

DILLSBORO – FERC NO. 2602

FISHERIES STUDY

INTRODUCTION

During the biological studies consultation process subsequent to the issuance of the First Stage Consultation Package for the Dillsboro Hydroelectric Project, the state and federal resource agencies identified the need for additional fisheries data in the vicinity of the project. A Technical Leadership Team (TLT) comprised of representatives from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the United States Forest Service (USFS), the Land Trust for the Little Tennessee and the applicant developed a fisheries study to collect the needed data. The objectives of the study were to: (1) Describe the fishery resources within the project impoundment, and in the river upstream and downstream of the project (2) Determine any potential project-related impacts to the fishery resources associated with the project.

The fisheries study consisted of reviewing recent historical data (within the past 5 years) collected by state and federal resource agencies and/or consultants, and additional site-specific field surveys to describe the fisheries resources in the vicinity of the project. The field surveys incorporated both routine fishery inventories and directed surveys for any Proposed, Endangered, Threatened, and Species of Concern (PETS) species that may occur within the project waters or the adjacent upstream and downstream areas.

METHODS

Fisheries sampling for the Dillsboro Project consisted of quantitative sampling within the project impoundment, in the immediate tailrace and in associated upstream and downstream riverine reaches of the Tuckasegee River. The study plan identified six general areas where sample stations would be located: (1) a representative riverine reach between the confluence of the East and West Forks Tuckasegee and the confluence of Caney Fork Creek, (2) a representative riverine reach upstream of the Dillsboro impoundment and the Sylva Wastewater Treatment Plant, (3) representative shoreline within the Dillsboro Project impoundment (one sampling reach on each side of impoundment), (4) the immediate tailrace between the Dillsboro dam and first downstream bridge (U. S. Route 441), (5) a representative riverine reach downstream of the project dam and the first bridge, but upstream of the USGS gauge at Dillsboro and (6) an additional representative riverine reach just downstream of the Tuckasegee gorge, in the vicinity of Tuckasegee Outfitters. These sample areas were selected to provide project-related fisheries data as well as fish community data for selection of target species for the Tuckasegee River instream flow study. In consultation with state and federal resource agency biologists, specific sampling stations were selected in these six areas of the river (Figure 1 and Table 1). Stations were selected to be representative of the various mesohabitats present in that area of the river (e.g., riffle, run, pool sequence). Stations T-1, T-2, and T-3 are located downstream of the Dillsboro Project, Station DR is located within the project impoundment and Stations T-4 and T-5 are located upstream of the project impoundment. A detailed description of each sample station is provided in the SITE DESCRIPTION section.

The study plan included four sample periods during 2001; two spring samples (early spring and late spring), one summer sample and one fall sample. Due to delays in finalizing the study plan, however, only the late spring, summer and fall samples were conducted during 2001. The early spring sample was conducted during spring 2002. Additionally, a late winter sample of the tailrace station, T-3, was conducted during 2002 to evaluate the presence of any migratory species that may have been missed during the spring sampling. All riverine stations were sampled in May, July, and September of 2001 and again in March of 2002. As mentioned above, the tailrace station, T-3, was also sampled in February of 2002. The reservoir station, DR, was sampled in May 2001 and April 2002.

All sampling was conducted with boat-mounted and/or backpack electrofishing equipment, depending upon site-specific conditions and access. Sampling was conducted under base flow conditions, to ensure sample crew safety and sampling efficiency. According to the study plan, a 200-m reach of shoreline was to be sampled at all stations, however, the actual distance of shoreline sampled at each of the riverine stations was adjusted as necessary to incorporate all representative mesohabitats for that portion of the river. Sampling within the project impoundment was conducted with boat-mounted electrofishing gear and consisted of sampling a 200-m contiguous reach of shoreline on either side of the impoundment. Settings for voltage output of electrofishing gear were adjusted to achieve maximum sampling efficiency without injury to collected fishes. Sampling was conducted in an upstream direction.

Based on results of the spring 2001 sampling, the February and April 2002 samplings at the riverine stations also included electrofishing into a seine. This modification to the original study plan was implemented to ensure a representative sample of the species present during the spawning period. The method consisted of setting a 6-m seine in the riffle or run area, and backpack electrofishing an area approximately 7.5 m upstream of the seine. Sampling was conducted in a downstream direction towards the seine. Two electrofishing passes were made at each sample site. If the two passes resulted in the collection of new species not collected during the standard boat/backpack sampling, then additional passes were conducted until no new species were collected. Settings for voltage output of electrofishing gear were adjusted to achieve maximum sampling efficiency without injury to collected fishes. .

All collected fish were identified, measured for individual total length (mm) and sorted by species into 25-mm size groups. For each species, all fish within a particular size group were enumerated and weighed in aggregate to yield number and biomass by size group. Once fish were measured and weighed, they were placed in a holding tank until the completion of sampling, after which they were returned to the river alive.

Catch data were summarized in tabular format by sample period, station and species for total number of fish and weight by size group. Additionally, catch per unit of effort (CPUE) was calculated for both number of fish per hour and number of fish per 100 m of shoreline. Cumulative time of active electrofishing (as opposed to total sample time) was used to calculate hourly CPUE.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Sampling for the Dillsboro project fish survey was conducted at six sample stations between the Barkers Creek Bridge crossing of the Tuckasegee River and the upstream confluence of the Caney Fork Creek. The specific description of each sample station is provided below.

Station T-1

A 50-m riffle area, upstream of the Barkers Creek Bridge, was selected for backpack electrofishing. The area was electrofished from bank to bank. The lower end of the riffle area consists of cobble, gravel and bedrock. Both shorelines in the riffle area support woody buffer strips of willow and alder, separating the river from highway 74 on the left ascending bank (LAB) and the Smoky Mountain Railroad on the right ascending bank (RAB). The average river width in this area is 48.5-m.

A 150-m pool area, at the Barkers Creek Bridge, was selected for boat electrofishing. The substrate consisted of sand and boulders. The sample area was bounded by a riffle on the upstream end and the Tuckasegee Outfitter's launch site on the downstream end. The RAB is a woody buffer strip consisting of willow and alder. The LAB includes a grass-covered bank at the lower end, the boat ramp under the Barkers Creek Bridge and a woody area of alder and willow at the upper end.

Station T-2

A 50-m riffle area located downstream of the confluence with Scott Creek was selected for backpack electrofishing. The area was electrofished from bank to bank. The substrate in this area consists of boulder, cobble and gravel. The downstream portion of the riffle is divided by a mid-stream island. Vegetation along the LAB consists of blackberry, greenbrier and scattered black locust and willow trees. The RAB is a steep bank with large yellow poplars and various oak species. The average river width in this area is 44.6 m.

A 150-m run area located immediately downstream of the confluence of Scott Creek was selected for boat electrofishing. The substrate in this area consists of bedrock and boulder. The upper end of the run is located at the confluence of Scott Creek. Vegetation along the LAB and RAB is generally consistent with that of the backpack electrofishing area described above.

Station T-3

An area located directly downstream of the Dillsboro Dam was selected for both backpack and boat electrofishing. A combination of backpack and boat electrofishers were used to sample the entire area from bank to bank. This site does not include a defined riffle and pool area as the other sites. The substrate in the backpack shocking areas consisted primarily of cobble and gravel at the downstream end, transitioning to bedrock at the base of the dam. Substrate in the deeper boat electrofishing areas consisted primarily of sand and bedrock. The width of the sample area at the downstream end is approximately 46.3-m. The upper end of the sample area is the Dillsboro Dam. The LAB consists of gravel and grassy banks and a municipal park. The

RAB consists of a small woody area at the upstream end, transitioning to a kudzu-covered bank downstream.

Station DR

A 200-m sample area within the Dillsboro impoundment was selected 100 m upstream of the Dillsboro Dam. Boat electrofishing occurred along the LAB and RAB. Substrate within the impoundment consisted of sand and silt. The lower end on the LAB is marked with flagging on a Sycamore tree. The LAB is vegetated with primarily grasses and blackberries, with a few black locust and alder trees, which separate the impoundment from Old Settlement Road. The RAB is mostly a woody area of black locust, various oak species and alder.

Station T-4

A 50-m riffle area located off of Old Settlement Road in Webster was selected for the backpack-electrofishing. The area was electrofished from bank to bank. The average river width in this area is 38.1 m. The riffle is divided by a mid-stream island. The sample site begins at the downstream end of this island and extends upstream to the tail of a long, deep pool. On the LAB, the riffle substrate consists of cobble and gravel. The left ascending portion of the riffle is completely shaded by oaks and other hardwoods on the LAB and willows and alders on the island. The right ascending side of the riffle has substrates composed of sand and boulders at the downstream end and boulder, cobble and gravel substrates at the upstream end.

A 150-m pool area located upstream of the backpack sample area was selected for boat electrofishing. The downstream end of the sample area begins immediately upstream of the riffle sample area. The substrate of the pool is sand and bedrock. The RAB is covered with hardwoods on the lower half, but is bordered by a narrow buffer strip of oaks, black locust and sycamores before opening up to a cultivated area on the upper half. The LAB is vegetated with grasses and briars and a few black locust and sycamore trees.

Station T-5

Both the backpack and boat electrofishing areas are located upstream of the confluence with the Caney Fork Creek. The backpack electrofishing area consists of a 50-m riffle, with cobble and gravel substrate and occasional bedrock. The riffle was sampled from bank to bank. The RAB is sparsely covered with black walnut, black locust and American hornbeam trees and opens to a pasture on the flood plane. The LAB is steep and is covered with sycamore, black cherry and other hardwood trees forming a buffer between the river and Highway 107. The average river width in this area is 39.5 m.

