ROBUST REDHORSE

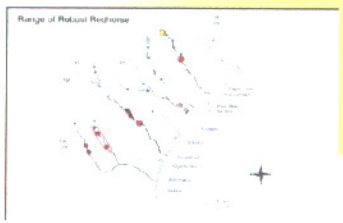
Moxostoma robustum

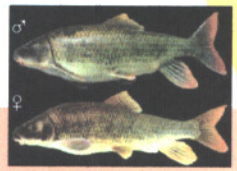
INTRODUCTION:

Edward Cope originally described the robust redhorse in 1870 from a specimen collected from the Yadkin River in North Carolina. He described the specimen as "stout in all its proportions and with marked coloration". Following Cope's death his collections were lost and no other records of the robust redhorse occurred until the 1980's. The species was recognized again when it was "rediscovered" in the Oconee River, GA in 1991.

It is believed the robust redhorse once inhabited a range from the Yadkin/Pee Dee River system in North Carolina across the Atlantic Slope to the Altamaha River in Georgia.

The robust redhorse is currently found in the Oconee and Ocmulgee rivers in Georgia, the Savannah River, Georgia/South Carolina. In the last two years three specimens have been collected in the Pee Dee River, North Carolina/South Carolina. A population of robust redhorse has been established by stocking in the Broad River of Georgia.

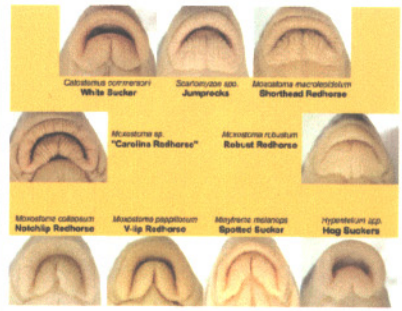




ROBUST REDHORSE FACTS:

- Large, long-lived member of the redhorse sucker group.
- Average length in sampled populations is 25 inches.
- Average weight in sampled populations is about 9 pounds.
- Spawning typically occurs over shallow gravel deposits from late April to early June when the water temperature is 18-24 C.
- Non-spawning adults prefer deeper, moderately swift areas in or near outside bends, often in association with woody debris.
- Adults feed almost exclusively on bivalves, including the Asiatic clam, *Corbicula*.
- Fish have molariform pharyngeal teeth, used for crushing bivalves.
- Fish have a rose-colored caudal fin (tail), particularly in males and juveniles.
- Fish have a fleshy lower lip.

PARTNERS:

The Robust Redhorse Conservation Committee was formed in 1995 to develop an understanding of the biology and status of the species, and to reestablish reproducing populations within its historic range. Committee membership includes:

- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
- Georgia Power Company
- Carolina Power & Light Company
- Duke Power Company
- South Carolina Electric and Gas Company
- Georgia Wildlife Federation
- U. S. Geological Survey (Biological Resources Division)
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U. S. Forest Service
- U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Georgia River Network
- South Carolina Aquarium