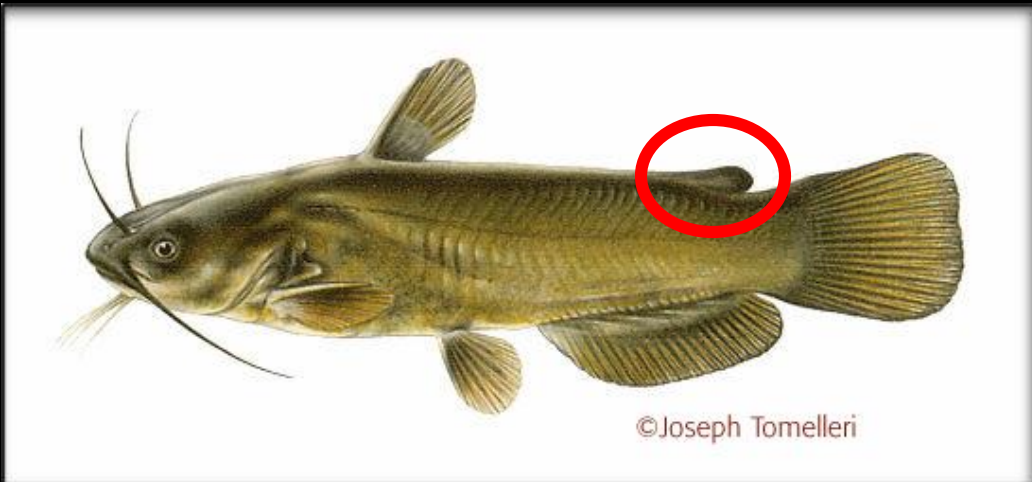




# Catfishes



*Black Bullhead: Dark chin barbels*



*Yellow Bullhead: Light chin barbels*

# Catfishes



Channel Catfish



Headwater Catfish



Blue Catfish

- Rounded anal fin
- Spots on body

- Square anal fin
- Flat head region



# Catfishes

## Flathead Catfish



- Long slender body; brown-black mottling
- Head depressed dorsally; lower jaw projects past upper jaw
- Caudal fin emarginate

# Catfishes – Habitat Shift

**RIFFLE**  
**(Juvenile)**



**POOL**  
**(Adult)**

Channel Catfish



Flathead Catfish





# Livebearers

## Western Mosquitofish



Gonopodium

- Small fish w/superior mouth; swim near water surface
- Black bar on eye; cross hatching on scales
- Internal fertilization

# Sunfish

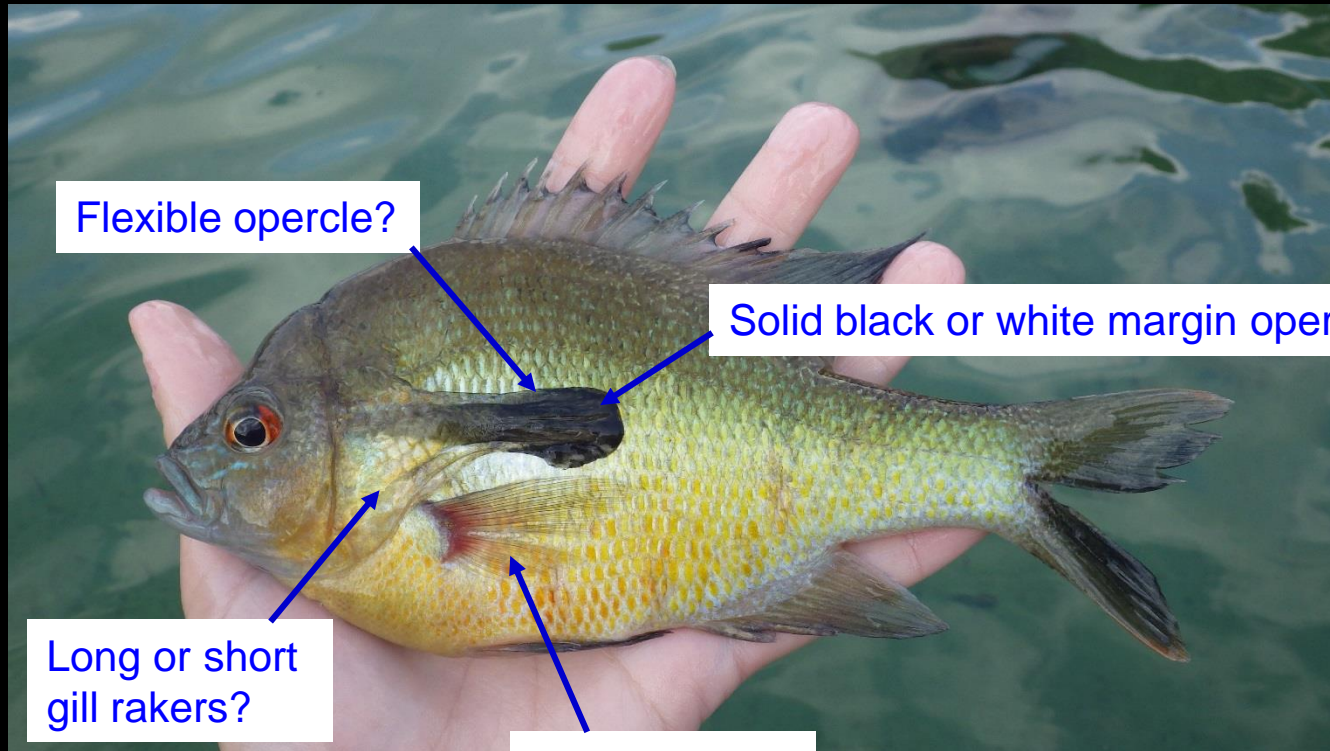
## Warmouth



- Body covered in scattered dark spots
- War paint on face & operculum; red eye
- Very large mouth; tooth patch on tongue



# Sunfish Identification



# Sunfish

## LONG PECTORAL

Bluegill



Orangespotted Sunfish



Redear Sunfish



## SHORT PECTORAL

Longear Sunfish



Redbreast Sunfish



Green Sunfish



Redspotted Sunfish



FLEXIBLE OP.

STIFF OP.



# Black Bass

## Largemouth Bass



- Long body w/dark mid-lateral stripe (may be absent)
- Deep notch between dorsal fins
- Large mouth (past eye); no tooth patch

# Black Basses & Sunfishes: Spawning





# Drums

## Freshwater Drum



- Strongly arched, deep body; double dorsal fin
- Lateral line extends into caudal fin; up to 2.3 ft
- Benthic dweller

# Cichlids

## Rio Grande Cichlid



- Only native cichlid in the US
- Introduced outside of the Rio Grande



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**(512) 754-6844 ext. 221**