A 150-m pool just downstream of the backpack sample area was selected for boat electrofishing. The substrate within the pool consists of sand and boulders. Vegetation and cover along the LAB and RAB are similar to that described for the backpack sample area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During this study, a total of 11,240 fish representing 42 species were collected from the six stations sampled for the Dillsboro project. Fish abundance and species diversity varied by location and sample period (Tables 2-14). Overall, fish abundance and species diversity increased from upstream to downstream. The average number of fish per sample site downstream of the Dillsboro dam (2,952 fish) was 51% higher than the average number of fish per sample site upstream of the dam (1,951 fish). Diversity followed the same trend with an average of 28 species per station upstream of the dam and an average of 32 species downstream of the dam.

In terms of overall abundance by sample site, the highest numbers of fish were collected from the downstream Stations T-2 (2,678 fish) and T-1 (2,614) (Tables 4 and 3, respectively), followed by the upstream Station T-4 (2,467) (Table 6), the tailrace Station T-3 (1,977) (Table 5), the most upstream Station T-5 (1,435) (Table 7) and the Dillsboro Reservoir Station DR (69) (Table 8). With the exception of the tailrace Station T-3, species diversity decreased from downstream to upstream. Species diversity was highest at the tailrace Station T-3 (38 species), followed by the most downstream Station T-1 (32 species), the Scott Creek Station T-2 (28 species) and the two upstream Stations T-4 and T-5 (24 species each). Catches at the downstream Stations T-1, T-2 and T-3 were generally dominated by minnows, suckers and darters (Tables 3-5), while catches at the upstream Stations T-4 and T-5 were dominated by minnows, suckers, darters and sculpin (Tables 6 and 7). The most frequently collected fish from the Dillsboro Reservoir Station DR were suckers (Table 8).

There were a number of species collections worth noting. All three species of trout, rainbow, brown and brook, were collected from all six sample stations. The mountain brook lamprey was collected from all five riverine stations. Walleye was collected only from the most downstream Station T-1, during the early spring sample. There were six species collected at the tailrace Station T-3 that were not collected elsewhere: common carp, green sunfish, spotted bass, yellow perch, black bullhead and brown bullhead. There were four species that were collected downstream of the Dillsboro Dam, but not upstream of the dam: silver shiner, tangerine darter, golden redhorse and river redhorse. Two North Carolina Special Concern species were collected in the vicinity of the Dillsboro project. The olive darter was collected from the downstream Stations T-1 and T-3 (Table 15) and the wounded darter was collected from all five riverine stations (Table 16).

The number of fish and biomass by species and size class for the standard boat/backpack electrofishing samples are presented in Appendix 1, Tables 1-23. The late winter/early spring 2002 supplemental seine sampling resulted in the collection of 650 additional fish but only one new species (Appendix 1, Tables 24-29). A single specimen of a white sucker was collected at Station T-1 during March 2002 (Appendix 1, Table 25). A wide range of size classes, indicative of multiple year classes, was observed for the most frequently collected species. Overall, the size distributions for the most frequently collected species appeared to be similar among sample stations.

PROPOSED, ENDANGERED, THREATENED AND SPECIES OF CONCERN (PETS)

Two species listed as PETS or on the United States Forest Service list of sensitive species were collected during this study. As mentioned earlier, the North Carolina Special Concern species, the olive darter and wounded darter were collected from several of the sample stations on the Tuckasegee River (Tables 15 and 16).

POTENTIAL PROJECT IMPACTS

Fisheries data for the Dillsboro project do not indicate that project operations have had any overall adverse impacts on fishery resources in the Tuckasegee River in the vicinity of the project. In comments on the fish survey report for the project, however, the NCWRC did note that the project appeared to be the furthest upstream extent for the silver shiner, river redhorse, shorthead redhorse, tangerine darter and olive darter (fish survey comments provided by Chris Goudreau, via e-mail dated August 7, 2002). Additionally, the NCWRC noted that low species diversity and fish abundance in the project impoundment suggest that fish habitat in the impoundment is less suitable for many species than habitat elsewhere in the river.

As suggested in the NCWRC's review comments, data from historical collections in the Tuckasegee River upstream of the project were reviewed to determine if the project dam was the upstream extent of the species mentioned above. Historical data were limited and consisted of NCWRC data from scientific collecting permit reports for 1993 and 1999 (data provided by Scott Loftis, NCWRC, District 9 Fisheries Biologist).

The review of historical fisheries sampling of the Tuckasegee River upstream of the project impoundment did not provide documentation of the presence of the silver shiner, river redhorse, shorthead redhorse, tangerine darter or olive darter upstream of the project. However, Menhinick (1991) reports the distribution of the silver shiner includes the mainstem Tuckasegee River between the confluence of Savannah Creek and Cullowhee Creek. The distribution of these and other species upstream and/or downstream of the project is likely related more to the habitat present in the respective areas of the river and species habitat preferences (see **SPECIES LIFE HISTORY** section), than to any blockage to upstream migration posed by the project dam.

The NCWRC's conclusion that habitat diversity and quality in the project impoundment is less suitable for many species than habitat upstream and downstream of the project impoundment is valid. The shallow, riverine nature of the impoundment and sediment accumulation result in less suitable fisheries habitat, and corresponding lower species diversity and fish abundance.

Overall, the fisheries data for the project indicate an abundant and diverse fishery exists in the Tuckasegee River in the vicinity of the project. The historical operation of the project has had no observable adverse impacts on fishery resources in the Tuckasegee River. Accordingly, the continued operation of the project under the current operational regime should not result in any future adverse environmental impacts.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

This section contains life history data for the various species collected during this study and a summary of the sampling stations where each species was collected.

Ichthyomyzon greeleyi, mountain brook lamprey

A. Identification

The mountain brook lamprey is a member of the Family Petromyzontidae (the lampreys) in the Order Petromyzontiformes. This lamprey is nonparasitic and not anadromous. Teeth are well developed in radiating rows and the lateral teeth are bicuspid. The posterior and outer teeth are bluntly rounded and short. The dorsal fin is not divided. Body color is olivaceous, brown, or gray. The gut of adults is thin, granular, and fragmented. There are 53-62 myomeres (muscle segments between the last gill opening and the anus), usually 55-58. The transverse lingual lamina (a feature of the oral region) is bilobed and has tiny denticles. Total length (TL) rarely exceeds 6 inches.

B. Range

The mountain brook lamprey occurs in the upper Ohio River drainage of Pennsylvania, and the southern tributaries of the Ohio River south through the Tennessee River. It is absent from the Coastal Plains area.

C. Habitat

Mountain brook lamprey habitat includes small upland rivers and creeks with gravel substrates and gentle riffles. They prefer clear water.

D. Local Occurrence

The mountain brook lamprey is limited in North Carolina, occurring only in a few western streams of the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but not in the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Oncorhynchus mykiss*, rainbow trout**

A. Identification

The rainbow trout is a member of the Family Salmonidae (the salmon) in the Order Salmoniformes. This is a streamlined trout with a moderately large terminal mouth (the upper jaw barely extends behind the eye) and teeth on the shaft of the vomer (a bone in the roof of the mouth). An adipose fin is present and the small scales covering the trout are embedded in slimy mucous. The head, back, and upper sides are olive-green and thickly speckled with black spots. The side has a broad pink or reddish longitudinal stripe, but no orange or red spots. The belly is silvery white or yellowish. The dorsal, adipose, and caudal fins have many black spots. The dorsal fin has 10-12 rays and the anal fin has 8-12 rays. The pectoral fin has 11-17 rays and the pelvic fin has 9-10 rays.

B. Range

The rainbow trout was native to the Pacific Coast drainages of western North America, primarily in the coastal streams of the Northwest, but has been widely introduced. It is stocked extensively in many coldwater streams and reservoirs throughout North America and the world.

C. Habitat

Rainbow trout preferred habitat includes streams, lakes, and reservoirs where water temperatures remain below 70° F (21.3° C). However, temperatures as high as 83° F are tolerated. Rainbow trout prefer fast whitewater sections of cool streams, but adapt well to cool, deep reservoirs that have sufficient oxygen.

D. Local Occurrence

The rainbow trout occurs throughout the streams and reservoirs of the Appalachian Mountain Province and a few streams and reservoirs in the Broad, Catawba, and Yadkin drainage basins of the Piedmont Plateau in North Carolina.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations and from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Salmo trutta*, brown trout**

A. Identification

The brown trout is a member of the Family Salmonidae (the salmon) in the Order Salmoniformes. This trout has a moderately large terminal mouth (the upper jaw barely extends behind the eye). An orange to orange-red adipose fin is present and the small scales covering the trout are embedded in slimy mucous. The back and upper sides are dark olive-brown, with scattered red or orange spots that may have pale blue halos. There is no lateral orange or red band present on the sides. The belly is yellowish white or silvery. The dorsal and adipose fins have black spots while the caudal fin has only a few spots on the dorsal portion or no spots. The leading edge of the anal fin is white. The dorsal fin has 12-14 rays and the anal fin has 10-12 rays. The pectoral fin has 13-14 rays and the pelvic fin has 9-10 rays.

B. Range

The brown trout is not native to North America, and only occurs naturally in Europe and western Asia. It has been widely introduced in North America, since its first stocking in 1883, and now occurs throughout the world.

C. Habitat

Brown trout habitat includes moderate to steeply sloped coldwater streams, rivers, reservoirs, and tailraces where water temperatures stay between 33 and 75° F (although it can tolerate higher temperatures). It is often found around dense cover such as logs or undercut banks, or in deep pools below riffles. The brown trout appears to be more tolerant of turbid water and pollution than other trout.

