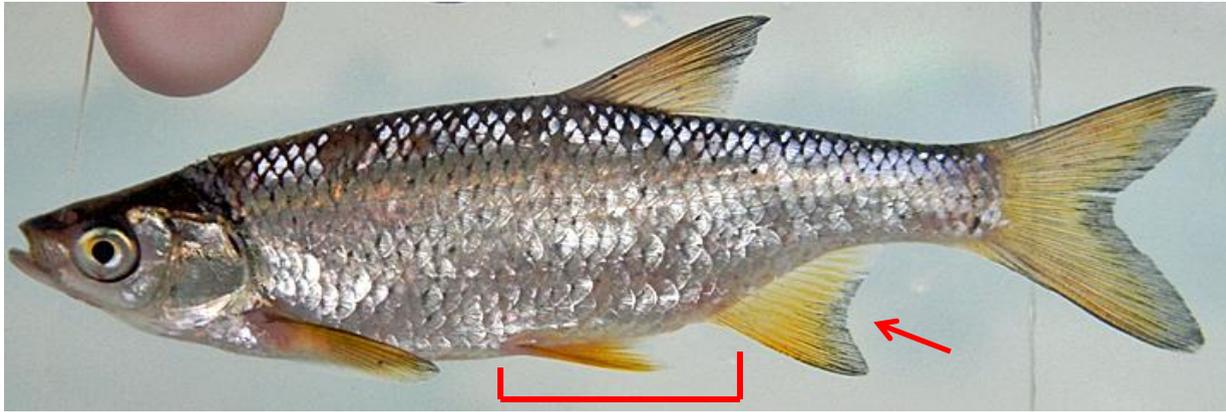


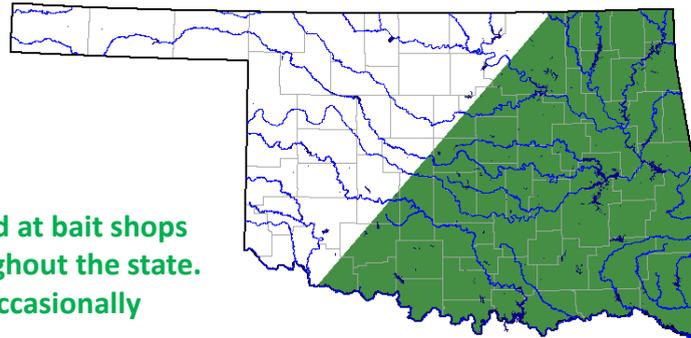
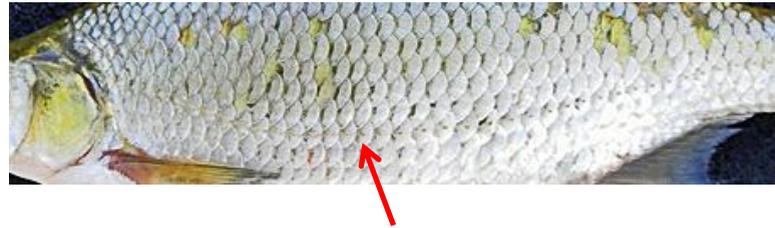
The Minnows



Golden Shiner



- Golden shiners are deep-bodied silver minnows with no distinctive markings, but with a noticeably downward curving lateral line.
- They keel from pelvic fins to anus is unscaled.
- Juveniles often have a dusky stripe along the body that is not present in adults.
- The anal fin is long and curves inward.

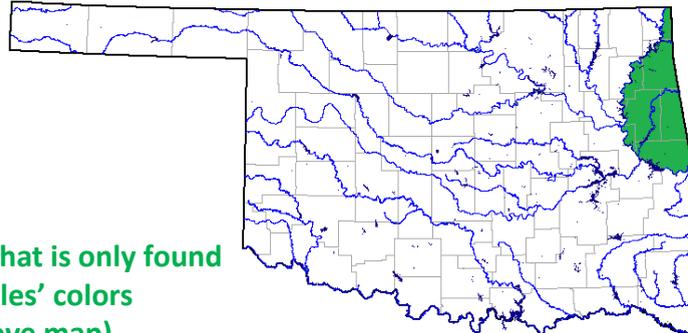


Fish Fact: Golden shiners are the species most commonly sold at bait shops as “minnows.” Because of this, they have been spread throughout the state. They can grow surprisingly large (up to 10 inches), and are occasionally caught on hook and line.

Cardinal Shiner



- Cardinal shiners are one of the most common minnows in Ozark streams.
- They have a dusky stripe along their sides and a narrow, gold band above it. An iridescent green band often overlaps the gold band.
- Their eyes are large and life colors often include a powder blue nose.

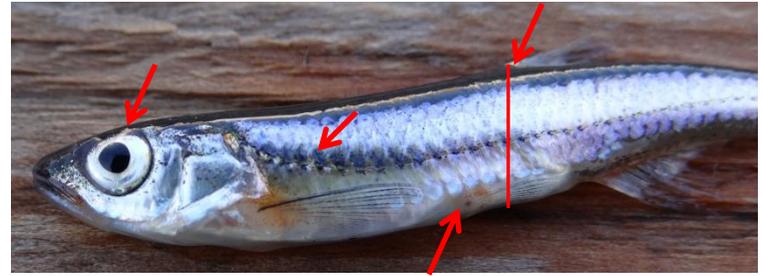


Fish Fact: Cardinal shiners are a sensitive and fragile species that is only found in clear, cool Ozark streams. During spawning season, the males' colors intensify and develop into vivid reds and blacks (pictured above map).

