

Fishes of Lake Waccamaw, Columbus County, North Carolina

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This essay was written by Tim Aldridge, member of the North American Native Fishes Association (NANFA), describing his fishing and microfishing experiences over the past several years at Lake Waccamaw and adjacent canals. For those who do not know, Lake Waccamaw is one of North Carolina's ecological jewels with its diverse fish and mussel fauna, the large number of imperiled fish and mussel species inhabiting the lake, its extremely clear to lightly tannin stained waters, circum-neutral pH waters, and that it is the largest bay lake in the state. Lake Waccamaw is located in southeastern North Carolina, approximately 40 miles west of Wilmington, in Columbus County. The lake is approximately 9,000 acres in size with a mean depth of approximately 6-8 ft. Dominant aquatic plants along the shoreline include Maiden Cane, Cape Fear Spatterdock, Yellow Lotus, Pickerel Weed, Bald Cypress, Stonewort, and Southern Naiad.



Cape Fear Spatterdock (aka Narrowleaf Pond-lily), *Nuphar sagittifolia*, covers portions of Lake Waccamaw and makes for excellent cover for smaller fish species and predators alike.



Arrows pointing to where Big Creek enters the lake and surrounding canals (right) and the dam (lower left). Canals encircle the lake in many places. Circles indicate location of public boat ramps.

Tim has caught 34 of the 54 species known to habitat the lake and surrounding canal systems (please see the table at the end of this article). Herein, Tim describes some tips on how to successfully catch them and how to tell apart some of the similar-looking species. All photographs were taken by Tim under field conditions and are accompanied by phototank images obtained from [NCFishes.com](https://www.ncfishes.com).

Longnose Gar, *Lepisosteus osseus*

More common in the canals, but also in Lake Waccamaw proper. Longnose Gar are ambush predators and can be caught on live bait at night. Hooking them is often an issue, so it's advised to let the fish run with the bait for at least 30 seconds before setting the hook. We've had better luck with Size 6 circle hooks to catch Longnose Gar. These fish grow to around six feet, sometimes a tad longer. Live- or cut-bait is recommended for targeting Longnose Gar and nighttime is a much more effective time to catch them.



Bowfin, *Amia calva*



A nod to fish of the Jurassic era, the Bowfin is an interesting design and tolerant of very low water oxygen levels. Bowfin are normally around 20-25 inches but can grow larger. With a wicked set of toothy jaws, Bowfin strike fast and effectively, holding onto prey with their teeth. They are stalking and ambush hunters and are typically caught at night but can be caught in the day as well lurking around heavy cover. They are normally found in the canal systems around Lake Waccamaw, but some are found in the lake as well.



Bowfin are often mistaken for snakehead (family Channidae), which are invasive species that resemble the overall shape of the Bowfin. Differences include a short anal fin for Bowfin and a very long one for snakeheads. Also, the pelvic fins of the Bowfin are positioned further back near the anal fin while snakeheads have pelvic fins that are closer to the head. There are no documented reports of snakeheads in North Carolina.

American Eel, *Anguilla rostrata*

The American Eel is a catadromous species meaning that that it lives in fresh water but spawns at sea. They typically reach up to 4 feet in length, covered with slimy mucus, and have a mouth equipped with sharp teeth. American Eels are burrow- and crevice-dwellers and typically found in pipes, plants, and cover near the bottom. American Eel love worms on the bottom, and we've caught them in pipes at the Lake Waccamaw dam this way. Good luck taking pictures, as American Eel are very slimy and hard to hold!



Golden Shiner, *Notemigonus crysoleucas*

The Golden Shiner is one of the larger members of the minnow family, reaching over a foot in length. They are commonly sold as bait and stocked as forage fish across North America. Golden Shiners are easily identified by a strongly decurved lateral line. They may be taken with up to size 18 dry fly hooks with bits of worm or worms under a bobber. They are fond of the canals around the lake and near the dam at Lake Waccamaw.



Coastal Shiner, *Alburnops petersoni*

Besides Golden Shiners, Coastal Shiners are the most abundant minnow in Lake Waccamaw. Coastal Shiners reach a little over 3 inches in length and often have a black-blue stripe along the side. They are often found in small schools patrolling the sandy shorelines or near the dam. Coastal Shiners readily take worm bits with Tanago or smaller dry fly hooks while microfishing.