D. Local Occurrence

The brown trout occurs mainly in streams and reservoirs in the Appalachian Mountain Province of North Carolina. However, it also occurs in a few streams in the Piedmont Plateau.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations and from the reservoir. It was also collected in the seine sample at Station T-5.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Salvelinus fontinalis*, brook trout**

A. Identification

The brook trout is a member of the Family Salmonidae (the salmon) in the Order Salmoniformes. This trout has a large terminal mouth with the upper jaw extending well behind the eye. The backs and sides are dark olive or slate gray with light worm-like markings across the back. Light spots appear on the sides along with scattered red spots with blue halos. The dorsal, adipose, and caudal fins are heavily speckled with dark blotches. Other fins are often orange with black and white edges. Females have a white or yellow belly. Breeding males have golden sides and the belly, paired fins, and anal fin are bright orange or scarlet. The dorsal fin has 10-14 rays and the anal fin has 9-13 rays. The pectoral fin has 11-14 rays and the pelvic fin has 8-10 rays.

B. Range

The brook trout originally occurred in Canada (south and east of Hudson Bay) southward through the northern states to eastern Minnesota and northeastern Iowa, and eastward to Pennsylvania, and continued south to northern Georgia along the Appalachian uplands (particularly in the Blue Ridge). It has been widely introduced in western North America.

C. Habitat

Brook trout inhabit cold, clear streams and lakes. It does best at water temperatures of 68° F (20° C) or less and is often found near cover such as rocks, logs, and undercut banks. Optimal habitat occurs in streams and lakes at elevations of 1500-1800 feet and above.

D. Local Occurrence

The brook trout occurs in streams and reservoirs in the Appalachian Mountain Province of North Carolina.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations and from the reservoir. It was also collected in seine samples at Stations T-3 and T-4.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Campostoma anomalum*, central stoneroller**

A. Identification

The central stoneroller is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a heavy-bodied, large minnow (maximum 11.3 inches TL) that has a blunt head and rounded snout that overhangs an inferior, U-shaped horizontal mouth with a cartilaginous lower lip. Body color is variable: brownish, olivaceous, or gray above grading to white on the belly. Sometimes the central stoneroller is very silvery. Irregular patches of black or brown spots often mark the sides. Fins are clear or faint brown-orange and short and rounded. Breeding males have an orange band in the dorsal fin and black bands in the dorsal, and often the anal, pelvic, and pectoral fins. Breeding tubercles are extensively developed over the head, upper body, and along some of the rays of the dorsal, caudal, and pectoral fins. The dorsal fin has 8 rays and the anal fin has 7 rays. The pectoral fin has 16-18 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The central stoneroller is widespread and abundant in many of the upland waters of the eastern United States, but it is mostly restricted to the Blue Ridge in the Atlantic Coastal drainages.

C. Habitat

Central stoneroller habitat includes small streams to large rivers with gravel, cobble, or exposed bedrock substrates. It is occasionally found in small numbers in upland impoundments. The central stoneroller prefers clear streams, as they are intolerant of heavy siltation.

D. Local Occurrence

The central stoneroller is abundant in the Appalachian Mountain Province of western North Carolina and also occurs in a few streams of the Piedmont Plateau.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but not in the reservoir. It was collected in all seine samples except for Station T-4.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Cyprinus carpio*, common carp**

A. Identification

The common carp is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a stout, laterally compressed fish with a long dorsal fin and an arched back. The head is small, with a long snout, and small eyes. The mouth has two barbels at each end of the upper jaw. There is a stiff, serrated spine on the first ray of the dorsal and anal fins. Body color is olivaceous to slate gray above, grading to bronze or gold laterally with a yellowish white belly. Fin color is generally orange, golden or light olive. Males become darker during the breeding season. The dorsal fin has 15-23 rays and the anal fin has 4-6 rays. The pectoral fin has 14-17 rays and the pelvic fin has 8-9 rays.

B. Range

The common carp is a native of Eurasia that was introduced into North America in the 1800's. They are now widely established throughout North America north to southern Canada.

C. Habitat

Common carp habitat includes large streams, rivers, and reservoirs. It prefers soft-bottomed, weedy pools in streams, although it probably adapts to a wider variety of conditions than almost any native fish. The common carp is tolerant of all bottom types and is found in clear or turbid waters.

D. Local Occurrence

The common carp occurs in reservoirs and sluggish rivers in all three physiographic provinces of North Carolina.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at Station T-3 only. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Luxilus coccogenis*, warpaint shiner**

A. Identification

The warpaint shiner is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a large, deep bodied, active, and brightly colored shiner (maximum 4.7 inches TL). Adults and large young have pale basicaudal areas and red-orange at the anterior dorsal fin base, on the snout, and on the posterior margin of the preopercle. A black vertical bar is present on the dorsal fin and a dark humeral bar is present behind the operculum. Breeding males have large tubercles on the tip of the snout and in 2-3 rows along the lower jaw and red develops on the fins and body. Tubercles are also present on all fins, although not as common on the caudal fin. The dorsal fin has 8-9 rays and the anal fin has 8-10 rays. The pectoral fin has 15-17 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The warpaint shiner is found in the upper Tennessee River drainage. It also occurs in the upper Savannah and Santee River drainages of Georgia and the Carolinas, and in the upper New River system.

C. Habitat

Warpaint shiner habitat includes cool, clear streams with rocky substrates where it occurs in areas of moderate to swift currents. It is tolerant of water temperatures sufficiently cold to support trout populations.

D. Local Occurrence

The warpaint shiner occurs only in western North Carolina waters of the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but not in the reservoir. It was collected in the seine samples during February at Station T-3 and at Station T-1 in March .

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Nocomis micropogon*, river chub**

A. Identification

The river chub is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a robust, rather cylindrical fish (maximum 13 inches TL) with orange-red fins. The body color is dark olivaceous above to dusky yellowish on the belly. The large, horizontal and slightly subterminal mouth has a barbel at the tip of the maxilla. The small eyes are remote from the mouth and are situated near the dorsal border of the head. Breeding males develop swollen heads, with pinkish-purple coloration on the body, and nuptial tubercles that are restricted to the area from the eyes to the snout tip. The dorsal fin has 8 rays and the anal fin has 7 rays. The pectoral fin has 15-19 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The river chub is widespread in the Great Lakes basin (except Lake Superior), the upper and middle Ohio and Tennessee river drainages, the upper Cumberland River drainage, and the Atlantic Coast drainages from the Susquehanna River south through the James River. It is also native in the upper Savannah River drainage and is present in the Santee River drainage and portions of the Coosa River system of Mobile Basin (likely introduced).

C. Habitat

River chub habitat includes large creeks to small rivers with rapid current, cool waters, and rocky substrates.

D. Local Occurrence

The river chub occurs only in western North Carolina waters of the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations and in the reservoir. It was collected in all seine samples except for Station T-5.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

Notemigonus crysoleucas, golden shiner

A. Identification

The golden shiner is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. It is a deep bodied, flat-sided minnow with a vertical mouth and can get quite large (maximum 14.5 inches TL). The region between the pelvic fin base and the anus is naked and keeled. Body color on adults is silvery to golden. Juveniles have a broad, dark, lateral stripe, especially when taken from clear waters. Breeding males develop small, scattered tubercles on the head and opercles. All lateral scales have several tiny, marginal tubercles. Tiny tubercles occur on the rays of all fins, including both dorsal and ventral surfaces of the pectoral and pelvic fin rays. The dorsal fin has 8 rays and the anal fin has 12-15 rays. The pectoral fin has 15-18 rays and the pelvic fin has 8-10 rays.

B. Range

The golden shiner is widespread throughout the central and eastern United States and southern Canada, and has been widely introduced in the western United States. It is most abundant on the Coastal Plain.

C. Habitat

Golden shiner habitat includes quiet waters of natural lakes, swamps, oxbows, rivers, and large creeks. It is also quite tolerant of reservoir conditions.

D. Local Occurrence

The golden shiner occurs throughout North Carolina, but mainly in the Coastal Plain provinces.

This species was collected in the Tuckasee River system only from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

Cyprinella galacturus, whitetail shiner

A. Identification

The whitetail shiner is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a large, slab-sided shiner (maximum 6 inches TL) with small eyes, a terminal oblique mouth, and two conspicuous white patches at the base of the caudal fin. The two white patches may merge into one vertical patch. The body is silver and the fins are clear, except for a dusky black blotch on the last 2 or 3 membranes of the dorsal fin. The base of the anal fin is well pigmented. Dorsal, pectoral, and caudal fins are salmon-pink or red on breeding males while other fins are milky white. Males also develop breeding tubercles on the head, dorsum, fins, and body scales throughout the body (except on the breast). The dorsal fin has 8 rays and the anal fin has 8-10 rays. The pectoral fin has 14-17 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The whitetail shiner is common in all upland provinces of the Cumberland and Tennessee river drainages, and is also present in the headwaters of the Savannah and Santee river drainages of the Atlantic slope. Likely introduced in the Big Sandy and upper New system of the Ohio River drainage. Disjunct populations are widespread in the Ozark region of southern Missouri and northern Arkansas.

C. Habitat

Whitetail shiner habitat includes clear upland creeks and rivers with swift runs or flowing pools and it has some tolerance for upstream storage reservoirs. Preferred substrates include silt-free gravel, cobble, and boulders.

