



Redfin Pickerel (*Esox americanus*)

Fishes in the Pike family are all predators.* Some members of the Pike family may grow to a large size, but the redfin pickerel is the smallest member of the Pike family. Redfin pickerel may be found in all regions of Alabama, but it is most common in the Coastal Plain.*

Pike are long, slender fish with duckbill-shaped snouts and lots of teeth. Contrary to its name, a redfin pickerel may or may not have red fins.* It has a dark bar below its eye that is almost at a diagonal. A redfin pickerel has a shorter mouth than a chain pickerel. The back of a redfin pickerel is dark green or brown. The pattern on its sides varies from a green and white brick wall to green-white forward-slanting vertical bars. The belly is a cream or yellow color.

Alabama's largest redfin pickerel is only slightly heavier than a half pound; seven to twelve inches is a normal length. True to its small size, a redfin pickerel is most often found in smaller streams. It hides in the vegetation of small, slower-moving streams and in swamps. Wildlife-based activities – such as fishing, hunting, and wildlife-watching – bring over a billion dollars annually to Alabama's economy and connect people with nature.

***Vocabulary**

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.

Predators – animals that eat other animals.