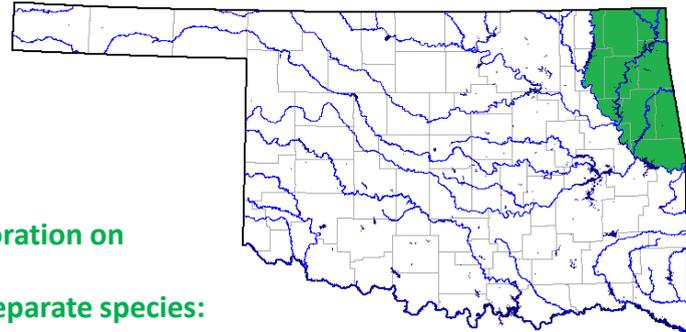
Carmine and Emerald Shiners



Nate Tessler



- Carmine and emerald shiners are part of a complex of closely related species that are difficult to tell apart. They are long, slender minnows with large eyes and decurved lateral lines that are often etched with black. Members of the group are found statewide. The range map is for the carmine shiner.
- The most distinguishing feature for these species is that their dorsal fin is located far back on the body and behind the beginning of the pelvic fins.
- Refer to ichthyologic literature and keys for positive identification.



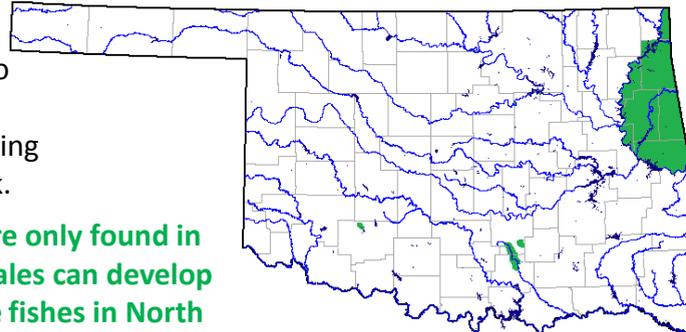
Biologist Tip: Carmine shiners often have red or pinkish coloration on their breast.

Fish Fact: The rosyface shiner was recently split into three separate species: carmine, rocky and rosyface. They all closely resemble the emerald shiner.

Southern Redbelly Dace



- Dace are attractive, delicate minnows with fine scales and soft bodies.
- Colors can vary, especially when stressed, but generally with a broad, black stripe running the length of the body. A narrower gold and second black band usually run parallel to the first.
- Their bellies and throats are often tinted red or pink, and during breeding season or when excited, they can become very dark.

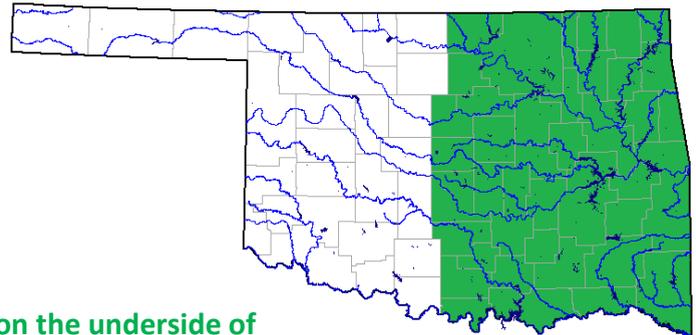
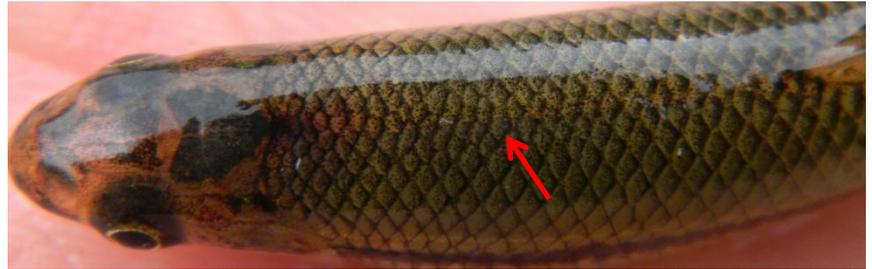


Fish Fact: Dace are very sensitive to poor water quality, and are only found in springs or high quality spring fed waters. Both males and females can develop the cherry-red coloration. They are among the most attractive fishes in North America.

Bluntnose minnow

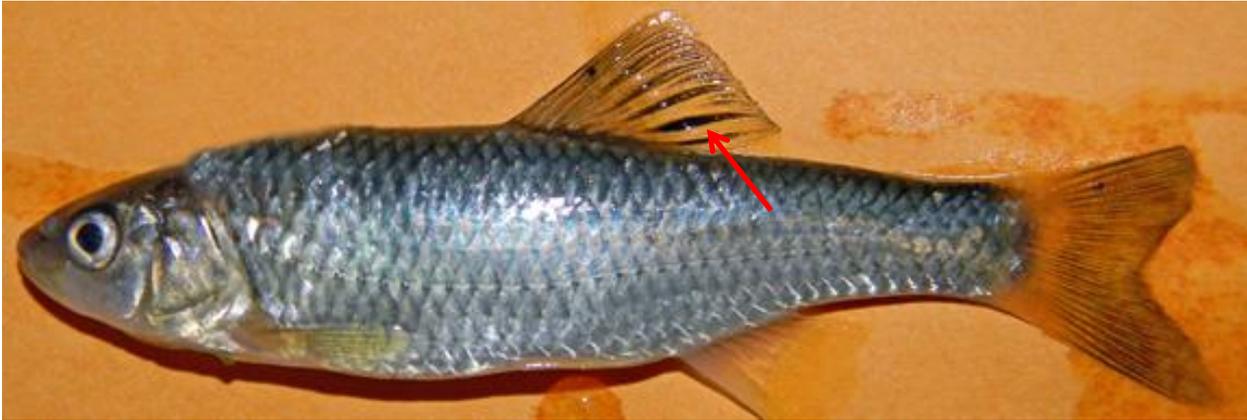


- The bluntnose is a stocky, round-nosed minnow with a subterminal mouth and a broad, black stripe running from the nose to the tail.
- They usually have black spots at base of tail.
- The head is flattened and the scales are small and crowded in front of dorsal.