D. Local Occurrence

The whitetail shiner is restricted to the Tennessee drainages and the headwaters of the Savannah, Broad, and Catawba drainage basins of the Appalachian Mountain Province in western North Carolina.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but not in the reservoir. It was collected in the seine sample at Station T-1.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status

***Notropis leuciodus*, Tennessee shiner**

A. Identification

The tennessee shiner is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a slender bodied minnow with bright silver sides and a dark gray back (maximum 4.3 inches TL). The lateral-line canal and a rectangular black basicaudal spot are always visible. Breeding males develop bright red coloration on the head, anterior body, pectoral fins, and bases of the dorsal, pelvic, and caudal fins. Males also develop breeding tubercles on the head, most body scales, and on the pelvic, anal, and dorsal fins. The dorsal fin has 7-8 rays and the anal fin has 8-9 rays. The pectoral fin has 14-16 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The tennessee shiner occurs in the Tennessee and Cumberland river drainages, the Barren (Ohio) River system, and the upper Savannah River drainage. It has been introduced in the New River system.

C. Habitat

Tennessee shiner habitat includes pool areas to swift waters flowing over gravel to boulder and bedrock substrates in small creeks to large rivers. It is not tolerant of reservoirs.

D. Local Occurrence

The tennessee shiner occurs in the Tennessee, New, and Savannah drainages of western North Carolina in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but not in the reservoir. It was collected in all seine samples except for the Station T-5 sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Notropis photogenis*, silver shiner**

A. Identification

The silver shiner is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a slender, slab-sided minnow that is straw-colored on the dorsum and has bright silver sides that obscure the dark lateral stripe. The dorsal margin of the lateral stripe is bluntly saw-toothed on the anteriodorsal margin and the origin of the dorsal fin is directly above the origin of the pelvic fins. Bright breeding colors do not develop in this minnow. Small breeding tubercles cover the head, body scales, and fins. The dorsal fin has 8 rays and the anal fin has 10-11 rays. The pectoral fin has 15-18 rays and the pelvic fin has 9 rays.

B. Range

The silver shiner occurs in Lake Erie tributaries south through the Ohio, Cumberland, and Tennessee River drainages.

C. Habitat

Silver shiner habitat includes large creeks to small rivers with firm substrates. It is associated with clear waters and flowing pools with moderate to swift currents. This shiner appears to like deeper waters than other *Notropis* species; however, schools often feed near the surface of the water, occasionally jumping from the water in pursuit of flying insects.

D. Local Occurrence

The silver shiner occurs in the Tennessee and New river drainages in the Appalachian Mountain Province of western North Carolina.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations below the Dillsboro dam but not in the reservoir or any riverine stations above the dam. It was collected in all seine samples except for Station T-2.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Notropis spectrunculus*, mirror shiner**

A. Identification

The mirror shiner is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This elongate, cylindrical shiner is silver on the sides, gray on the back, and has a prominent triangular black basicaudal spot. The dorsal fin rays are outlined with melanophores and both the dorsal and anal fin margins are straight edged or rounded. The head is flat between the eyes. The lateral stripe is faint to absent. Breeding males have red and black pigment on the leading edge of the pectoral fin and the dorsal and caudal fins have a centrally located reddish area. Breeding males also have small tubercles on the head, pectoral fin, and dorsal fin. Tubercles are absent from other fins and body scales. The dorsal fin has 8-9 rays and the anal fin has 7-9 rays. The pectoral fin has 13-16 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The mirror shiner is restricted mostly to Blue Ridge habitats of the upper Tennessee River drainage from the Clinch and Powell river systems of Virginia south through the Hiwassee River system. There are several distinct Atlantic slope populations in the Savannah and Santee river drainages.

C. Habitat

Mirror shiner habitat includes mountain creeks and rivers where it occurs in rocky pools and runs.

D. Local Occurrence

The mirror shiner occurs in the mountain streams of western North Carolina in the Appalachian Mountain Province, including the Hiwassee, Little Tennessee, Savannah, Pigeon, French Broad, Broad, and Toe drainage basins.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations except T-5. It was not collected from the reservoir. It was collected in all seine samples except for Stations T-2, T-4 and T-5 .

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Notropis telescopus*, telescope shiner**

A. Identification

The telescope shiner is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a silver colored, slender shiner with a large eye and a terminal, oblique mouth. The anterior dorsolateral scales have both a marginal and submarginal concentration of dark pigment separated by a paler area, giving a double exposure effect. Concentrations of dark pigment between horizontal scale rows form two irregular horizontal lines on each side of, and converging behind, the dorsal fin. These lines are easier to see when looking down on the dorsum. The middorsal streak is continuous under the dorsal fin, but there is not a dark basicaudal spot. Males, females and juveniles have persistent snout and lower jaw tubercles and breeding males have small tubercles on the head, body, and fins. Bright breeding colors do not develop and fins are colorless. The dorsal fin has 8 rays and the anal fin has 9-11 rays. The pectoral fin has 14-16 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The telescope shiner occurs in the Tennessee and Cumberland river drainages, the Little, St. Francis, and White river systems of southern Missouri and northern Arkansas, and the upper New (Kanawha) system of North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia.

C. Habitat

Telescope shiner habitat includes rocky streams and small rivers where it typically occurs in swift currents adjacent to riffle areas.

D. Local Occurrence

The telescope shiner occurs in streams and reservoirs in the Appalachian Mountain Province of western North Carolina.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all stations except T-4 and the reservoir. It was collected in seine samples at Station T-1 and T-2.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Phenacobius crassilabrum*, fatlips minnow**

A. Identification

The fatlips minnow is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a slender, silvery minnow with a fleshy, sucker-like mouth. The snout projects well beyond the tip of the upper jaw and no barbel is present. There is no frenum so the upper jaw is completely separated from the snout. All dorsal fin rays are lined with dark pigment and the caudal spot is distinct to faint. Breeding males develop small tubercles on the head, body, and fins. The dorsal fin has 8-9 rays and the anal fin has 7 rays, and both fins are spineless. The pectoral fin has 14-16 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The fatlips minnow is restricted to the Blue Ridge and occurs only in the upper Tennessee River drainage from the South Fork Holston River through the Little Tennessee River.

C. Habitat

Fatlips minnow habitat includes riffle areas in small to medium rivers over gravel substrates, often in waters sufficiently cold to support trout.

D. Local Occurrence

The fatlips minnow occurs in the Little Tennessee, French Broad, and Toe drainage basins of western North Carolina in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but not in the reservoir. It was collected in all seine samples except for Station T-4.

E. Federal and State Status

The fatlips minnow is listed as a forest concern species by the U.S. Forest Service and as W2 species with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (Watch Category 2 includes species that are rare to uncommon in North Carolina, but are not necessarily considered to be declining or otherwise in trouble). The fatlips minnow is not listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

***Rhinichthys atratulus*, blacknose dace**

A. Identification

The blacknose dace is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This minnow has a frenum and a barbel at the tip of the maxilla. The snout is short. Body color is dark brown to gray on the back grading to silvery on the lower sides and belly, typically with scattered dark colored scales on the sides. Males develop an orange to rust colored streak along the sides. Pectoral fin tubercles of males consists of elevated pads distal to the branching of the second through fifth rays. Large conical tubercles occur on other fins, where they are concentrated toward the leading edge of the fin. Tubercles also occur on the opercles and body scales, with only a few tubercles on the head. The dorsal fin has 8-9 rays and the anal fin has 7 rays. The pectoral fin has 13-16 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The blacknose dace is common in the uplands of the Ohio, Cumberland, Tennessee, and upper Mississippi drainages. Also occurs in the upper Mobile Basin where it is rare.

C. Habitat

Blacknose dace habitat varies greatly among populations but it is commonly found in small creeks over gravel substrate. It often occurs near the headwaters of streams and is often found in springs.

D. Local Occurrence

The blacknose dace occurs in streams and some reservoirs in western North Carolina in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at riverine Stations T-3 and T-4 but not from any other riverine station or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Rhinichthys cataractae*, longnose dace**

A. Identification

The longnose dace is a member of the Family Cyprinidae (the minnows) in the Order Cypriniformes. This minnow has a frenum and a barbel at the tip of the maxilla. The snout is rather long and protrudes beyond the lower lip of the inferior mouth. Body color is reddish brown to dark olivaceous on the back and upper sides, and there scattered dark colored scales on the sides that may form faint stripes. The lateral stripe is usually absent posteriorly in adults, but is present in juveniles. Breeding males have red lips and red at the bases of the pectoral, pelvic, and anal fins. Males develop breeding tubercles on the head, body, and fins – except usually not on anal and pelvic fins. The dorsal fin has 8-9 rays and the anal fin has 7 rays. The pectoral fin has 13-15 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The longnose dace is wide ranging in the mountainous regions of North America, including the Rockies and the northwest coastal ranges as well as the eastern ranges. Present in the north central glaciated regions. In the southeast, mostly restricted to the Blue Ridge region.

C. Habitat

Longnose dace habitat includes swift, gravel riffle areas in cool to cold streams, which includes trout streams. It may also occur in cold lakes.

D. Local Occurrence

The longnose dace occurs in western North Carolina streams in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine Stations T-2, T-4 and T-5 but not at any other riverine station or from the reservoir. It was collected in a seine sample at Station T-5.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Catostomus commersoni*, white sucker**

A. Identification

The white sucker is a member of the Family Catostomidae (the suckers) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a slender sucker with a short dorsal fin and large, fleshy papillose lips. The mouth is small (extends backwards only as far as the nostrils), the snout is rounded, and the area between the eyes is flat. Body color is mottled olive or gray dorsally with scale rows faintly marked by horizontal streaks. The lower sides and belly are white. Dorsal and caudal fins are dusky, and the lower fins are often yellow. Males often develop a copper to red midlateral streak during spawning activity and large breeding tubercles on the rays of the anal and lower lobe of the caudal fin. Tiny tubercles also occur on both surfaces of the pelvic and pectoral fin rays of breeding males. Juveniles have four diffuse dark blotches (parr marks) along the sides. The dorsal fin has 10-13 rays and the anal fin has 6-8 rays. The pectoral fin has 16-19 rays and the pelvic fin has 9-11 rays.

