

BLACKMOUTH SHINER

Notropis melanostomus

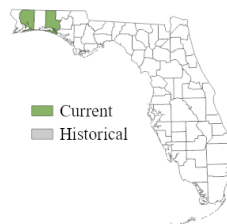
Order: Cypriniformes

Family: Cyprinidae

FNAI Ranks: G2/S1

U.S. Status: none

FL Status: Threatened



Description: Minnow-sized fish, up to 1 - 1.5 in. (25 - 38 mm), with large eyes, strongly upturned mouth, and nearly transparent fins; edges of dorsal scales black, dorsolateral pale grey area; black stripe along the midside that passes through the eye and onto snout; ventral surface silver; peritoneum black.

Similar Species: Blackmouth shiners are fairly nondescript and can be mistaken for other superficially similar minnows and young shiners; golden shiner (*Notemigonus crysoleucas*) has fleshy keel that extends from between the pelvic fins to the anal fin; pugnose minnow (*Opsopoeodus emiliae*) also has an upturned mouth, but the mouth shape has a peculiar “puckered” appearance.

Habitat: Calm, shallow backwaters of blackwater streams below steep, vegetated banks; usually found in schools.

Seasonal Occurrence: Present in all seasons. However, may be absent from sites for years, only to reappear.

Florida Distribution: Restricted to backwater pools of lower Blackwater River and Pond Creek near Milton, Santa Rosa County, and the Shoal River near Mossy Head, Walton County.

Range-wide Distribution: Pascagoula River system in Mississippi and above-mentioned Florida sites.

Conservation Status: Urban and industrial development of the Milton, Florida, region is rapidly degrading habitat; extirpation of Florida populations is likely in foreseeable future.

Protection and Management: Maintain integrity of stream systems, prevent

Blackmouth Shiner

Notropis melanostomus

habitat destruction and pollution.

References: Bortone 1989, Bortone 1993, Gilbert (ed.) 1992, Hoehn 1998, Page and Burr 1998.



© Gray Bass courtesy of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



Blackmouth Shiner

Notropis melanostomus

© Joe Tomelleri