Taillight Shiner, *Notropis maculatus*

Taillight Shiners are striking and beautiful members of the minnow family that are sporadic in their occurrence in Lake Waccamaw and surrounding canals. They typically reach 3 inches in length and are bright red with hues of black on the scales. They are not usually known to be common and over the last 6 years in many trips we've only netted two specimens in the canals near the Big Creek boat ramp on SR 1947 (Bella Coola Road). Taillight Shiner have been taken via hook and line however, with worm bits and Tanago hooks a good option.



Channel Catfish, *Ictalurus punctatus*

Channel Catfish is the most common and widely distributed catfish species in the United States and are second to White Catfish in their abundance in Lake Waccamaw. They have a deeply forked caudal fin and juveniles may have black spots along the sides. Channel Catfish are normally no more than 20-30 pounds, although they may grow larger. Cut bait on the bottom will work great for catching adults while juveniles can be caught by microfishing.



White Catfish, *Ameiurus catus*

Resembling a Channel Catfish with its moderately forked tail and grayish/silvery body, White Catfish are not true *Ictalurus* catfish but are bullheads and are in the genus *Ameiurus*. White Catfish normally reach a foot in length, however we did manage to catch a 6-pound specimen from Lake Waccamaw one evening using cut Bluegill as bait on the bottom. White Catfish prefer sluggish water and are more active during darkness but can be also be caught during the day. In the spring at the dam in the shallow water, enormous swarms of White Catfish fry can be seen and even caught while microfishing with worm bits and Tanago hooks.



Yellow Bullhead, *Ameiurus natalis*

Yellow Bullheads are normally small, sluggish water dwelling fish that are more active at night in the canals around Lake Waccamaw. They have smaller eyes than other members of the Bullhead Family, have a rounded, not forked caudal fin, and clear or yellow chin barbels. Worms on the bottom are a great way to catch Yellow Bullheads.



Tadpole Madtom, *Noturus gyrinus*

Small, drab colored, and capable of inflicting a painful wound, Tadpole Madtom can be found at night in Lake Waccamaw amongst debris and vegetation along the shoreline and often at the dam. A headlamp is recommended for microfishing for Tadpole Madtoms. Be careful when handling these small fish, as the dorsal and pectoral spines are very sharp and serrated. Tadpole Madtoms may reach up to 5 inches in length but are normally only 2-3 inches.



Chain Pickerel, *Esox niger*

With a duckbill snout and a mouth full of teeth, Chain Pickerel are ambush predators that remain motionless like logs until an unsuspecting sunfish or minnow comes too close. Chain Pickerel has a chain-like pattern on its greenish side and may reach up to 30 inches in length. They are best caught with live bait or shiny lures that mimic minnows and are very aggressive during hours of darkness. Chain Pickerel are commonly found in the canal systems around Lake Waccamaw.



Redfin Pickerel, *Esox americanus*

Redfin Pickerel are similar to Chain Pickerel but have reddish fins, whereas Chain Pickerel do not. It is also of smaller size, most being less than 12 inches in length.. Redfin Pickerel may be taken in the same manner as Chain Pickerel as they are also ambush predators that are easier to catch at night. These fish are found alongside Chain Pickerel hiding in undercut banks in the canals around the lake.



Eastern Mudminnow, *Umbra pygmaea*

Resembling a small Bowfin, Eastern Mudminnows are sometimes placed in the pikes family Esocidae and at other times placed in its own family mudminnow, Umbridae. Eastern Mudminnow reach only around four inches in length. Eastern Mudminnows are extremely tolerant of stagnant, low oxygenated water and may be found in roadside ditches, swamps, creeks and blackwater habitats. They usually remain hidden during the daylight hours in thick vegetation but at night they tend to come into the shallows, making headlamp microfishing a great way to catch this species. They are found in the canals around Lake Waccamaw.



Blackstripe Pirate Perch, *Aphredoderus ornatus*

Until 2024, there was only one species of Pirate Perch, *Aphredoderus sayanus*, recognized in the United States. Recently, based upon genetic and morphological data, five species are now recognized. The sole species in North Carolina is now known as the Blackstripe Pirate Perch, *Aphredoderus ornatus*.

Pirate Perches are solitary and feed mainly during hours of darkness. One interesting aspect of the Pirate Perch is that the fish's anus migrates forward towards its throat as the fish matures. Pirate Perch are dark brown in coloration and may have a purplish hue. They reach up to five inches in length and they are more active at night, hiding during the day among aquatic vegetation and root banks. The canals and creeks around Lake Waccamaw are good places to find Pirate Perch.