B. Range

The white sucker is widespread throughout the uplands of eastern North America, throughout the Plains region, and into northern Canada.

C. Habitat

White sucker habitat is variable, with southeastern populations usually occurring in pool areas of tiny to moderate-sized streams (often intermittent) that have large amounts of submerged vegetation and gravel substrate. It is often associated with spring habitats and cool lakes. Breeding adults congregate over clean, gravelly shoals near the lower ends of pools where they current begins to quicken.

D. Local Occurrence

The white sucker occurs in streams and reservoirs in all three physiographic provinces of North Carolina, but is limited to only a few locations in the Coastal Plain.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at riverine Stations T-1, T-3 and T-5 and in the reservoir. It was collected in seine sample at Station T-1.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Ameiurus melas*, black bullhead**

A. Identification

The black bullhead is a member of the Family Ictaluridae (the North American freshwater catfishes) in the Order Siluriformes. This is a dark, robust, small-eyed catfish with a free adipose fin and an almost square or slightly notched caudal fin. The upper jaw projects slightly beyond the lower jaw. Gray or black chin barbels are present. The posterior serrae on the pectoral spine is small and not sharp or recurved. Dark fin membranes contrast sharply with paler fin rays. The caudal fin often has a pale vertical bar at its base. The dorsal region of the head, back, and sides of adults are solid brownish yellow to black, not mottled. The belly is yellow to white. Young individuals are solid black. The dorsal fin has 6 rays and the anal fin has 19-25 rays. The pectoral fin 9 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The black bullhead is widespread and abundant throughout much of central North America east of the Rocky Mountains and west of the Appalachians, and widely introduced elsewhere.

C. Habitat

Black bullhead habitat includes quiet waters over soft bottoms in farm ponds, lakes, reservoirs, small creeks, and large rivers away from strong currents. They are found in a variety of habitats but seem to prefer quiet, turbid water and a silty bottom with vegetation or other cover.

D. Local Occurrence

The black bullhead is limited to a few streams and reservoirs in North Carolina, mostly in waters of the Piedmont Plateau province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River only at riverine Station T-3 but not from any other riverine station or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Ameiurus nebulosus*, brown bullhead**

A. Identification

The brown bullhead is a member of the Family Ictaluridae (the North American freshwater catfishes) in the Order Siluriformes. This is a stout bodied, mottled, small-eyed bullhead with a free adipose fin and an emarginated caudal fin. The jaws are nearly equal in length. The chin barbels are darkly pigmented and the pectoral spine is moderately to strongly serrate on the posterior edges. Body color is dark brown or gray dorsally and the sides are usually mottled. The belly is yellow to white. All fins are uniformly dark gray, but the anal fin might be slightly mottled. Young brown bullheads are black. The dorsal fin has 6 rays and the anal fin has 18-24 rays. The pectoral fin has 9 rays and the pelvic fin has 8 rays.

B. Range

The brown bullhead is native to the eastern United States and southern Canada, west through the Mississippi River basin, and north to the southern portion of the Hudson Bay drainage.

C. Habitat

Brown bullhead habitat includes pool areas of streams; and ponds and lakes with moderate to large amounts of aquatic vegetation.

D. Local Occurrence

The brown bullhead is found throughout North Carolina in all three physiographic provinces.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River only at riverine Station T-3 but not from any other riverine station or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Moxostoma carinatum*, river redhorse**

A. Identification

The river redhorse is a member of the Family Catostomidae (the suckers) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a moderately heavy-bodied redhorse with a short dorsal fin, a large head, a large mouth that has heavy plicate lips, and a thick pharyngeal arch that has molarlike teeth. The rear margin of the lower lip forms a slight V-shaped angle. Body color is silver to bronze and the scales of the back and upper sides have a crescent-shaped dark spot at the base. The caudal fin base has a thin, black pencil line along the margin of the last scale row. The dorsal and caudal fins are bright red and the lower fins are orange to red. In adults, the dorsal lobe of the caudal fin is triangular and sharply pointed in contrast to the more rounded lower caudal lobe. Breeding males have large tubercles on the head and smaller tubercles on the anal and caudal fins. The dorsal fin has 12-15 rays and the anal fin has 7 rays. The pectoral fin has 16-17 rays and the pelvic fin has 18 rays.

B. Range

The river redhorse occurs in the Mississippi Basin above the Fall Line, in some Great Lakes tributaries, and the eastern Gulf Coast drainages east to the Escambia River. It is apparently disappearing from many Plains systems.

C. Habitat

River redhorse habitat includes clear, swift waters of medium to large rivers with gravel and cobble substrates. It rarely enters smaller streams except during the breeding season; however, it is sometimes found in reservoirs.

D. Local Occurrence

The river redhorse occurs in limited streams and reservoirs in North Carolina. It is reported from the Hiwassee, Little Tennessee, and French Broad drainage basins of the Appalachian Mountain Province and from one location in the Yadkin drainage basin of the Piedmont Plateau.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations located below the Dillsboro dam but not from any riverine station above the dam or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Moxostoma duquesnei*, black redhorse**

A. Identification

The black redhorse is a member of the Family Catostomidae (the suckers) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a slender, elongate redhorse with a short, slightly concave dorsal fin and a rather small, horizontal mouth with thin plicate lips. The halves of the lower lip meet to form a shallow V. The pharyngeal teeth are comb-like and compressed. The snout is rounded and swollen and the caudal peduncle is slender. Body color is gray to brown above, grading to silver on the sides, and the belly is white. The dorsal and caudal fins are usually slate colored, but they may be red in the clear waters of trout streams. The lower fins are orangish. Breeding males have small, inconspicuous tubercles on the head, the fins, and on most body scales. The dorsal fin has 11-15 rays and the anal fin has 7 rays. The pectoral fin has 15-19 rays and the pelvic fin has 18-20 rays.

B. Range

The black redhorse occurs in the Mississippi Basin uplands, the southern Great Lakes tributaries, and the Mobile Basin above the Fall Line.

C. Habitat

Black redhorse habitat includes clear, cool, larger creeks and small rivers with gravel and cobble substrates. It is intolerant of silty waters and is uncommon in big rivers and rarely occurs in reservoirs. When found with the golden redhorse, the black redhorse tends to predominate in short, rocky pools with current, whereas the golden redhorse prefers large pools and backwaters without noticeable current.

D. Local Occurrence

The black redhorse occurs in limited streams and reservoirs of western North Carolina in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations and in the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Moxostoma erythrurum*, Golden Redhorse**

A. Identification

The golden redhorse is a member of the Family Catostomidae (the suckers) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a moderately stout redhorse with a short, concave dorsal fin and a large, horizontal mouth that has many bladelike pharyngeal teeth. The rear margin of the lower lip forms a distinctly acute V-shaped angle. The caudal peduncle is short and heavy. Body color is olivaceous above, silvery brown on the sides, and the belly is white. The side and back scales do not have dark spots at the bases. The caudal fin is slate-colored and the paired fins are usually dusky, or they may have some reddish-orange pigment. Young-of-year have three diffuse, dusky saddle bands. Breeding males have a dark horizontal midlateral stripe, above which is a golden area and then another dark stripe. Males develop breeding tubercles on the head, body scales, and fins. The dorsal fin has 12-14 rays and the anal fin has 7 rays. The pectoral fin has 16-19 rays and the pelvic fin has 18 rays.

B. Range

The golden redhorse occurs in the Mississippi Basin (mostly above the Fall Line), the Mobile Basin, in Great Lakes tributaries, and some middle Atlantic Coastal drainages.

C. Habitat

Golden redhorse habitat includes larger creeks and small rivers with gravel and cobble substrates, where it often occurs with the black redhorse. It is more tolerant of larger rivers than the black redhorse, often occurring with the river, silver, and shorthead redhorses in larger rivers.

D. Local Occurrence

The golden redhorse occurs in limited streams and reservoirs of North Carolina. It is found in the Hiwassee, Little Tennessee, French Broad, and Toe drainage basins of the Appalachian Mountain Province and the Roanoke drainage basin of the Piedmont Plateau and Coastal Plain.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at riverine stations below the Dillsboro dam. It was not collected at any riverine station above the dam or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

Moxostoma macrolepidotum, shorthead redhorse

A. Identification

The shorthead redhorse is a member of the Family Catostomidae (the suckers) in the Order Cypriniformes. This is a slender redhorse with a slate colored dorsal fin that has a very concave margin and is bright red distally. The small mouth has lower lips that meet to form a straight line and a distinctive pea shaped thickening is located on the middle of the upper lip. Body color is olivaceous above, golden yellow on the sides, and the belly is white. The back and upper side scales have a crescent shaped dark spot at the base. The caudal fin is bright red and the upper and lower lobes are very asymmetrical (the upper lobe is more sharply pointed and longer than the lower lobe). Lower fins are yellowish to orange red. Males have breeding tubercles on the head, body, and fins. The dorsal fin has 11-14 rays and the anal fin has 7 rays. The pectoral fin has 16-18 rays and the pelvic fin has 18-20 rays.

B. Range

The shorthead redhorse is widely distributed through the entire Mississippi Basin mostly above the Fall Line, in the Great Lakes, the Hudson Bay, and the middle Atlantic Coastal drainages.

C. Habitat

Shorthead redhorse habitat includes large rivers over gravel to boulder substrates with swift water, and it occurs occasionally in reservoirs. The shorthead redhorse avoids small streams inhabited by the black and golden redhorses.