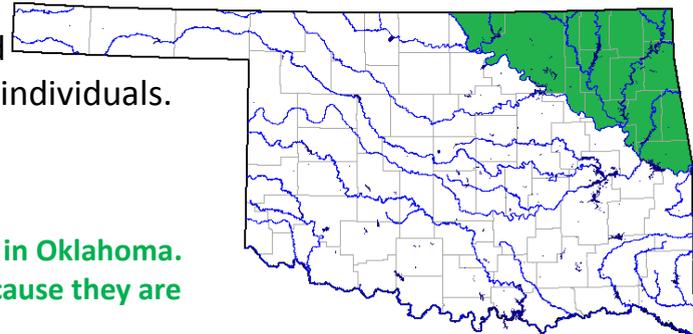
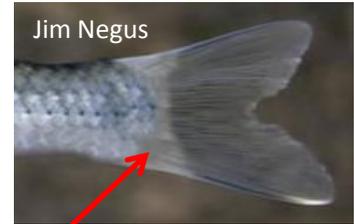


Biologist Fact: Spawning bluntnose minnows lay their eggs on the underside of logs, rocks, old boards or other kinds of overhead cover.

Bluntnose Shiner



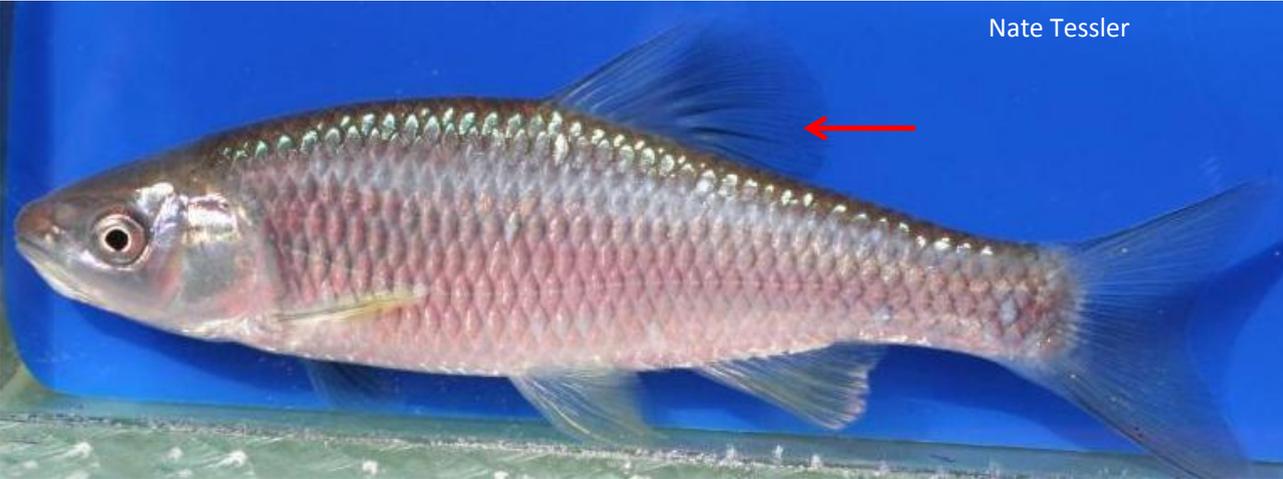
- Bluntnose shiners are uncommon residents of northeastern Oklahoma streams.
- Like the steelcolor shiner they have black slashes on the dorsal fin and lack any other black spots or markings.
- They can be positively identified by the milky, or colorless, band at the base of the tail fin.
- The band is more obvious in live specimens, and is sometimes difficult to see in stressed or dead individuals.



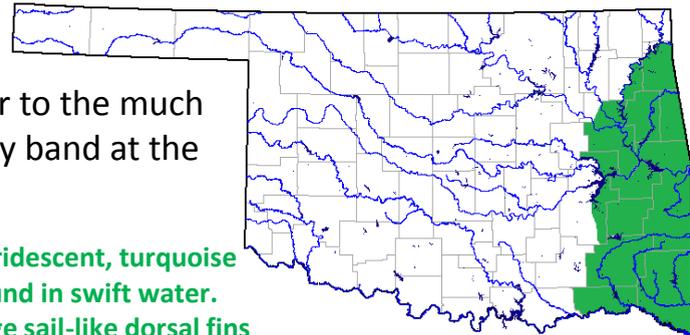
Fish Fact: Bluntnose shiners are a species of special concern in Oklahoma. Biologists are unsure of their range and population size, because they are currently collected quite infrequently.

Steelcolor Shiner

Nate Tessler



- Steelcolor shiners are one of the most common minnows in many eastern Oklahoma streams.
- They are a fairly robust, silvery minnows with a black slash on their somewhat rounded dorsal fins.
- Scales are large, diamond-shaped and faintly outlined with black pigment. They are very similar to the much less common bluntface shiner, but without a milky band at the base of the tail.