Waccamaw Killifish, *Fundulus waccamensis*

The Waccamaw Killifish is 1 of 3 endemic fish species only found in Lake Waccamaw (the other two being Waccamaw Darter and Waccamaw Silverside). It is a slim fish that prefers sandy shorelines in the lake, normally close to shore. Waccamaw Killifish has a somewhat pointed snout, and a series of dark bars are present along the flanks. It typically reaches a little over three inches in length. Current population estimates place the number of the Waccamaw Killifish at more than one million in the lake. The dam is a great place to find them as is the north-central shoreline near Dale's Restaurant.



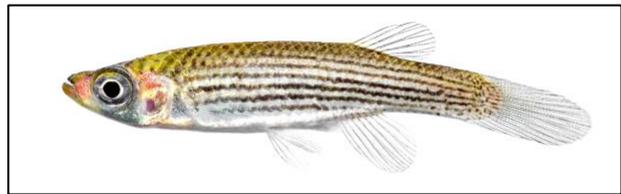
Golden Topminnow, *Fundulus chrysotus*

Golden Topminnow is another topminnow species found in the canals around Lake Waccamaw and in the lake at the dam. Golden Topminnows are beautiful little fish with gold and or red specks along the body at maturity and reach a total length of around three inches. They may be found right below the surface near vegetation or underneath it. Golden Topminnows, like most topminnows, can be taken easily with a Tanago hook and bit of worm.



Lined Topminnow, *Fundulus lineolatus*

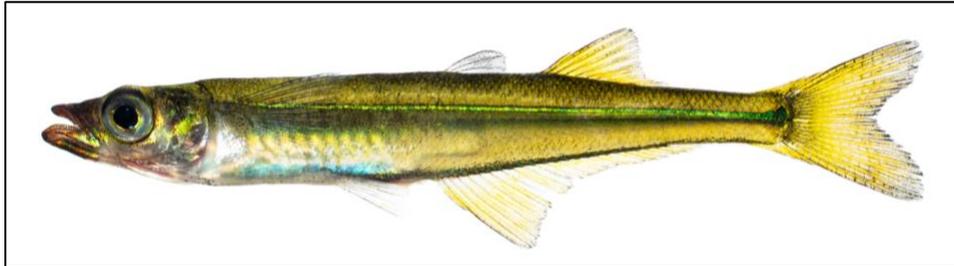
The Lined Topminnow is common in the canals around Lake Waccamaw and in the Waccamaw River exiting the lake at the dam. They prefer vegetation and stay near the surface or just below it. Lined Topminnow males have the typical topminnow profile, but have 9-13 narrow dark bars on the side, while females have 6-8 narrow longitudinal black stripes. Females also may retain a red nose or beak. Lined Topminnows are easily caught by dragging a Tanago hook and worm bit across the surface of the water.



Green Silverside, *Labidesthes vanhyningi*

Pencil-thin with a red beak-like snout and semi-translucent, Green Silversides is a southern specialty. Green Silversides are closely related to the silvery looking Brook Silverside, *Labidesthes sicculus*. But the Brook Silverside has a midlateral stripe that narrows in front of the first dorsal fin and its range in North Carolina is restricted to the lower French Broad River in Madison County. The Green Silverside has a midlateral stripe that usually expands in front of the first dorsal fin and its current range in North Carolina

is restricted to the Pee Dee River, the Lumber, Waccamaw, and lower Cape Fear River basins. Lake Waccamaw has Green Silversides in good numbers by the dam.



In Lake Waccamaw pay particular attention to the federally-threatened Waccamaw Silverside, *Menidia extensa*, which is currently co-existing with the recently naturally colonizing Green Silverside. The Waccamaw Silverside is 1 of 3 species found solely in Lake Waccamaw (the other two being Waccamaw Darter and Waccamaw Killifish). Waccamaw Silverside has a snout that is rounded when viewed from above, whereas the Green Silverside has a snout that is triangular when viewed from above.



A bit trickier to catch, silversides, family Atherinopsidae, can be tricked into biting by dragging a size 30 Tanago hook with a red worm bit across the surface of the water in erratic patterns.

