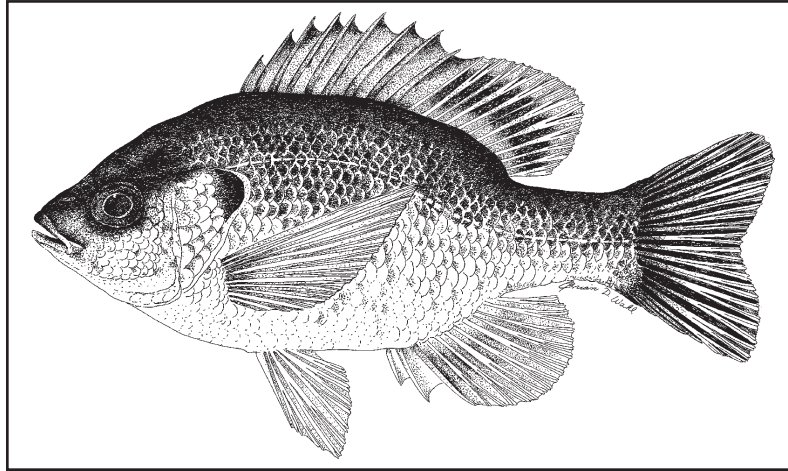


## Life History Notes

# Redear Sunfish

**Common Names:** Shellcracker, Stumpknocker

**Scientific Name:** *Lepomis microlophus*



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### Identification:

Redear are a deep, slab-sided fish similar to the bluegill, except the ear flap is black with a red or orange margin; black blotch at the base of the dorsal fin is absent.

### Range and Habitat:

Redear sunfish are not native to Ohio, but have been stocked in state waters since 1931. Their native range was limited to southern states below the mouth of the Wabash River on the Ohio River. This species thrives in clear, warm impoundments with rooted vegetation. Redear sunfish are attracted to submerged vegetation and trees, hence the name "stumpknocker." Following spawning, redear tend to move offshore to deeper water.

### Life History:

Redear sunfish, like most other sunfish, are communal nest spawners. Spawning normally occurs in May or June, and the male guards the nest until the eggs hatch. Following spawning,

redear sunfish move to deeper water for the summer months. The preferred diet for redear sunfish is snails. They use specially modified teeth in the throat that allow them to crush mollusk shells and extract snails.

### Adult Size:

In well managed waters with good habitat, redear sunfish will reach 9 to 11 inches in length. The state record redear weighed 3 pounds and 1 ounce, and was 13.25 inches in length.

### Fishing Methods:

Most redear are caught while on spawning beds. During this time they can be easily caught using most natural baits, and they will hit on small spinners and flies. Following the spawning season redear are harder to find because they move into deeper water, however the same baits can be used when they are located.