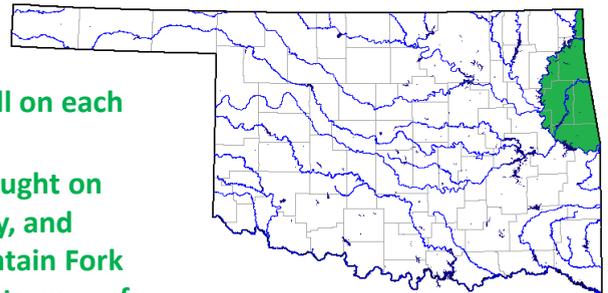
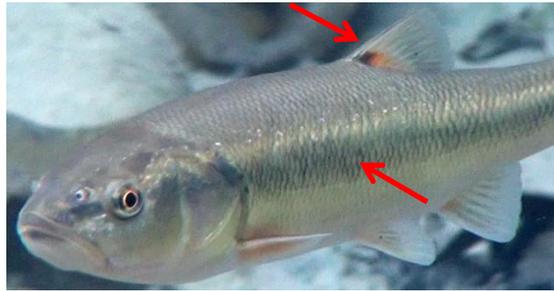


Fish Fact: Breeding males develop a red nose, yellow fins and an iridescent, turquoise blue sheen. They are a very attractive and active species often found in swift water. They are also excellent maneuverers and sometimes use their large sail-like dorsal fins to catch and ride water currents.

Creek Chub



- Creek chubs have large heads and a big, bass-like mouth.
- Their most identifiable feature is a black spot at the base of the dorsal fin.
- They also have a prominent dusky, black stripe running the length of their body.



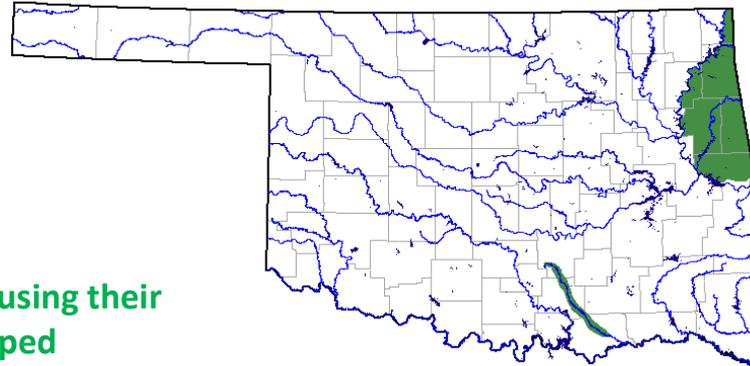
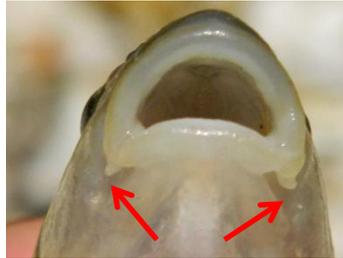
Biologist Tip: Though hard to see, creek chubs have a small barbell on each side of their upper lip, just before the back of the jaw.

Fish Fact: Creek chubs are surprisingly aggressive and are often caught on hook and line. Creek chubs are intolerant of siltation and turbidity, and require clean water to survive. Reports are known from the Mountain Fork River, but in Oklahoma, creek chubs occur primarily in the Ozark streams of the northeast.

Redspot Chub



- Redspot chubs are common inhabitants of northeast Oklahoma Ozark streams and are occasionally caught on worms and other live baits. They can be surprisingly aggressive and are sometimes able to steal food from larger species like smallmouth bass.
- Adults are easily identified by the obvious red spot behind the eye (lacking in juveniles) and two small barbells located on each side of the mouth. Breeding males develop bump-like tubercles on top of their head. Juveniles typically have reddish fins and a spot at base of tail.
- A disjunct population occurs in the Blue River in south-central Oklahoma.

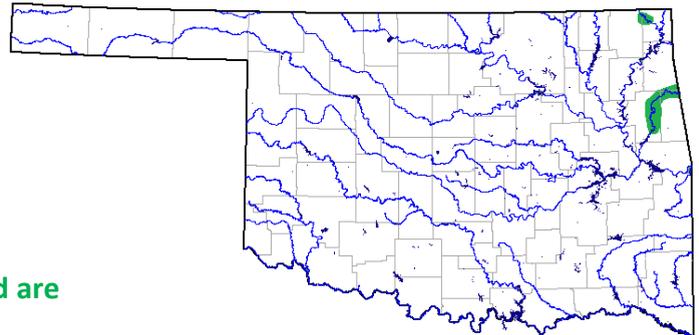
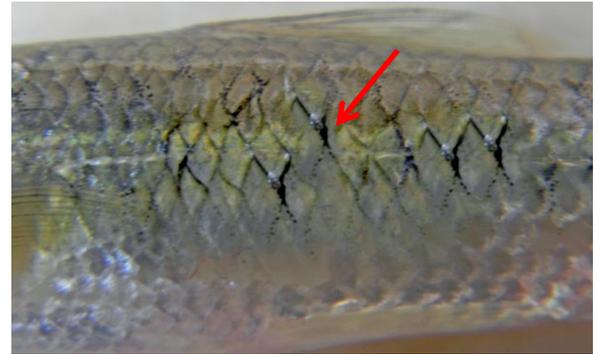


Fish Fact: Redspot chubs build their nests by using their mouths to drag and pile stones into cone shaped pyramids. They use this nest for spawning.