D. Local Occurrence

The shorthead redhorse occurs in streams and reservoirs in all three physiographic provinces of North Carolina, although its occurrence is quite limited.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River only at riverine Stations T-1 and T-2. It was not collected at any other riverine station or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Ambloplites rupestris*, rockbass**

A. Identification

The rockbass is a member of the Family Centrarchidae (the sunfishes) in the Order Perciformes. This is a deep-bodied sunfish that is fully scaled. The dorsal, caudal, and anal fins are usually mottled with brown and the anal fin of the male has a black marginal band. Horizontal rows of dark scale spots occur on the sides below the complete lateral line while less obvious horizontal spots may be present above the lateral line. Body color is olive to brassy green with uniform mottling that can change drastically with surroundings. There are obscure dark blotches present on the back in the predorsal region and the undersides are dusky white. The eye is often rimmed in red and the posterior edge of the operculum lacks a sharp spine. Pelvic fins are beneath the pectorals and have one spine and five soft rays. The caudal fin is symmetrical with 17 principal rays and the well-joined dorsal fins have 10-13 spines and 10-12 soft rays. The anal fin has 5-7 spines and 9-11 soft rays.

B. Range

The rockbass is widespread and abundant in the Mississippi River, the Great Lakes, and the southern Hudson Bay basins. It is also native from Connecticut through Delaware river drainages on the Atlantic Coast. The rockbass was introduced to the Atlantic slope, the New River, and the Ozarks.

C. Habitat

Rockbass habitat includes sheltered pool areas in creeks and rivers, from warmwater streams to trout streams; and they are occasionally encountered in reservoirs near rocky shores. Rockbass are often found in association with smallmouth bass and trout. They are usually found near cover such as boulders, root complexes, brush, or water willow (*Justicia*) beds. Rockbass appear to be intolerant of high turbidity and siltation. In northern areas of its range, it is found in small, cool, weedy lakes or littoral regions of larger lakes.

D. Local Occurrence

The rockbass occurs only in western North Carolina in the Appalachian Mountain Province and a few locations in the Piedmont Plateau.

This species was collected in the Tuckasee River at all riverine stations and from the reservoir. It was collected in both seine samples at Station T-3.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Lepomis auritus*, redbreast sunfish**

F. Identification

The redbreast sunfish is a member of the Family Centrarchidae (the sunfishes) in the Order Perciformes. It is a deep bodied, moderately compressed sunfish that is fully scaled. The redbreast sunfish has a long, narrow opercular flap that is uniformly dark to its margin. Its mouth is small with the upper jaw extending to just past the front of the eye. Palatine teeth are present in the roof of the mouth. There are no horizontal lines above the complete lateral line and the posterior edge of the operculum lacks a sharp spine. The back and upper sides are olive to blue-green and the lower sides are reddish orange to yellow. On breeding males, the breast, belly, and lower head are bright red. The soft dorsal fin and the upper lobe of the caudal fin have yellow margins, which are bright orange to scarlet on breeding males. There are usually bright blue, wavy lines on the cheeks and snout. Pectoral fins are short and rounded with 13-15 fin rays. The pelvic fins have one spine and five soft rays and the caudal fin is symmetrical with 17 principal rays. The well-joined dorsal fins have 10-11 spines and 10-12 soft rays. The anal fin has 3 spines and 9-10 rays (usually 10).

B. Range

This species was originally native to Atlantic Coast drainages east of the Appalachian Mountains and the eastern Gulf slope. Today populations occur in these areas as well as in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.

C. Habitat

The redbreast sunfish is mainly a stream-adapted species in its native range, but it has become well established in a variety of habitats from small creeks to rivers and reservoirs. In streams with rapids, they move to deeper stretches with gravel or rocky bottoms and frequently concentrate around boulders, limestone outcroppings, logs or aquatic vegetation.

D. Local Occurrence

The redbreast sunfish occurs throughout North Carolina, although it is less common in the Coastal Plain of eastern North Carolina.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations except Station T-2. It was also collected from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Lepomis cyanellus*, green sunfish**

A. Identification

The green sunfish is a member of the Family Centrarchidae (the sunfishes) in the Order Perciformes. This is a robust, elongate sunfish with a large mouth (the upper jaw usually extends to about the middle of the eye). The operculum is stiff to its margin and the short, round earflap is black with a white or yellow-orange margin. The back and sides are olive to bluish green (females may have several dark vertical bars on the sides), the belly is yellow-orange, and the sides of the head have iridescent blue or green mottlings. A black blotch is usually present near the posterior base of the dorsal and anal fins, and the pectoral fins are short and rounded. Fins of breeding males become dark and the margin of the caudal, anal, and pelvic fins are whitish orange. The well-joined dorsal fins have 9-11 spines and 10-12 soft rays. The anal fin has 3 spines and 8-11 soft rays.

B. Range

The green sunfish is native to central North America but has been widely introduced elsewhere. It also occurs in the Atlantic and Pacific slopes and the Southwest.

C. Habitat

Green sunfish is a highly adaptable species and can be found in almost every type of aquatic habitat (from small intermittent streams to ponds, lakes, and occasionally the margins of larger streams). It is a relatively sedentary fish with a very small home range. It is tolerant of a wide range of ecological conditions, particularly to extremes of turbidity, dissolved oxygen, temperature, and flow.

D. Local Occurrence

The green sunfish mainly occurs in streams and reservoirs of the Piedmont Plateau of North Carolina. However, it also occurs in several drainage basins in the Appalachian Mountain Province and the Coastal Plain.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River only at riverine Station T-3 but not from any other riverine station or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Lepomis macrochirus*, bluegill**

A. Identification

The bluegill is a member of the Family Centrarchidae (the sunfishes) in the Order Perciformes. This is a deep bodied, slab-sided sunfish that is fully scaled. The upper jaw of the small, oblique mouth does not extend past the front of the eye. Pectoral fins are long and pointed with 13-14 fin rays. The opercular flap is entirely black and it is long and flexible in adults, but shorter in juveniles. The sides are dark bluish-green with about 8-10 sets of double darker vertical bars that may be chain-like in appearance. The belly is a deep orange to rust color or white. The chin and lower part of the operculum are blue. In breeding males, all colors are more intense and fins become densely pigmented with the pelvic and anal fins turning almost black. A dark spot is present at the posterior base of the soft dorsal fin in adults. The complete lateral line is arched anteriorly. The well-joined dorsal fins have 9-11 spines and 10-12 soft rays. The anal fin has 3 spines and 10-12 soft rays.

B. Range

The bluegill occurs throughout the United States and in many countries in the world. Originally it was only native to eastern and central North America from the Great Lakes area south to northern Mexico, but not in the Atlantic Coastal drainages from Virginia northward.

C. Habitat

Bluegill habitat includes clear, quiet, warm waters having at least some aquatic vegetation and other cover, and it is most frequently found in the shallow, shady areas along lake shorelines. Bluegill can live in most waters, except swift-flowing cold trout streams, so it is often found in slow-flowing streams and rivers. It also occurs in coastal estuaries in the less brackish water. The bluegill may sometimes be found in turbid water, but it is intolerant of continuous high turbidity and siltation. The bluegill is often found with largemouth bass.

D. Local Occurrence

The bluegill is found in all physiographic provinces and drainage basins of North Carolina.

This species was collected in the Tuckasee River at riverine Stations T-1 and T-2 but from any other riverine station or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Micropterus dolomieu*, smallmouth bass**

A. Identification

The smallmouth bass is a member of the Family Centrarchidae (the sunfishes) in the Order Perciformes. This is an elongate bodied, robust sunfish that is fully scaled. It has a moderately large mouth, but the upper jaw usually does not extend past the rear margin of the eye. The sides of the body are uniformly dusky (olive-brown to bronze), without lateral bands, but it may have several separate vertical bars. The lower sides (below the complete lateral line) sometimes have dark spots irregularly arranged but not forming horizontal rows. The cheek has 3-5 conspicuous dark bars radiating back from a commonly reddish eye. The belly is white and often may have a dusky pigment, as do the fins. Pectoral fins have 16-18 rays. The spinous dorsal fin (9-11 spines) is low and broadly joined to the soft dorsal fin (13-15 rays) with a shallow notch between them. The anal fin has 3 spines and 10-11 soft rays (usually 11).

B. Range

The smallmouth bass was native to interior eastern North America west of the Appalachians, but has been widely introduced elsewhere.

C. Habitat

Smallmouth bass habitat includes clear upland creeks, rivers, and lakes near submerged logs, stumps, or rock outcrops. They seem to prefer rocky bottoms and flowing water in streams. They are most often found in reservoirs at steep rocky slopes along submerged river and creek channels. Smallmouth bass are more intolerant to habitat alteration than any other black basses, and they are especially intolerant of high turbidity and siltation.

D. Local Occurrence

The smallmouth bass occurs in the Appalachian Mountain Province and a few areas in the western Piedmont Plateau of North Carolina.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations and in the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Micropterus punctulatus*, spotted bass**

A. Identification

The spotted bass is a member of the Family Centrarchidae (the sunfishes) in the order Perciformes. This is a large, slender, elongate bass with a large mouth (the upper jaw reaches to near the center of the eye) and a patch of teeth on the base of the tongue. The spinous dorsal fin is broadly joined to the soft dorsal fin and there is a shallow notch between them. Body color above the complete lateral line is olive-green with darker mottlings; the midside has a broad, longitudinal dark band of more or less confluent blotches; the lower sides are white with regular rows of dark brown or black spots; and the undersides are white. Three dusky bars are generally present on the cheeks and opercles, and the eyes are usually reddish. The dorsal fin has 9-11 spines and 11-13 soft rays while the pectoral fins have 14-17 rays. The anal fin has 3 spines and 9-11 soft rays.

B. Range

The spotted bass is native to the Gulf Coastal drainages from San Antonio Bay, Texas east to, but not likely including, the Apalachicola drainage.