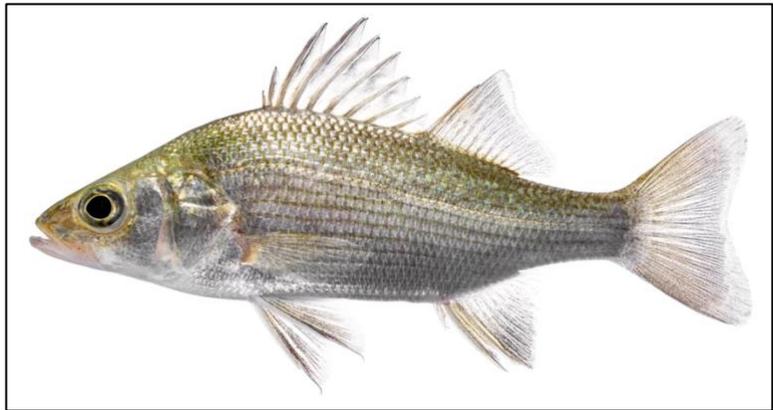
Eastern Mosquitofish, *Gambusia holbrooki*

Abundant and capable of easily overpopulating, Eastern Mosquitofish are likely the most common species in Lake Waccamaw. Eastern Mosquitofish is small, typically under two inches and very aggressive - easily making a day of microfishing for other species frustrating. Eastern Mosquitofish is in the Livebearer Family, Poeciliidae, and females can be seen with gravid spots in the belly. They are most common in shallow water, swimming just below the surface.



White Perch, *Morone americana*

Often confused with White Bass, *Morone chrysops*, White Perch are normally a bit smaller, lack a median tooth patch on the tongue, and the two dorsal fins are distinctly joined by a membrane. Not a true Perch, family Percidae, but a member of the Temperate Bass Family, Moronidae, White Perch are normally silvery to white in coloration, although some specimens may have shading. Abundant and capable of quickly overpopulating a waterbody, White Perch are often considered a "nuisance" specie, but coincidentally make great table fare! They prefer low-salinity estuaries but frequently inhabit coastal rivers and lakes over mud, sand or silt bottoms in open water.



Florida Bass, *Micropterus salmoides*

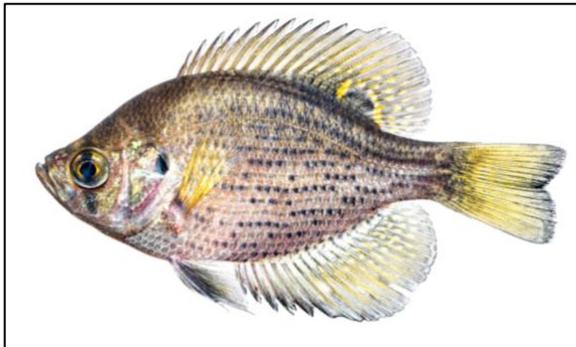
Two species that need no introduction, Florida Bass and Largemouth Bass, *Micropterus nigricans*, are America's favorite sport fishes. Capable of growing to nearly 25 pounds, Florida Bass and Largemouth Bass have a huge following among anglers as they fight hard and jump consistently. These fish prefer underwater cover, docks, and rocky areas. Lifespan may reach 10-15 years. Florida Largemouth Bass predominate in Lake Waccamaw, but there is also evidence of Florida Largemouth Bass X Largemouth Bass hybrids inhabiting the lake.

The non-field image of the bass to the right is most likely a Florida Bass, because it was caught in Onslow County, NC. However, the possibility also exists that it could be a Largemouth Bass, or a hybrid between the two species.



Flier, *Centrarchus macropterus*

Flier, the only member of the monospecific genus *Centrarchus*, are commonly found across the Southeast. Dark green – blackish, Flier has dorsal and anal fins which are quite large and may reach the caudal peduncle. Flier is common around 5 inches but can grow much larger. Flier is found in slow flowing streams, lakes, ponds, oxbows, and swamps and are normally taken on worms or via microfishing. In Lake Waccamaw, Flier are found in the canals around the lake and at the dam area, though they prefer dense cover and vegetation.



Warmouth, *Lepomis gulosus*

A fish that causes more identification confusion than any other sunfish species, Warmouth are shy during the day and lurk around sunken cover or vegetation. They are more active at night when they come out to hunt. The mouth, as one can suspect, is rather large and Warmouth have no problem taking spinnerbaits or lures.

