

REDBREAST SUNFISH

Lepomis auritus

Description:

- ◇ long, narrow, black ear flap
- ◇ wavy blue lines on cheek and opercle
- ◇ dark olive back
- ◇ sides are greenish yellow brown with yellow flecks
- ◇ red orange spots form rows on upper side
- ◇ randomly scattered orange spots on lower sides
- ◇ orange belly
- ◇ short rounded pectoral fins
- ◇ large mouth; upper jaw extends under eye pupil

Size:

- ◇ up to 9.5 inches

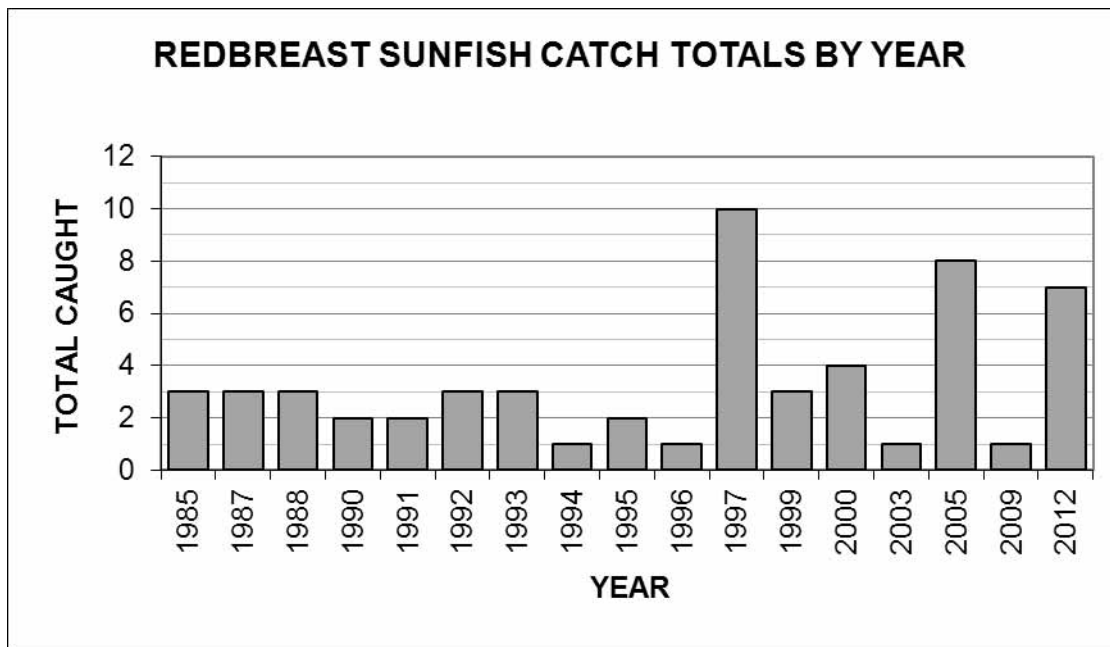
Range:

- ◇ native to Atlantic and Gulf Slopes, from New Brunswick to central Florida and west to Apalachicola and Choctawhatchee drainages, Georgia and Florida; introduced into Gulf drainages as far west as Rio Grande and in Mississippi River basins as far north as Kentucky and Arkansas

Facts:

- ◇ prefer ponds, lakes, streams and smaller, slow moving rivers with sandy bottoms
- ◇ feed on insects, snails, crayfish and small fish
- ◇ one of seven Lepomis species that do not produce sounds during courtship

- ◇ average lifespan is up to 7 years
- ◇ spawn May to August
- ◇ females lay 1000 to 10,000 eggs per season
- ◇ males build the nest and guard the eggs



*redbreast 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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