



PUMPKINSEED SUNFISH

Lepomis gibbosus

Description:

- ◇ bright red/orange spot with light edge on black ear flap
- ◇ deep, laterally compressed body
- ◇ brassy yellow to olive sides with abundant gold and copper flecks
- ◇ wavy blue lines on cheek and opercle of adult
- ◇ dark, chain-like vertical bands on sides of young

Size:

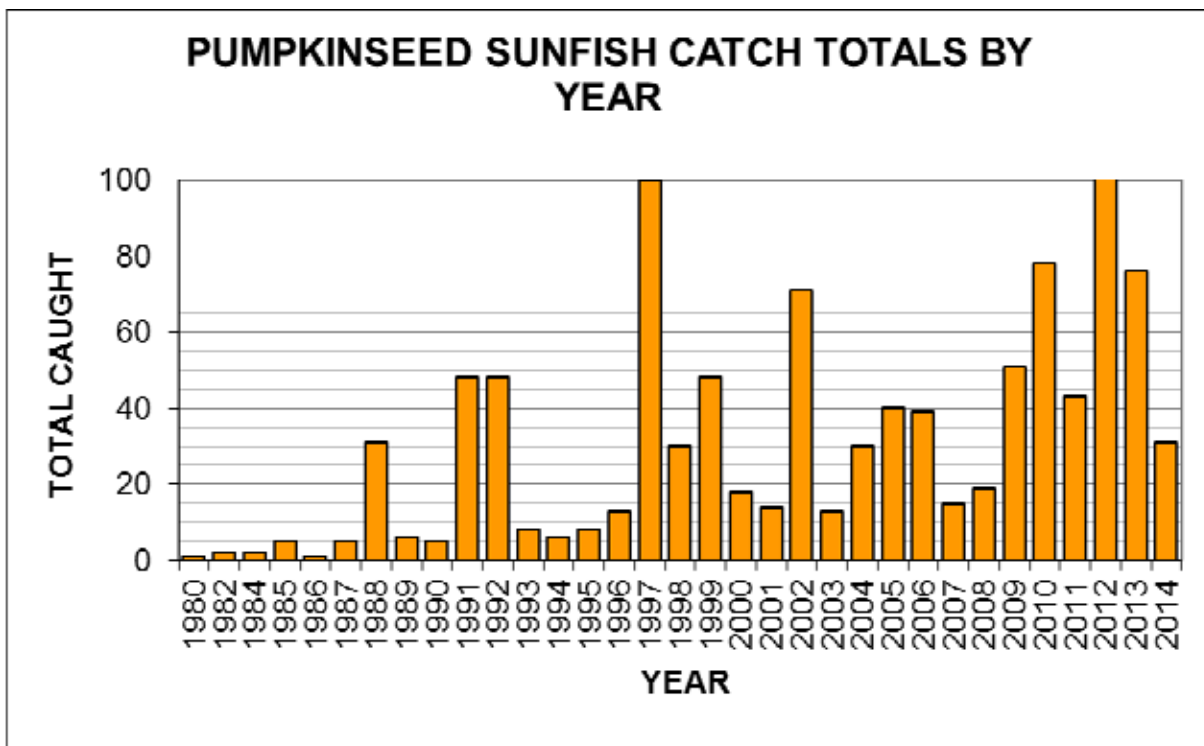
- ◇ up to 16 inches; average around 7 inches

Range:

- ◇ Native to Atlantic Slope drainages from New Brunswick to Edisto River, South Carolina; Great Lakes, Hudson Bay and upper Mississippi River basins from Quebec and New York west to southeastern Manitoba and North Dakota and south to northern Kentucky and Missouri; introduced over much of southern Canada and U.S., including some Pacific drainages

Facts:

- ◇ prefer well vegetated lakes, ponds and quiet pools of creeks and small rivers
- ◇ spawning occurs late spring to late summer
- ◇ males build and protect the nest
- ◇ females, between 2 and 5 years, produce 4000 to 7000 eggs in one season
- ◇ males breed several times (about every 11 days) throughout the season
- ◇ average lifespan is 5 to 6 years
- ◇ consume insects, insect larvae, mollusks, snails, crustaceans, small fish and leeches
- ◇ effective tool for controlling mosquito populations



*pumpkinseed 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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