Gravel Chub



- Gravel chubs are streamlined silvery chubs, and well adapted for river life.
- Their head is long and pointed, with the nose extending beyond the mouth.
- The most reliable way to identify gravel chubs is by the X-shaped pattern that etches some scales on their sides.
- They have small barbells at the corner of their mouths.

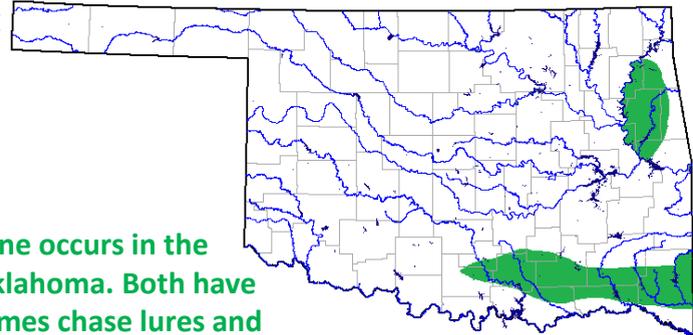
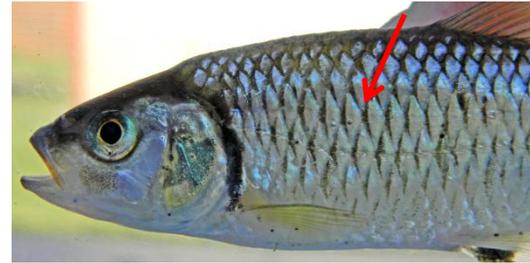


Fish Fact: Gravel chubs have taste buds on their snouts and are perfectly adaptive for life in clear, swift water.

Striped Shiner

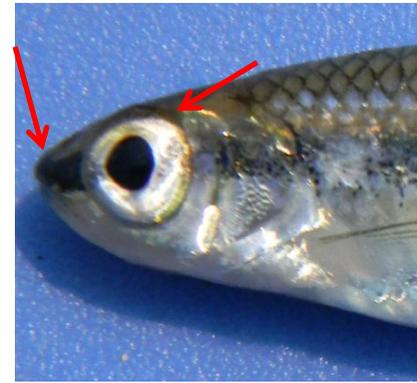
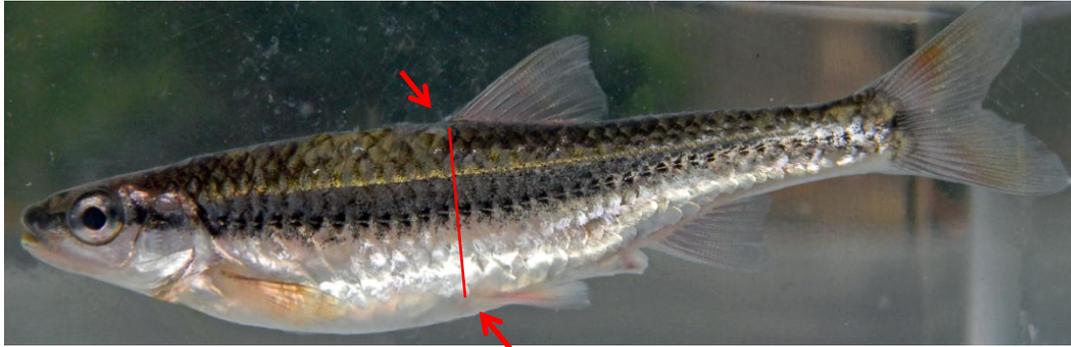


- Striped shiners are robust minnows with large diamond-shaped scales that are often outlined with black etching.
- In larger fish, the scales often appear “roughed up” or as if some are missing, due to the black pigment on the front of some scales.
- When viewed from above, two to three black parallel lines are usually visible running down their backs.

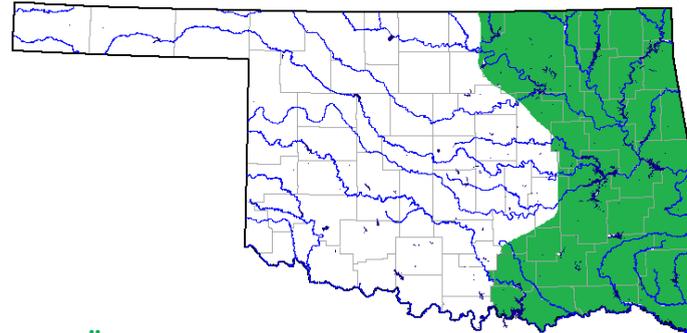
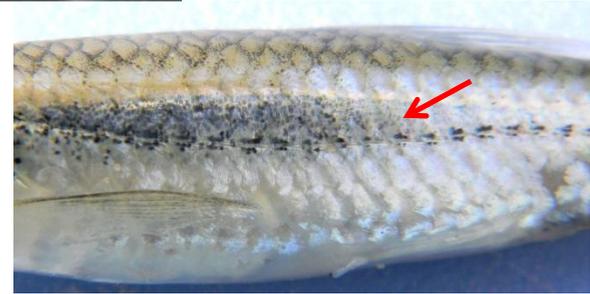


Fish Fact: Oklahoma has two subspecies of striped shiners. One occurs in the Ozarks and the other in a wide band throughout southern Oklahoma. Both have large mouths and can get surprisingly large. They will sometimes chase lures and are occasionally caught on hook and line. Males develop striking breeding colors.

