

Shelby Joyner

RedbreastSunfish_LM14



PHOTO OF SAMPLE SPECIES: *LEPOMIS AURITUS*

TAXONOMIC INFORMATION

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Actinopterygii

Order: Perciformes

Family: Centrarchidae

Genus: Lepomis

Species: *L. auritus*

Collection and Diversity Information:

RedbreastSunfish_LM14 was collected from Little Mulberry Park in Dacula, GA in fall of 2023. The coordinates are 34.040897, -83.890187. The Shannon H' value is 1.473779891.

Distinguishing Morphological Characteristics:

Redbreast sunfish have compressed bodies that have a green/blue coloration. Male and Females both have orange and reddish brown spots in vertical rows on the sides of their bodies. Redbreast sunfish get their name from the coloration breeding males can develop. When the males are breeding they develop a red/orange coloration and when they are not they have a yellow color on their bodies. Their gill covers have a long black lobe that is very distinguishable. They typically have 10 to 11 spines on their dorsal fins and 12 vertical bars on their sides that grow wider and become less distinguishable as they mature.

Basic Ecology:

The redbreast sunfish is a warm water species that prefers temperatures of 27-29°C. They feed on juvenile fishes as well as aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates. They can be found in small to medium sized rivers, pools of creeks, and vegetated lake margins. They reproduce using either nest-building or cuckoldry. Female Redbreast sunfish produce an average of 3302 eggs. They usually live to 7 years and typically mature by age 2 at about 90-120 mm long. How much they grow depends on the environment around them including climate, geography, and hydrology. Redbreast sunfish experience little disturbance from human activity due to large populations and inhabiting secluded areas.

DNA Sequence:

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