



## **Redeye Bass (*Micropterus coosae*)**

The redeye bass or Coosa bass is a game fish found above the Fall Line in the Mobile basin.\* The fast-moving small to medium streams in this upland area are favorable to redeye bass. Fishing for redeye bass is best when using a fly rod or light spinning tackle.

Shoal bass and smallmouth bass look similar to the redeye bass. A tell-tale sign that separate the redeye bass from the other two fish is that the top and bottom edges of a redeye's caudal fin is white.\* With a big mouth that reaches to or passed the eye, redeye bass are long and slender. Inside their mouth, a tooth patch is present on the tongue.\* A redeye bass is olive to brown in color with dark brown spots that appear uneven. Adults may grow to 17 inches and have several horizontal rows of dark spots. The dorsal fin may have nine to 11 spines and 11 to 13 rays.\* Breeding males may have blue green color on the lower head and throat.

Redeye bass eat insects, crayfish, and smaller fish. Fun to catch, the state record redeye bass was caught in Choccolocco Creek in 2000. It weighed three pounds two ounces. Taking action today to conserve wildlife and the places they live is the key to ensuring that they survive for future generations to enjoy.

### **Vocabulary**

Anal fin – a single fin on the bottom of a fish behind the anus.

Breeding – ready to reproduce.

Dorsal – top fin.

Fall Line – divides Alabama into two regions – the upland and the lowland- and is the change between the hard rocks of the higher Highland Rim, Cumberland Plateau, Ridge and Valley and Piedmont and the soft sediments of the lower Coastal Plain.

Game fish – any one of variety of fishes made legal catch by specific legislation

Caudal fin – the tail fin on a fish, used to make the fish go forward.

Pelvic fins – a pair of side fins on the bottom of a fish.

Pectoral fins – a pair of side fins behind the head.

Rays – the soft, bony part of a fin.

Spines – the hard, bony part of a fin

Tongue – in fishes, a structure composed of bone or cartilage that is used to grind prey or food items.

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The drawing is original artwork by Julie Harris Mitchell. The photograph and some of the information are from *Fishes of Alabama and the Mobile Basin*.