Bigeye Shiner

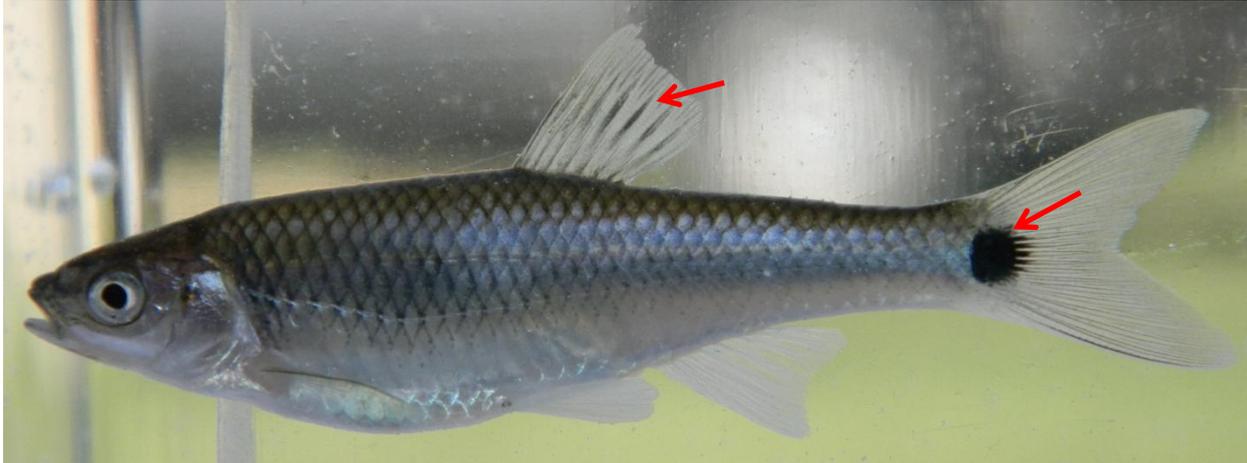


- Bigeye shiners have very large eyes and relatively small heads.
- The start of the dorsal fin is directly above the start of the pelvic fin.
- A dusky black stripe extends from the lips to the tail. Below this stripe is a series of black dashes, which also run the length of their body.

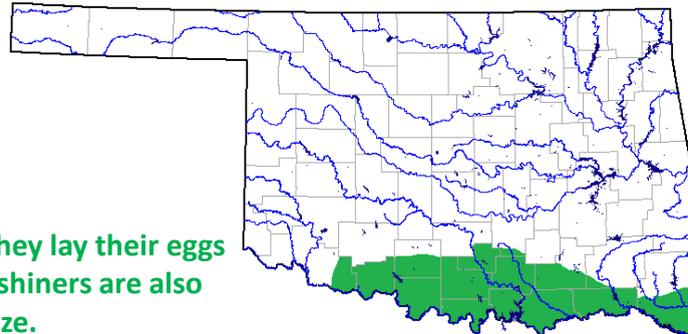


Fish Fact: Their Latin name *Notropis boops*, literally means “ox eye.”

Blacktail Shiner

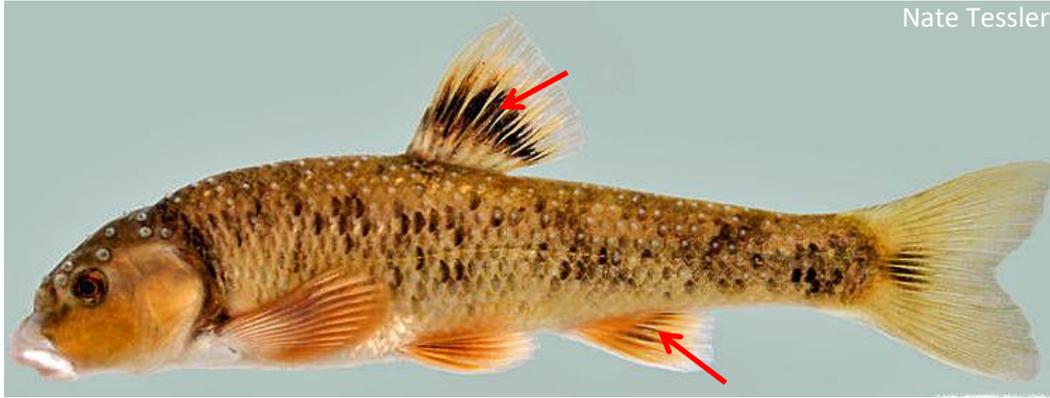


- Blacktail shiners are one of the easiest minnows to identify in Oklahoma.
- They are attractive and have bright silvery bodies with a distinctive black spot at the base of the tail and a dusky dash on their tall dorsal fins.
- No other minnows have such a prominent tail spot.
- They often have a dusky stripe on the second half of their body ending at the tail spot.



Fish Fact: Blacktail shiners are crevice spawners, meaning they lay their eggs in the cracks between rocks, logs and other structures. Red shiners are also crevice spawners, and the two species are known to hybridize.

Central Stoneroller



- Stoneroller coloration varies depending on sex, age and the time of year.
- They have small eyes, fine scales and soft bodies. Their color is usually dark grading to white on the belly. All stonerollers have a wide scraper-like bottom lip. Juveniles often have a dark lateral stripe.
- They often have black speckles, which are regenerated scales.
- Breeding males are unmistakable, with pronounced breeding tubercles covering most of their body, and dark dashes in the dorsal and anal fins.

