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## Recent Collections of Fishes from the Spring River Drainage in Northeast Arkansas

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# GENERAL NOTES

## RECENT COLLECTIONS OF FISHES FROM THE SPRING RIVER DRAINAGE IN NORTHEAST ARKANSAS

Several ichthyofaunal surveys have been conducted in the Spring River of Arkansas. Meek (1894) initially collected fish in some tributaries of the Upper Spring River. Buchanan (1973) sampled throughout the drainage in developing his *Key to the Fishes of Arkansas*. Several studies have been conducted in sub-basin tributary streams of the Spring River (Fowler and Harp, 1974; Bounds *et al.*, 1977; Johnson and Beadles, 1977; and Carter and Beadles, 1980). Winters (1985) conducted a survey of the Spring River ichthyofaunal for his master's thesis. Sampling throughout the Spring River basin has also been sporadically conducted by Arkansas Game and Fish Commission personnel.

An ichthyofaunal survey was conducted at eight locations within the main channel of the Spring River and South Fork of the Spring River in northeast Arkansas by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission from September 1985 to September 1986. A total of 68 different fish species was collected. Sampling was performed by electrofishing, beach seining, and hoop netting.

Two species of fish were collected for the first time from the Spring River. *Moxostoma macrolepidotum*, the shorthead redhorse, was moderately common in samples collected from the Hardy area (NE ¼, S11, T19N, R5W) south to Williford (SE ¼, S36, T19N, R4W). *M. macrolepidotum* was collected by electrofishing in deeper pools below riffle areas, and was often found in conjunction with *M. erythrum*. Although widely distributed throughout central and eastern United States (Jenkins, 1980), *M. macrolepidotum* has not previously been documented from the Spring River drainage.

*Carassius auratus*, the goldfish, was also collected from the Spring River at Hardy (NE ¼, S11, T19N, R4W). One specimen was collected by electrofishing in a deep pool and was likely a bait bucket release. This capture was the first collection of *C. auratus* from the Spring River.

Two fish species represent modern day catch records. *Cyprinus elongatus*, the blue sucker, was represented by one specimen collected at Hardy (NE ¼, S11, T19N, R4W). The most recent collection of *C. elongatus* from the Spring River was by Meek (1894). Robison (1974) noted that it was a rare inhabitant of the state. Pflieger (1975) discussed the typical habitat of the blue sucker as being large rivers. The site of collection in the Spring River drainage was at Hardy Beach, a stretch of the Spring River immediately south of water normally utilized by trout and characterized by clear water and moderately swift current. Thus, this occurrence also marked a collection of *C. elongatus* in an atypical habitat.

The American eel, *Anguilla rostrata*, was also collected in vegetated pools in the Hardy area. Winters (1985) noted that *A. rostrata* was observed in a fisherman's creel near Spring River Oakes Camp in Fulton County. Two specimens were collected by electrofishing in this survey.

Two species of fish were collected at locations which extended their distributions within the drainage. The gizzard shad, *Dorosoma cepedianum*, was documented by Winters (1985) as an inhabitant of the South Fork and lower reaches of the Spring River. In this survey *D. cepedianum* was frequently collected by electrofishing in pools at Hardy and Williford.

The sauger (*Stizostedion canadense*) was noted by Winters (1985) as part of a fisherman's creel near Ravenden. Buchanan (1973) records *S. canadense* only from the lower reaches of the Spring River. The sauger was collected in this survey from both Hardy and Williford and was an inhabitant of deep pools below riffle areas.

This survey, coupled with several others throughout the Spring River drainage, reemphasizes that the Spring River is a valuable river system with a highly diverse ichthyofaunal which demands careful monitoring and conservation. Future studies may document still more previously undiscovered species of fish from the system.

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