Warmouth are commonly confused with the Mud Sunfish, *Acantharchus pomotis*, but an easy way to check is to rub your hands laterally across the fish's scales. Warmouth and every other sunfish species, except the Mud Sunfish, have ctenoid scales which are rough to the touch. The more uncommon and reclusive Mud Sunfish, however, has cycloid scales, which are smooth to the touch. The canals around the lake are more prone to hold Warmouth than the lake itself.



Bluegill, *Lepomis macrochirus*

A fish that many children have grown up catching while learning how to fish, Bluegill are super-common in and widely distributed across North America. Seemingly when nothing else will bite, even Redbreast Sunfish, ol' Bluegill remains faithful, energetic, and aggressive. Bluegill are best identified by the large blue-black operculum just behind the gills. Bluegills will not have any other coloration on the operculum. There are two "subspecies", known as Hand Painted Bluegill and Coppernose Bluegill, that may be elevated to species status in the future. While more commonly found in Florida, we have taken the Coppernose Bluegill, *Lepomis macrochirus purpurascens* here in the Carolinas. Coppernose Bluegill are typically darker, larger and have a cream or copper-colored bar around the nose that stands out and is easily identifiable. All Bluegill will readily take worms under a bobber or bottom-fished most anywhere in and around Lake Waccamaw.



Green Sunfish, *Lepomis cyanellus*

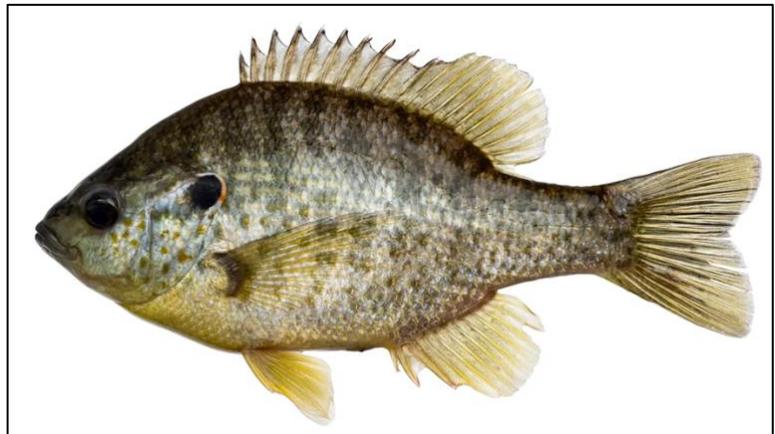
A less common, but still widespread sunfish species, Green Sunfish has a large mouth and males normally have orange coloration on their fins. Green Sunfish commonly hybridizes with other sunfish species, and this results in unusual hybrids that can be more numerous in a stream than the parent species. Green Sunfish likes sluggish backwaters, lakes, ponds, and intermittent streams with gravel, sand, or bedrock bottoms. They can tolerate very muddy conditions where oxygen levels may be too low for other fish to survive. Green Sunfish likes to hang around sunken debris, vegetation and rocks - basically, anything it can hide under. In Lake Waccamaw they are commonly found in the Waccamaw River leading out of the dam and if the habitat is right, can be taken with worms on the bottom fairly easily.

Note: This is the first reported occurrence of this non-native species in the entire Waccamaw River basin. Tim believes he first caught the species in 2017 and in subsequent years.



Redear Sunfish, *Lepomis microlophus*

Also known as “shellcrackers” for their affinity for eating snails and bivalve mollusks, especially Asiatic Clam, Redear Sunfish is the true giant of the common sunfishes within the genus *Lepomis*. Easily identified by the black operculum with a reddish-orange edge, Redear Sunfish can grow to well over 16 inches, weighing up to several pounds. “Shellcrackers” are not as shy as some other sunfish species and will wander around in the daytime hunting for snails or other mollusks along shorelines. They can be taken by bottom fishing worms or crickets in and around Lake Waccamaw.



Redbreast Sunfish, *Lepomis auritus*

Redbreast Sunfish prefer vegetated and rocky pools in streams and lake margins for its habitat. Its diet can include insects, snails, and other small invertebrates. A panfish popular with anglers, Redbreast Sunfish are also kept in an aquarium by fish hobbyists. Redbreast Sunfish are usually caught with live bait such as nightcrawlers on the bottom or under a bobber but can be taken on smaller spinning lures or even flies. Easily identified by the orange-reddish breast and belly and a thin operculum, Redbreast Sunfish can reach nearly a foot in length, although most specimens are around 4-8 inches. They are not shy, and many can be caught when nothing else is biting, even well into the winter.