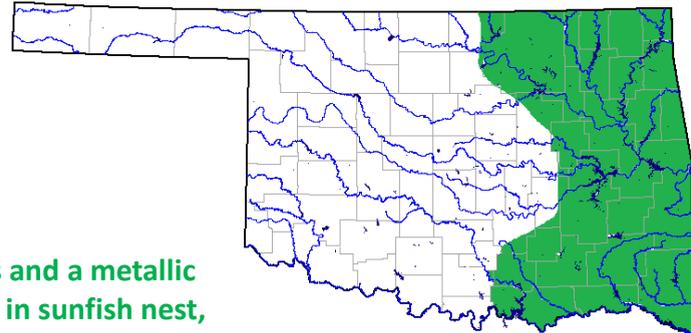
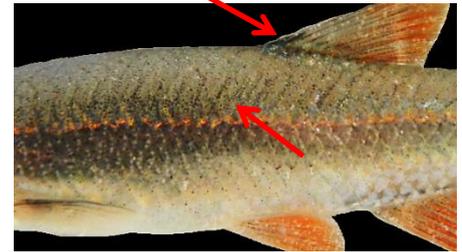


Fish Fact: Stonerollers are grazers and important species in Oklahoma streams, where they not only serve as food for larger fish, but help control algae levels.

Redfin Shiner

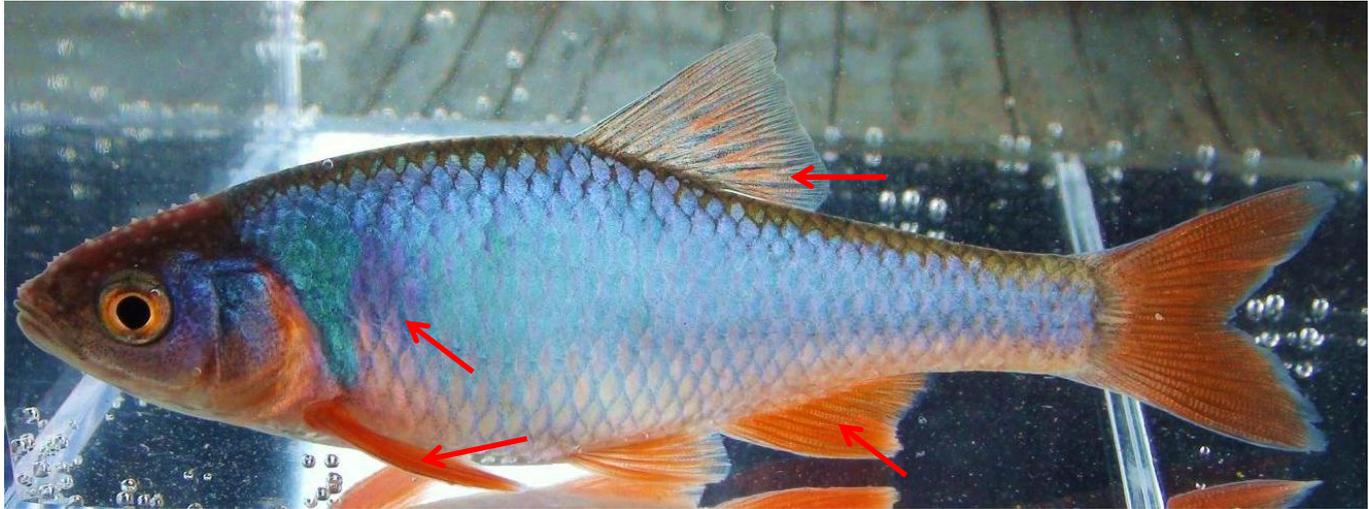


- Redfin shiners are silvery minnows with small heads and fairly large eyes. Their most distinguishing features are the light black chevrons that can be seen on their backs (not shown well by photo).
- They also have a black spot on the front edge of the dorsal.
- The lateral line is strongly decurved with the dorsal directly above the pelvic fin.



Fish Fact: Breeding males develop red fins, bright blue heads and a metallic blue sheen over their entire body. They are known to spawn in sunfish nest, especially green and longear sunfish.

Red Shiner



- Red shiners are one of the most common and widespread OK minnows. They are very common in our big sandy rivers like the Canadian, Red and Arkansas and can be found in lakes, river and streams of all size throughout the state.
- Females and juvenile males are plain silvery minnows, but the males are unmistakable with bright red fins and a vertical purple dash behind the gill. They lack black spots, dashes and lines found in similar looking minnow species.

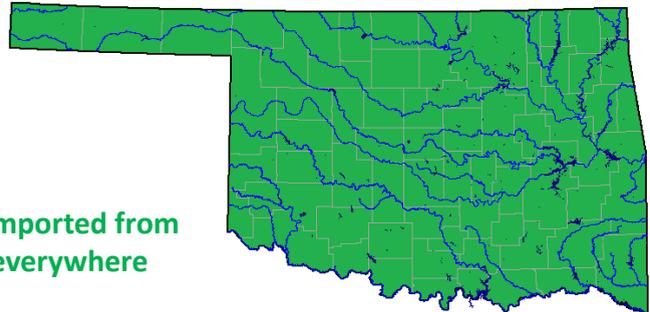
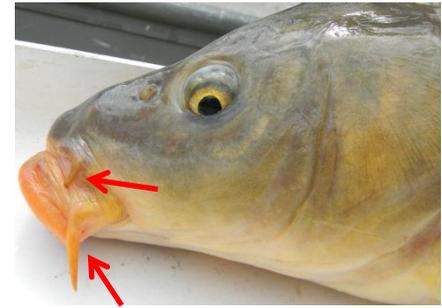


Fish Fact: Red shiners are one of our “toughest” minnows and can thrive in conditions other species can barely survive. Fish born in early summer are able to reproduce by that fall.

