



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

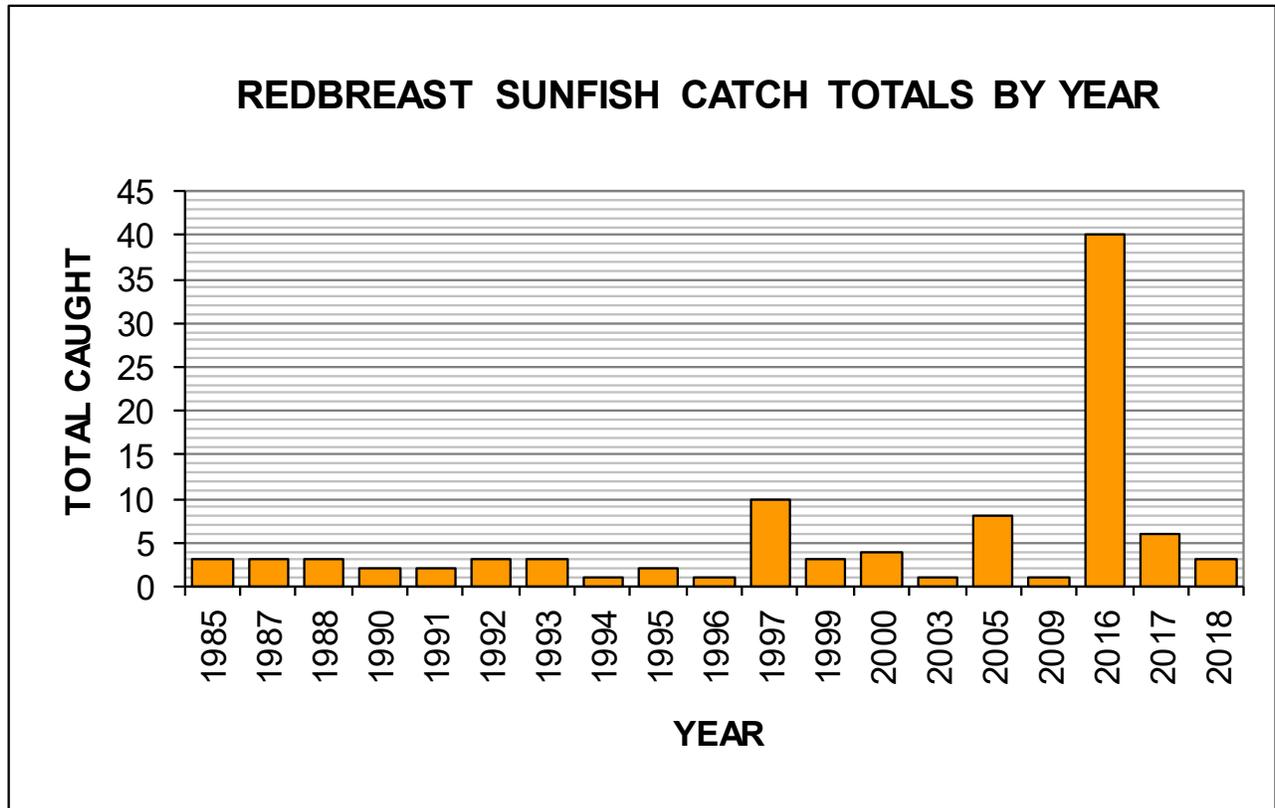
Facts:

- ◆ 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



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*redbreast sunfish were only caught during the years shown