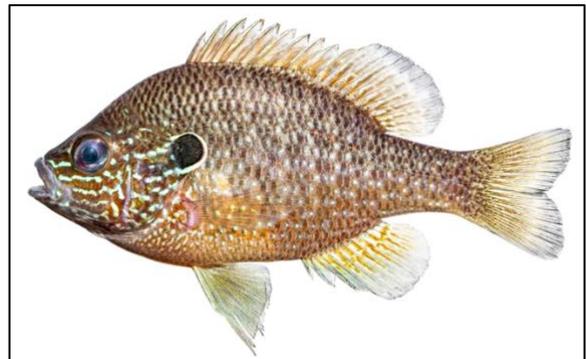
Spotted Sunfish, *Lepomis punctatus*

Closely related to the Redspotted Sunfish, *Lepomis miniatus*, Redear Sunfish, and Pumpkinseed, *Lepomis gibbosus*, Spotted Sunfish have black dots along the flanks in rows forming patterns in some populations while other populations, notably in black or tannic water, will produce dark brown Spotted Sunfish with no or very few spots. Found in the southeastern United States from the Cape Fear River in North Carolina west to Tennessee and down to Florida, Spotted Sunfish are normally much smaller than other sunfish species like Bluegill, Redbreast Sunfish, and Redear Sunfish. Spotted Sunfish seem to like slow moving water and actively feed on insects and insect larvae but will readily take a small worm bottom fished near them. We have only seen them below the dam at Lake Waccamaw.



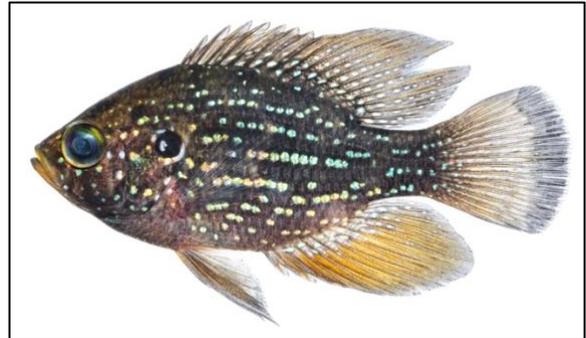
Dollar Sunfish, *Lepomis marginatus*

Seemingly a smaller version of the Longear Sunfish, *Lepomis megalotis*, which is not found in North Carolina, Dollar Sunfish only reach a maximum size of no more than 5 inches and have a very small mouth, making it a challenge to catch on all but micro gear. Dollar Sunfish prefer dense aquatic vegetation and will dart out quickly from underneath cover for a worm bit dropped nearby. They can be taken commonly at the Lake Waccamaw dam under vegetation, roots and sunken logs and debris and in the canals around the lake. There is a possibility in the future of a splitting Dollar Sunfish into two species – a “Western” and an “Eastern” Dollar Sunfish. “Western” Dollar Sunfish tend to be larger, thicker, and more robust while “Eastern” Dollar Sunfish which are normally thinner and not so large.



Bluespotted Sunfish, *Enneacanthus gloriosus*

A large breeding male Bluespotted Sunfish is undoubtedly the most attractive sunfish species, even though they only reach a size of around 4 inches. With a body covered in blue, white, or even iridescent spots, this species can only be confused with the Banded Sunfish, *Enneacanthus obesus*. However, Banded Sunfish typically have gold dots and coloration while Bluespotted Sunfish do not. Habitat for Bluespotted Sunfish includes ponds, lakes, creeks, streams, and less often smaller rivers. It can tolerate slightly brackish water in areas near the coast and it thrives in small backwaters filled with vegetation and tree roots. Taken much easier at night while using a headlamp and micro rod along muddy shorelines as they try to avoid larger, toothy predators, Bluespotted Sunfish will sometimes take a worm in this manner. But they will also quickly inhale bug larvae, particularly mayfly larvae. We have only seen them in the tannic and blackwater canals and streams around Lake Waccamaw. Bluespotted Sunfish also make great aquarium pets and very attractive ones at that.



