



Rare and Endangered Biota of Florida: Vol. II. Fishes

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"The series has served as the definitive reference compendium on endangered and threatened species in Florida and is widely recognized as among the most authoritative such works in the nation. . . . I hope this revised series reinvigorates our resolve and commitment to endangered and threatened species conservation. These volumes provide a comprehensive database from which to embark."

--Robert M. Brantly, executive director,

Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission

(from the Foreword to the series)

Increasing human populations and their use of land and water resources are placing unprecedented stress upon many plant and animal species unique to Florida. Native habitats are rapidly being lost to agriculture, ranching, and forestry, as well as residential and commercial development. Conservation measures have been taken, with success in some cases, but in other cases the necessity for more stringent measures to protect the native fauna and flora has been proven. Though substantial strides have been made in the last decade, many Florida species are still perilously near extinction.

In the decades since the original publication of the Rare and Endangered Biota of Florida series, new data have been gathered and the condition of the natural environment has changed. In light of the continuing and increasing need to inform the residents, private and government agencies, and the business sector of the state, the Florida Committee on Rare and Endangered Plants and Animals (FCREPA) has rewritten the original series.

Each volume is arranged in order of species status: extinct, extirpated, endangered, threatened, rare, and special concern. The account of each species contains data categories of taxonomy, description, population size and trend, distribution range and history of distribution, geographic status, habitat requirements, and vulnerability of species and habitat. The review of the environmental situation of the species includes causes of threat, responses to habitat modification, demographic characteristics, key behaviors, conservation measures that have been taken, and those proposed for the future.

Tables list species currently on the FCREPA list with their status. Also included are the current designations of status by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission designations. A distribution map of Florida with an inset of the continental United States, Caribbean, and Central and upper South America shows the range of each species, and photographs or finely drawn illustrations of the species accompany the description.

Although 39 fish species are listed--most of which appeared in the original volume--none has become extinct. However, the Okaloosa darter, endemic to bayou tributaries in that Panhandle county, is still losing ground to the introduced brown darter. Only one native freshwater fish has been added to the list, the Southern starhead topminnow, but much new information on the reappearing species has been gathered from survey work or directed studies, and life histories of individual species have been initiated in response to concern about their status.

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