



## BLUEGILL SUNFISH

*Lepomis macrochirus*

### **Description:**

- ◆ large black spot on rear of dorsal fin
- ◆ 5 to 9 dark vertical bars on deep, compressed body
- ◆ long pointed pectoral fins
- ◆ black spot on rear edge of gill cover
- ◆ iridescent blue color on lower jaw and gill
- ◆ color ranges from olive black back with yellow belly to blue green back with white belly

### **Size:**

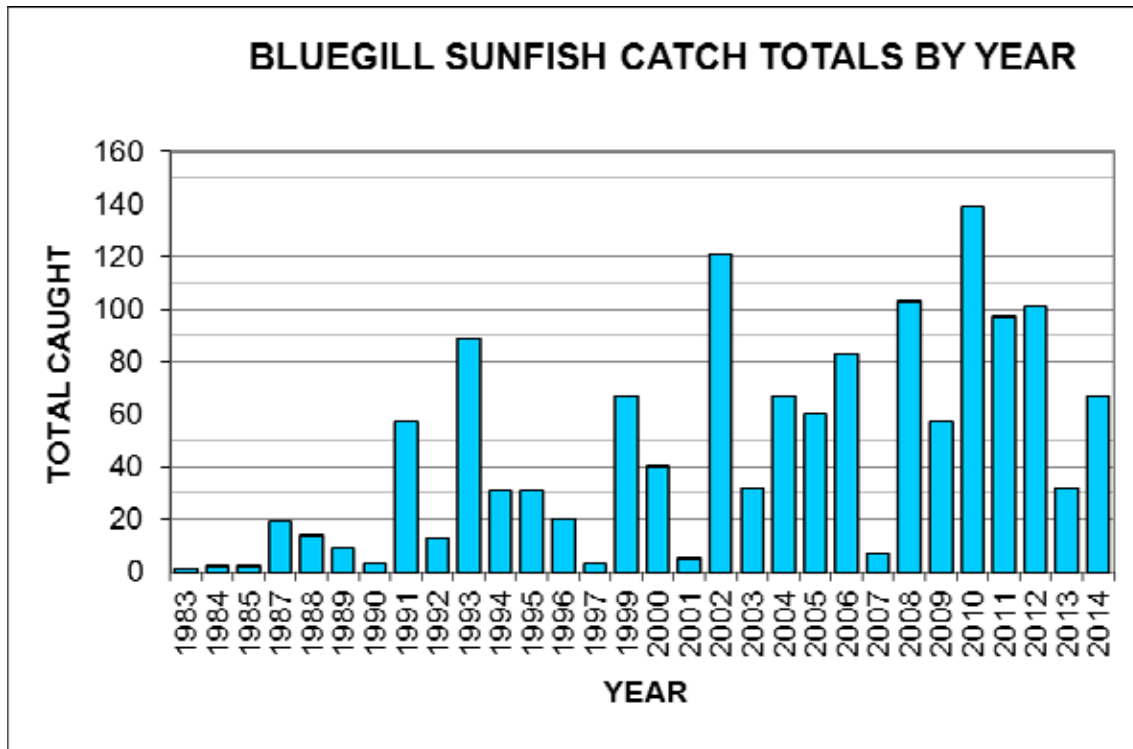
- ◆ up to 16.25 inches

### **Range:**

- ◆ Native to St. Lawrence – Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins from Quebec and New York to Minnesota and south to Gulf of Mexico; Atlantic and Gulf Slope drainages from Virginia to Rio Grande, Texas and New Mexico; also in north Mexico; introduced over much of the U.S.

**Facts:**

- ◆ prefer quiet, warm waters with a lot of vegetation to hide in
- ◆ young fish frequent shallow, weedy waters near the shore
- ◆ adults prefer deeper water during the day and shallow water at night
- ◆ feed mostly on aquatic and terrestrial insects, insect larvae and crustaceans, but will also eat vegetation, small fish, snails and mollusks
- ◆ feed all day long



\*bluegill sunfish were only caught during the years shown

NJ Department of Environmental Protection  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Bureau of Marine Fisheries  
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