Blackbanded Sunfish, *Enneacanthus chaetodon*

Without a doubt the hardest and most frustrating of the sunfish species to catch via hook and line, many a microangler has struck out while going for Blackbanded Sunfish. Super wary, prone to lots of cover in tannic to black water streams, Blackbanded Sunfish are notorious for refusing to take a bait presented perfectly to them. They occur from New Jersey along the East Coast and then south, mostly along the Coastal Plain, to Florida. Reported to grow to over 3 inches but this is not common, and most Blackbanded Sunfish are taken at 1 ½ - 2 inches. Identifying features include the six obvious black vertical bands along the body, the first one being through the eye. Blackbanded Sunfish are better targeted at night, although I caught mine on a mild December day in North Carolina on a red worm bit and size 30 Tanago hook. Overall, we believe that a bug larva is a much better choice when targeting Blackbanded Sunfish. In Lake Waccamaw we have only seen these fish on the Bella Coola Road side of the lake near the boat ramp hiding in dense vegetation.



Mud Sunfish, *Acantharchus pomotis*

Mud Sunfish are in the sunfish family, but they remain in a separate genus with only one species. This reclusive and uncommon species may be confused with the Warmouth, but Mud Sunfish have cycloid scales, which are smooth to the touch while Warmouth and every other sunfish species have ctenoid scales which are rough to the touch. Mud Sunfish can be taken during the day hiding among roots or underneath banks in as little as two inches of water, but nighttime headlamp microfishing is a more effective method as these fish move into the shallows to avoid daytime toothy predators. Mud Sunfish do grow to 8 inches or so, depending on who you ask, and they are often found in the same streams with Warmouth albeit in different habitat. They prefer the canals around Lake Waccamaw in slow, vegetated and heavily covered areas. Mud Sunfish respond better to bug larvae such as mayfly larvae than they do to worms, but some anglers have taken them with worms and even lures.



Yellow Perch, *Perca flavescens*

Yellow Perch look similar to darters but grow much larger, with the world record still hanging around at 4 pounds, 3 ounces. However, most specimens caught are around one pound if not smaller. Yellow Perch identification is very straightforward: a series of black vertical lines along the flanks over a yellowish-gold body and a long, pointed snout. Yellow Perch are tasty and abundant, and not too shy to pass up a bait on the bottom during the day, though they are more easily caught at night. Yellow Perch can be caught on worms on the bottom as well as jigs and lures. We catch them routinely from the new boat landing on Canal Cove Road and in most cases after sunset.



Waccamaw Darter, *Etheostoma perlongum*

Reaching no more than 3 ½ inches in length and with very effective natural camouflage, Waccamaw Darter is 1 of 3 endemic fish species native only to Lake Waccamaw (the other two being Waccamaw Killifish and Waccamaw Silverside). Waccamaw Darter is in the Perch family (Percidae) and very slightly resemble miniature Yellow Perch. Waccamaw Darters prefer sand bottoms with some vegetation and can be difficult to see without a good pair of polarized sunglasses and movement from the fish itself. Bland and sand-colored with a series of small W's as patterning, Waccamaw Darters resemble thin and elongated, Southern Tessellated Darters, *Etheostoma maculaticeps*. The two species would be hard to tell apart, however, the Waccamaw Darter is restricted solely to Lake Waccamaw and the surrounding creeks and canals. They can be caught in the daytime or evening in very shallow water with Tanago hooks and small bits of worm dragged across the bottom substrate to get their attention.



You can follow Tim and all of his fishing adventures on his Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/tim.aldridge.5074> and on the NANFA Facebook page

If you are interested in reading more of Tim's microfishing exploits please consider these publications:

- Aldridge, T. 2018. Why micofishing? American Currents 43 (4):19-21.
- Aldridge, T. 2019. Microfishing for darters. American Currents 44(1):29-32.
- Aldridge, T. 2019. Redhorsing around in western North Carolina. American Currents 44(4):19-22.
- Aldridge, T. 2020. The Seagreen affair. American Currents 45(2):24-26