Common Carp

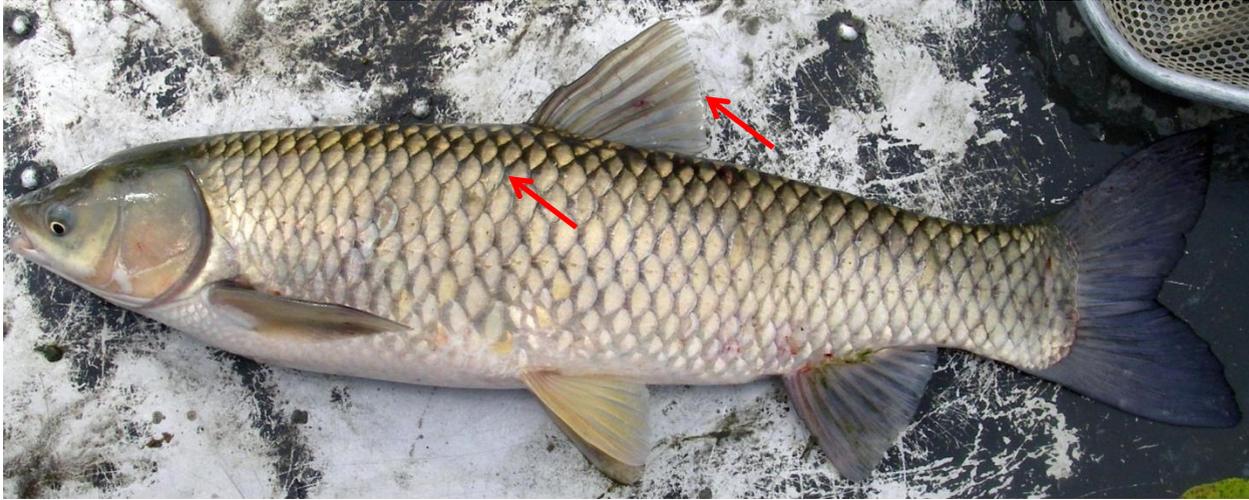


- Common carp are one of Oklahoma's largest minnows. They can be identified by their orange coloration, large scales and protractible, rubbery mouths with four barbells.
- The first dorsal and anal spine is long, hard and barbed.
- They are occasionally found with either very large scales or with slick patches without scales. These fish are often called leather, Israeli or mirror carp, but are really common carp with unusual scales.

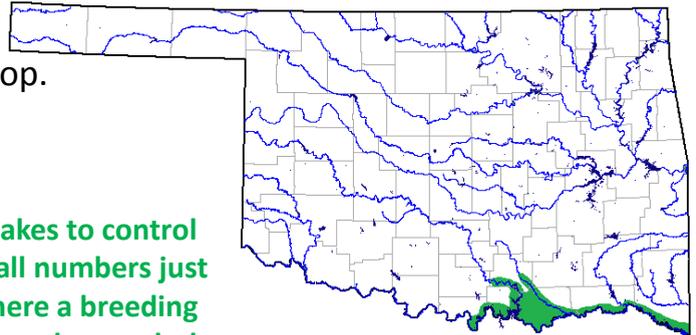


Fish Fact: Carp are not native to the United States. They were imported from Europe in the late 1800's. Since then, they have spread nearly everywhere and can be found statewide in Oklahoma.

Grass Carp

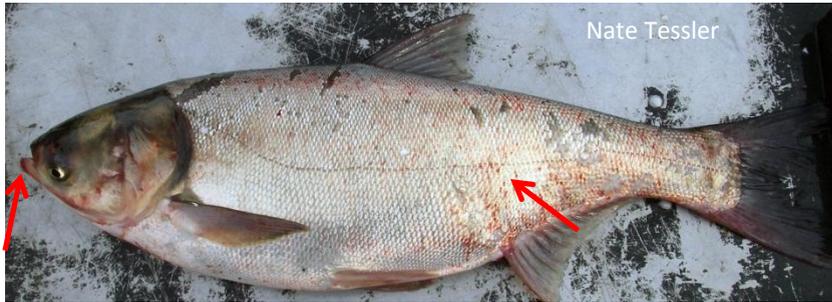


- Grass carp are large growing silver minnows with blunt heads and terminal mouths.
- Their scales are large and etched with black giving a distinct cross-hatched pattern.
- Unlike common carp, the dorsal fin is short.
- They have stout, torpedo-shaped bodies and are known to avoid seines by jumping over the top.



Fish Fact: Grass carp are often stocked in ponds and small lakes to control unwanted vegetation. As a result, they can be found in small numbers just about anywhere in Oklahoma. The range map indicates where a breeding population is known to exist and individuals are most likely to be regularly encountered.

Silver & Bighead Carp - ANS



- Silver and bighead carp are exotic species that look similar. Both have small scales, large heads and terminal mouths, with bottom lips that extend beyond the top.
- Both have sharp keels along their bellies, but the bigheads keel is much shorter.
- Juvenile silver and bighead carp look similar to gizzard shad.



Fish Fact: Silver and bighead carp are **aquatic nuisance species (ANS)**, which have been documented in the Red, Grand and Arkansas rivers. They eat the same food as many native fish, so their establishment could be catastrophic to native fish populations – everything from juvenile sportfish like largemouth bass to giant filter feeders like paddlefish. If you think you have caught one of these fish, do not release it. Report the catch to Curtis Tackett, aquatic nuisance species biologist for the Wildlife Department at (405) 521-4623.