C. Habitat

Spotted bass habitat includes sluggish portions of streams of all dimensions and also rocky areas of lakes and reservoirs. They are most abundant in streams having clear water, permanent flow, and gravel bottoms where they are usually found in deep pools. These fish tend to school more than any other member of the black bass family and are often seen chasing shad in open water in lakes.

D. Local Occurrence

The spotted bass occurs in a few streams and reservoirs of North Carolina (mainly in the Appalachian Mountain Province), but is not common in the rest of the state.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River only at riverine Station T-3 but not at any other riverine station or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Micropterus salmoides*, largemouth bass**

A. Identification

The largemouth bass is a member of the Family Centrarchidae (the sunfishes) in the Order Perciformes. This is a large, slender, elongate bass with a very large mouth (in adults the upper jaw extends far behind the rear margin of the eye). There are no teeth present on the tongue. The midside of the body is olive to green with a broad, dark longitudinal band. The lower sides (below the complete lateral line) are white with irregularly arranged dark spots that do not form continuous horizontal rows. The undersides are white, and the eye is brown. The spinous fins (9-11 spines) and the soft dorsal fins (12-14 rays) are narrowly joined with a deep notch almost completely separating them. Pectoral fins have 14-15 rays and the anal fin has 3 spines and 10-12 soft rays.

B. Range

The largemouth bass was native from the Mississippi Basin and the Great Lakes south to the southern Atlantic slope and Gulf slope through northern Mexico, but has been widely introduced throughout the world.

C. Habitat

Largemouth bass habitat includes clear, quiet, warmer waters in rivers, lakes, reservoirs and ponds, and is often found around aquatic vegetation. They also like other cover such as fallen trees, brush, and stumps. Largemouth bass are more tolerant of both turbidity and salinity than other member of the genus *Micropterus*.

D. Local Occurrence

The largemouth bass occurs throughout North Carolina. However it is uncommon in the higher-gradient streams of the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River only at riverine Stations T-3 and T-5 but not from any other riverine station or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Etheostoma blennioides*, greenside darter**

A. Identification

The greenside darter is a member of the Family Percidae (the perches) in the Order Perciformes and is the largest species in the genus *Etheostoma* (maximum TL of 6.5 inches). This is a moderately slender darter with a blunt snout that overhangs an inferior mouth. A frenum (a fleshy bridge that holds the front of the upper jaw bone to the snout) is present, but is often not evident because it is deep within the groove between the upper lip and snout. Body color is yellow-green with 6-7 dark green to brown saddles. The 6-7 lateral U- or W-shaped blotches are dark green. The upper sides have brownish red spots and small blotches. Both of the dorsal fins are green with basal red bands and the other fins are green. The belly is yellowish white to dusky. Gill membranes are broadly connected and the greenside darter has a complete lateral line. The dorsal fin has 12-14 spines and 12-14 soft rays. The anal fin has 2 spines and 7-9 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 14-16 rays and the caudal fin has 16-18 principal rays.

B. Range

The greenside darter is widespread and often abundant in upland streams from the Tennessee drainage north through the Ohio drainage and in southern tributaries to the eastern Great Lakes. It is absent from the Mississippi River Embayment, but widespread west of the Mississippi River from southern tributaries to the Missouri River south through the Ouachita River system.

C. Habitat

Greenside darter habitat includes swift riffle areas with boulder or coarse rubble substrates in small to moderate rivers with low turbidity. During cooler months, they often stay in deep pool areas. Juveniles inhabit shallow pool areas adjacent to riffles. Adults are often associated with attached aquatic vegetation.

D. Local Occurrence

The greenside darter is limited to western North Carolina streams in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but not in the reservoir. It was collected in the seine sample at Station T-5 and from both seine samples at Station T-3.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Etheostoma chlorbranchium*, greenfin darter**

A. Identification

The greenfin darter is a member of the Family Percidae (the perches) in the Order Perciformes. It is a robust, rather large darter in the subgenus *Nothonotus* (maximum TL of 4 inches). The snout is short and rounded, the lips are heavy, and the frenum (a fleshy bridge that holds the front of the upper jaw bone to the snout) is wide. Sexual dimorphism in pigmentation is strongly developed in this darter. The male is green with a dark green to blue-green breast, 10-12 green-black vertical bars on the sides, and 9-11 dark dorsal saddles. On the side are 12-15 dark horizontal stripes, most distinct posteriorly, and scattered red or red-brown spots. All median fins have black margins and brilliant green bands medially, except the first dorsal has clear or cream-colored submarginal bands. Pectoral fins are pink and pelvic fins are green. In females, the pigments are more subdued and the median fins have gray or brown bands. Both sexes have an anterior black blotch in the first dorsal fin. The suborbital bar is diffuse in the male and more distinct in the female. Gill membranes are separate to slightly connected. The dorsal fin has 11-12 spines and 12-13 soft rays. The anal fin has 2 spines and 8-9 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 13-15 rays and the caudal fin has 17 principal rays.

B. Range

The greenfin darter occurs in the extreme upper Tennessee River system in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia, from the Watauga River south to the Hiwassee River.

C. Habitat

The greenfin darter inhabits clear, fast riffles of cool to cold high-elevation creeks and rivers over substrates of gravel, cobble, boulder, and bedrock.

D. Local Occurrence

The greenfin darter is limited to western North Carolina streams in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but not in the reservoir. It was collected in the seine sample at Station T-4 and from both seine samples at Station T-3.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Etheostoma vulneratum*, wounded darter**

A. Identification

The wounded darter is a member of the Family Percidae (the perches) in the Order Perciformes and of the *Etheostoma maculatum* species group of the subgenus *Nothonotus*. Body color is gray to dark olive with bright red lateral spotting and the breast is green. Juveniles (and occasionally adults) have about eight dark saddles and ten dark midlateral blotches that may extend vertically to be continuous with the dorsal saddles. Sides have dark horizontal lines between the scale rows. The caudal fin base has a vertical row of four dark spots, two of these are marginal and two are located near the midline. The soft dorsal, anal, and caudal fins have narrow dark margins and vague pale submarginal bands. The spinous dorsal fin is dusky with pigment concentrated to form a dark blotch at the anterior base. The caudal fin typically has a dark center bordered above and below by a broad red area, but the entire basal portion of the fin may be red. Paired fins are gray and sometimes there is a dark marginal band on the upper portion of the pectoral fins. The lateral line is complete, a frenum is present, and the gill membranes are narrowly joined. The dorsal fin has 12-13 spines and 12-13 soft rays. The anal fin has 2 spines and 7-9 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 13-14 rays and the caudal fin has 17 principal rays.

B. Range

The wounded darter is confined to the upper Tennessee River downstream through Whites Creek and the Little Tennessee River.

C. Habitat

Wounded darter habitat includes moderate to large rivers in areas of gentle to moderate current. They seem to prefer boulder or coarse cobble substrates; and overhanging ledges or rocks piled on top of each other are necessary to provide optimum nesting and resting areas.

D. Local Occurrence

The wounded darter occurs in the Little Tennessee River drainage in North Carolina (abundant above Fontana Reservoir) in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but not from the reservoir. It was collected in all seine samples except for Stations T-4 and T-5.

E. Federal and State Status

The wounded darter is listed as a species of concern by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and as a sensitive species by the U.S. Forest Service. The wounded darter is not listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

***Etheostoma zonale*, banded darter**

A. Identification

The banded darter is a member of the Family Percidae (the perches) in the Order Perciformes and of the subgenus *Etheostoma*. Body color is gray to yellowish, with 6 dark green-brown dorsal saddles, about 10 green vertical bars on the sides, a suborbital bar, and 4 dark basicaudal spots. Dark markings are often present on the lower surface of the head. The spinous dorsal fin of females has a dark basal band and is gray elsewhere; the other fins have dark marks that may align to form banding patterns. Males (sometimes females) have bright green bars on the sides. The males also have a dark red basal band on both dorsal fins. Breeding males are brilliantly colored with bright green vertical bars encircling the body and dark green fins. The lateral line is complete, a frenum is present, and the gill membranes are broadly joined. The dorsal fin has 11 spines and 11-13 soft rays. The anal fin has 2 spines and 7-9 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 13-15 rays and the caudal fin has 16-17 principal rays.

B. Range

The banded darter is widespread but occurs only above the Fall Line throughout the Ohio, Cumberland, Tennessee, and much of the Mississippi river drainages. Introduced populations occur in the Susquehanna and upper Savannah rivers.

C. Habitat

Banded darter habitat includes medium sized streams and rivers in riffle areas with gravel and cobble substrates and in pools having some current. It is normally associated with attached vegetation, particularly *Podostemum*.

D. Local Occurrence

The banded darter is limited to western North Carolina streams in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations except Station T-5. It was not collected in the reservoir. It was collected in all seine samples except for Stations T-4 and T-5.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Perca flavescens*, yellow perch**

A. Identification

The yellow perch is a member of the Family Percidae (the perches) in the Order Perciformes. Body color is yellow on the sides while the back is brownish, bronze, or olivaceous. There are 6-9 dorsal saddles that extend well down the sides and narrow to a point on the belly. A prominent blotch is usually present in the posterior membranes of the spinous dorsal fin. The caudal fin and the remainder of the dorsal fin are dusky. The pectoral, pelvic, and anal fins are pale yellow to orange. The lateral line is complete, a frenum is absent, and the gill membranes are separate. An opercular spine is present and the posterior margin of the preopercle is strongly serrate. Teeth are present on the vomer and palatines (bones in the roof of the mouth). The dorsal fin has 13-15 spines in anterior portion, and 1-2 spines and 12-15 soft rays in the posterior portion. The anal fin has 2 spines and 6-8 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 15 rays and the caudal fin has 17 principal rays.