Table. Fish species known from Lake Waccamaw and adjacent canals.¹

Lepisosteidae - Gars	Atherinopsidae – New World Silverside
<i>Lepisosteus osseus</i> – Longnose Gar	<i>Labidesthes vanhyningi</i> – Green Silverside
Amiidae - Bowfins	<i>Menidia extensa</i> – Waccamaw Silverside
<i>Amia calva</i> - Bowfin	Fundulidae - Topminnows
Anguillidae – Freshwater Eels	<i>Fundulus chrysotus</i> – Golden Topminnow
<i>Anguilla rostrata</i> – American Eel	<i>Fundulus heteroclitus</i> - Mummichog
Dorosomatidae – Thread Herrings	<i>Fundulus lineolatus</i> – Lined Topminnow
<i>Dorosoma cepedianum</i> – Gizzard Shad	<i>Fundulus waccamensis</i> – Waccamaw Killifish
Catostomidae - Suckers	Poeciliidae - Livebearers
<i>Erimyzon oblongus</i> – Eastern Creek Chubsucker	<i>Gambusia holbrooki</i> – Eastern Mosquitofish
<i>Erimyzon sucetta</i> – Lake Chubsucker	Moronidae – Temperate Basses
Cyprinidae - Carps	<i>Morone americana</i> – White Perch
<i>Cyprinus carpio</i> – Common Carp	Percidae – Darters and Perches
Xenocyprididae - Sharpbellies	<i>Etheostoma fusiforme</i> – Swamp Darter
<i>Ctenopharyngodon idella</i> – Grass Carp	<i>Etheostoma perlongum</i> – Waccamaw Darter
Leuciscidae - Minnows	<i>Etheostoma serrifer</i> – Sawcheek Darter
<i>Alburnops chalybaeus</i> – Ironcolor Shiner	<i>Perca flavescens</i> – Yellow Perch
<i>Alburnops petersoni</i> – Coastal Shiner	Centrarchidae – Sunfishes
<i>Notemigonus crysoleucas</i> – Golden Shiner	<i>Acantharchus pomotis</i> – Mud Sunfish
<i>Notropis maculatus</i> – Taillight Shiner	<i>Centrarchus macropterus</i> - Flier
Ictaluridae – North American Catfishes	<i>Enneacanthus chaetodon</i> – Blackbanded Sunfish
<i>Ameiurus catus</i> – White Catfish	<i>Enneacanthus gloriosus</i> – Bluespotted Sunfish
<i>Ameiurus natalis</i> – Yellow Bullhead	<i>Enneacanthus obesus</i> – Banded Sunfish
<i>Ameiurus nebulosus</i> – Brown Bullhead	<i>Lepomis auritus</i> – Redbreast Sunfish
<i>Ameiurus platycephalus</i> – Flat Bullhead	<i>Lepomis cyanellus</i> – Green Sunfish
<i>Ictalurus punctatus</i> – Channel Catfish	<i>Lepomis gibbosus</i> - Pumpkinseed
<i>Noturus gyrinus</i> – Tadpole Madtom	<i>Lepomis gulosus</i> - Warmouth
<i>Noturus insignis</i> – Margined Madtom	<i>Lepomis macrochirus</i> - Bluegill
<i>Noturus</i> sp. “Lake Waccamaw Broadtail” Madtom	<i>Lepomis marginatus</i> – Dollar Sunfish
<i>Pylodictis olivaris</i> – Flathead Catfish	<i>Lepomis microlophus</i> – Redear Sunfish
Esocidae - Pikes	<i>Lepomis punctatus</i> – Spotted Sunfish
<i>Esox americanus</i> – Redfin Pickerel	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i> – Florida Bass
<i>Esox niger</i> – Chain Pickerel	<i>Pomoxis nigromaculatus</i> - Black Crappie
Umbridae - Mudminnows	Elassomatidae – Pygmy Sunfishes
<i>Umbra pygmaea</i> – Eastern Mudminnow	<i>Elassoma evergladei</i> - Everglades Pygmy Sunfish
Aphredoderidae - Pirate Perches	<i>Elassoma boehlkei</i> – Carolina Pygmy Sunfish
<i>Aphredoderus ornatus</i> – Blackstripe Pirate Perch	

This table was adopted from:

- A Fish Checklist for Lake Waccamaw State Park <https://www.ncparks.gov/state-parks/lake-waccamaw-state-park/education/about-park>
- Tracy, B. H., F. C. Rohde, S. A. Smith, J. L. Bisette, and G. M. Hogue. 2024. A guide to North Carolina’s freshwater fishes. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC.
- Tracy, B. H., F. C. Rohde, and G. M. Hogue. 2020. An annotated atlas of the freshwater fishes of North Carolina. Southeastern Fishes Council Proceeding. No. 60. Volume 1. 198pp. (Available at: <https://trace.tennessee.edu/sfcproceedings/vol1/iss60/1>).