

Fishes of the Jordan River

compiled by Dan Potts, local naturalist/ichthyologist, 2008

TROUTS, SALMONS (SALMONIDAE)

	<u>natives</u>	
Bonneville cutthroat trout	<i>Onchorhynchus clarki</i>	rare
	<u>introduced exotics</u>	
Brown trout	<i>Salmo trutta</i>	rare
Rainbow trout	<i>Onchorhynchus mykiss</i>	locally common, stocked annually

NOTE: All of the trouts are found primarily in and near tributary streams to the Jordan, except rainbows that are found in areas where they are stocked as sport fish by the State of Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.

MINNOWS (CYPRINIDAE)

	<u>natives</u>	
Redside shiner	<i>Richardsonius balteatus</i>	locally common
Speckled dace	<i>Rhinichthys osculus</i>	locally common
Utah chub	<i>Gila atraria</i>	uncommon
	<u>introduced exotics</u>	
Common carp	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>	common, pervasive
Goldfish	<i>Carassius auratus</i>	rare
Fathead minnow	<i>Pimephales promelas</i>	rare
Golden shiner	<i>Notemigonus crysoleucus</i>	rare

NOTE: Common carp are so common that they account for the vast majority of the fish by weight throughout the Jordan River. Fathead minnow and golden shiner were introduced into Utah Lake as a prey species and have found their way downstream in very limited numbers. Goldfish were probably introduced as pets, but have persisted over the years. The three remaining natives are less common and mostly found in upstream reaches, especially below the Narrows.

SUCKERS (CATOSTOMIDAE)

	<u>natives</u>	
Utah sucker	<i>Catostomus ardens</i>	common
Mountain sucker	<i>Catostomus platyrhynchus</i>	uncommon
June sucker	<i>Chasmistes liorus</i>	rare

NOTE: Utah sucker are the second most abundant fish species by weight in the Jordan River, and are found throughout. Mountain sucker are much less numerous and much smaller. June sucker is a "lake" species of Utah Lake, and are currently listed as an endangered species by the Federal Government.

CATFISHES (ICTALURIDAE)

introduced exotics

Black bullhead	<i>Ameiurus melas</i>	common
Channel catfish	<i>Ictalurus punctatus</i>	common, occasionally stocked

NOTE: Both species are more abundant in the upstream reaches above the Narrows.

LIVEBEARERS (POECILIIDAE)

introduced exotics

Mosquitofish	<i>Gambusia affinis</i>	common
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NOTE: Mosquitofish are stocked by county mosquito abatement departments to control mosquitos, and are very common in shallow backwater areas.

TEMPERATE BASSES (PERCICHTHYIDAE)

introduced exotics

White bass	<i>Morone chrysops</i>	common
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NOTE: White bass can be found throughout the river, but are much more common in upstream areas, especially from May till June when they make a spawning run.

SUNFISHES (CENTRARCHIDAE)

introduced exotic

Green sunfish	<i>Lepomis cyanellus</i>	common
Bluegill	<i>Lepomis macrochirus</i>	uncommon
Black crappie	<i>Pomoxis nigromaculatus</i>	uncommon
Largemouth bass	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>	uncommon

NOTE: Most of these species are primarily found in calm, backwater areas throughout the river. Green sunfish are the most widespread, and are found in shallow areas with cover.

PERCHES (PERCIDAE)

introduced exotic

Yellow perch	<i>Perca flavescens</i>	uncommon
Walleye	<i>Stizostedion vitreum</i>	uncommon

NOTE: Yellow perch can be found throughout the river, but are not normally a river species. Walleye do well in rivers and can be found throughout the Jordan, but are more numerous upstream, especially during their spring spawning run in April.

Ecology

There are a total of only seven native species found in the river, whereas introduced exotics number 16 on this list. The most common and pervasive species in the river is the common carp. Introduced into the area in the late 1800s carp have had a rather deleterious effect on the river's ecology due to its feeding and spawning habits which contribute to the turbidity of

Fishes of the Jordan River, Potts, 2008, cont., page 3

the water. Other introduced exotics that have significant impacts on the ecology include both catfishes and white bass. The only significant native species remaining in the river is the Utah sucker that appears to be doing well. The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources stocks both rainbow trout and channel catfish in the river to support a sport fishery, however, recent findings of various pollutants suggest that it may not be safe to eat any fish from the river, especially in downstream areas.

Other species that may be present, but were not included in the list above because of the improbability of their occurrence include natives: leatherside chub, longnose dace, mountain whitefish, and mottled sculpin; and introduced exotics: white sucker, brook trout, and smallmouth bass.

References:

Fishes of Utah, W. F. Sigler and J. W. Sigler, Univ. of Utah Press, 1996, 375 pp.

The Fish Fauna of Utah Lake, S. Ross Hatton, Master's Thesis, BYU, 1932, 64 pp.