



## **Orangefin Shiner (*Notropis ammophilus*)**

An orangefin shiner is a type of minnow. Shorter than a finger, an orangefin shiner grows to be about two inches long. Its shape is long and thin with a forked tail. The shape of the body and forked tail of the orangefin shiner allow it to swim easily against the flowing water. An orangefin shiner is colorful for a minnow.

During breeding season, a male orangefin shiner develops bright orange or reddish-orange fins that are more colorful than the female.\* A breeding male displays a pinkish-orange snout with bright orange lips. The back of an orangefin shiner is light olive yellow, which fades on the sides to a faint lateral band of silver with tiny black dots. The belly is silvery white.

An orangefin shiner lives in clear sandy streams of the Coastal Plain of Alabama.\* Large schools, numbering in the hundreds or thousands, are often seen swimming in shallow water, over sandy shoals or bedrock.\* No one has studied the diet of an orangefin shiner, but most minnows eat aquatic insects and some algae. Minnows swim fast to keep from being eaten by spotted bass and other predators.

The orangefin shiner is one example of the rich fish and wildlife resources that belong to every citizen in Alabama!

### **\*Vocabulary**

Bedrock – the rock layer that is often under the soil.

Coastal Plain – the geological region that is relatively flat and has little exposed bedrock; the Coastal Plain is the largest of the five main geological regions in Alabama.

Fin – a visible body part used in swimming or steering that is not supported by solid bone.

Shoal – shallow area of sand or rock where the water is often fast.