B. Range

The yellow perch is native to the northern states east of the Rocky Mountains and the Atlantic Coastal drainages south to South Carolina, but it has been widely introduced elsewhere.

C. Habitat

Yellow perch habitat includes quiet waters in streams and lakes, but it also enters brackish waters along the Atlantic seaboard. It is often associated with rooted aquatic vegetation.

D. Local Occurrence

The yellow perch occurs in all three physiographic provinces in North Carolina but is most abundant in the Coastal Plain. In western North Carolina, the yellow perch occurs in the Hiwassee and Pigeon drainages.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River only at riverine Station T-3. It was not collected in the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Percina aurantiaca*, tangerine darter**

A. Identification

The tangerine darter is a member of the Family Percidae (the perches) in the Order Perciformes and the subgenus *Hypohomus* and is one of the largest darters (TL of 6.75 inches). Body color is bright yellow to orange on the sides with a row of small discrete dark spots above the wide black lateral band of 8-10 fused blotches. The top of the head is dark while the lower half is yellow to orange. The belly of the female is yellow to yellow-orange, and it is bright orange on the male. The first dorsal fin of the male is black basally, orange submarginally, and with a black marginal band. The first dorsal fin on the female is clear except for a black marginal band. Dusky ventral fins become blackened in breeding males and they have iridescent blue highlights. The lateral line is complete, the frenum is well developed, and the gill membranes are separate. The dorsal fin has 14-16 spines and 13-15 soft rays. The anal fin has 2 spines and 10-11 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 14-15 rays and the caudal fin has 17 principal rays.

B. Range

The tangerine darter is confined to the upper Tennessee River system in Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

C. Habitat

Tangerine darter habitat includes rivers of moderate to steep gradient. Adult males live in swift, deep, rocky riffles with boulders, large cobble, and bedrock substrates. Adult females and juveniles live in deep pools with silty sand substrates below riffles. Males are likely to spend the winter in these deeper pools.

D. Local Occurrence

The tangerine darter occurs in western North Carolina in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River from all riverine stations located below the Dillsboro dam but not from any riverine station above the dam or from the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

The tangerine darter is listed as a forest concern species by the U.S. Forest Service and W2 status with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. The tangerine darter is not listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

***Percina evides*, gilt darter**

A. Identification

The gilt darter is a member of the Family Percidae (the perches) in the Order Perciformes and the subgenus *Ericosma*. It is a colorful species reaching 3 inches TL. The gilt darter is olive dorsally with 7-9 dark saddles. On the side is a series of 8-9 blue-green blotches, each directly below a dorsal saddle and often connected with the saddle to form a wide bar crossing over the dorsum. The belly is yellow to red-orange. On the basicaudal are 2 round white or yellow spots. A distinct suborbital bar is present. The first dorsal fin is often orange-black or amber basally and clear distally with an orange-yellow submarginal band. The second dorsal and caudal fins are vaguely spotted to distinctly banded. Other fins are clear to dusky. The breeding male is brilliantly colored, darkened overall, and has 5-8 wide blue-green or black-blue bars extending over the dorsum, the belly is bright orange-red or copper, the dorsal fins are orange-amber with a black base, and the anal and pelvic fins are blue-black. Breeding tubercles are well developed on the males and are sometimes present on the females. The lateral line is complete, a frenum is present, and the gill membranes are barely connected or separate. The dorsal fin has 11-13 spines and 11-13 soft rays. The anal fin has 2 spines and 7-9 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 13-15 rays and the caudal fin has 17 principal rays.

B. Range

The gilt darter is widespread in the upland portions of the Mississippi Basin from New York to Minnesota south to the White River system of Arkansas and the Tennessee River.

C. Habitat

Gilt darter habitat includes riffles in small to moderate-sized rivers. Larger individuals live in larger and faster riffles, often over cobble. Smaller individuals live in smaller gravel riffles. It has a strong preference for clear streams; so it is most common in better quality rivers.

D. Local Occurrence

The gilt darter occurs in western North Carolina streams in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but was not collected in the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Percina squamata*, olive darter**

A. Identification

The olive darter is a member of the Family Percidae (the perches) in the Order Perciformes and the subgenus *Swainia*. This darter has a long head and relatively pointed snout and is rather large (5.2 inches TL). The body is olive-brown with dark brown vermiculations on the upper side and dorsum. There are 13-15 small saddles on the dorsum (these disappear with age) and on the side there is a midlateral row of 10-12 dark oblong and often confluent blotches followed by a black round basicaudal spot. The belly is white or yellow. The first dorsal fin has a dusky green base, an orange submarginal band, and a dusky margin. The second dorsal, pectoral, and caudal fins are banded with light brown. Other fins are clear. A bold preorbital bar extends around the snout nearly joining the bar from the other side. Breeding males are overall much darker than other individuals.

The lateral line is complete, a frenum is present, and the gill membranes are moderately joined. The dorsal fin has 13-14 spines and 12-13 soft rays. The anal fin has 2 spines and 7-9 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 12-15 rays and the caudal fin has 17 principal rays.

B. Range

The olive darter is restricted to upland rivers primarily in the Blue Ridge and Cumberland Plateau portions of the upper Tennessee and Cumberland river drainages. Populations occur in Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, and North Carolina.

C. Habitat

Olive darter habitat includes deep pools and rocky channels in large streams and rivers with rocky substrates. It is commonly found in strong chutes with cobble and boulders in high gradient streams, or in the deeper downstream portions of gravel riffles in streams of moderate gradient.

D. Local Occurrence

The olive darter occurs in western North Carolina streams in the Appalachian Mountain Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River only at riverine Stations T-1 and T-3 but was not collected from any other riverine station or in the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

The olive darter is listed as a species of concern by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The U.S. Forest Service lists it as a sensitive species.

***Stizostedion vitreum*, walleye**

A. Identification

The walleye is a member of the Family Percidae (the perches) in the Order Perciformes. This is a slender, streamlined fish with a large mouth (upper jaw extends well behind the middle of the eye) and sharp teeth. Body color is extremely variable, ranging from bluish gray to brown to bright yellow. Pigment pattern is also variable, usually rather uniform, but it may have lateral and dorsal blotching. The first dorsal fin is dusky with a large, black basal posterior blotch. The second dorsal and caudal fins have narrow brown bands. The pectoral fin has a black spot at the base. The top of the anal fin, the lower lobe of the caudal fin, and the belly are white. The lateral line is complete, a frenum is absent, and the gill membranes are separate. The posterior margin of the preopercle is strongly serrate and adults get rather large (12 inches TL or much more). The dorsal fin has 12-16 spines and 18-21 soft rays. The anal fin has 2 spines and 11-14 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 13-16 rays and the caudal fin has 17 principal rays.

B. Range

The walleye has been widely introduced and hence their native range is uncertain. They occur throughout the Great Lakes and Hudson Bay drainages into the Arctic drainage in the Mackenzie River, and throughout the Mississippi and Missouri river basins. Populations also occur in the Atlantic slope from Pennsylvania to North Carolina and the Gulf Coast.

C. Habitat

Walleye are abundant in cool, sandy-bottom lakes, large rivers, and in clearer reservoirs. They are intolerant of turbidity, silt, and high temperatures and often occur together in loose schools. The walleye is sensitive to strong light and avoids it by seeking deeper water and sheltered areas during the day and moving inshore to shoal areas to feed at dusk.

D. Local Occurrence

The walleye occurs mainly in reservoirs and a few streams of the Appalachian Mountain Province of western North Carolina.

This species was found in the Tuckasegee River at Station T-1 only. It was not collected from any other riverine station or in the reservoir. It was not collected in any seine sample.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

***Cottus bairdi*, mottled sculpin**

A. Identification

The mottled sculpin is a member of the Family Cottidae (the sculpins) in the Order Scorpaeniformes. This fish is easily recognized by its large flattened head, expanded pectoral fins, and its heavy unscaled body. The body tapers abruptly from the large, broad head to a narrow caudal peduncle. The eyes are in a dorsal position. The dorsal fin is divided into two distinct parts. The spinous dorsal fin is red at the margin and black at the base. Body pigmentation is highly variable, indistinct dorsal saddles are usually as wide as or wider than the interspaces. The ground color of the body varies with the environment and can range from a coppery brown to a slate gray, and approaches black in breeding males. The dorsal fin has 7-8 spines and 16-18 soft rays. The anal fin has 12-14 soft rays. The pectoral fin has 14-16 rays and the caudal fin has 10-11 principal rays.

B. Range

The mottled sculpin is widespread in the eastern half of North America from Arctic Canada south. This range includes the Great Lakes area, the Ozarks, much of the Mississippi Basin, many Atlantic Slope drainages, and in the Mobile Bay drainage of the Gulf slope. It is also found in western North America on both sides of the Continental Divide.

C. Habitat

Mottled sculpin occur in several habitat types, including quiet springs and small creeks to high gradient mountain rivers. They have adapted to some cool tailwater habitats below reservoirs. Mottled sculpin are often found in the faster current areas of streams over cobble or boulder substrates.

D. Local Occurrence

The mottled sculpin occurs in western North Carolina streams of the Appalachian Mountain Province and a few streams in the Roanoke basin of the Piedmont Province.

This species was collected in the Tuckasegee River at all riverine stations but was not collected in the reservoir. It was collected in all seine samples except for Stations T-2 and T-3 for the March sample. It was however collected in the February seine sample at T-3.

E. Federal and State Status

No federal or state status.

LITERATURE CITED

Menhinick, Edward F. 1991. The Freshwater Fishes of North Carolina. North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Raleigh, NC. 227 p.

Figure 1. Map of the Dillsboro project fish sampling stations on the Tuckasegee River.