



Tallapoosa Shiner (*Cyprinella gibbsi*)

The Tallapoosa shiner is a type of minnow that lives in the Tallapoosa River watershed.* Found in the Piedmont region of Alabama and Georgia, the Tallapoosa shiner is one of Alabama's most colorful minnows.*

A breeding male Tallapoosa shiner is particularly colorful. Its tail fin is red-orange with a black margin and white tips. Its paired fins and anal fin are red-orange in the front and white in other areas.* The dorsal fin is red-orange in the front and dark in the back with some white streaks.* The back is blue-black and is separated from the broad steel-blue lateral stripe by a copper-colored streak.

An adult Tallapoosa shiner is usually just over 2 inches long - about the length of a finger. The shape of the Tallapoosa shiner helps it to swim in the fast water of Piedmont streams. As with many minnows, a Tallapoosa shiner probably eats aquatic insects and some algae.

Diverse and healthy wildlife habitats depend largely upon private landowners who care for their land. A Tallapoosa shiner depends upon private landowners to prevent dirt and gravel from washing into streams and filling their riffle sections.*

***Vocabulary**

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

Diverse habitats – in a stream, diverse habitats include a variety of substrate, water speeds and depths.

Dorsal fin – a fin or fins on the top part of a fish.

Piedmont – a region of igneous (cooled melted rock) and metamorphic rock (sedimentary rock changed by heat or pressure) found in east central Alabama; one of five geological regions in Alabama.

Riffle – areas of faster, shallow water in streams.

Watershed – all the land and streams that drain down to one point.

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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*.