

**Additional Observations of the Striped Mullet,
Mugil cephalus (Mugilidae), in Oklahoma¹**

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Occasional specimens of the striped mullet, *Mugil cephalus* Linnaeus, have been taken by various means from the Red River below Denison Dam (Riggs, 1957) with at least six records of this typically marine fish being known (Riggs and Bonn, 1959). The sporadic nature of the records might suggest that individuals or only small populations occasionally wander up the Red River, but recent evidence suggests otherwise.

On 12 June 1967 several graduate students and the authors observed several large, swimming aggregations of striped mullet in the Red River below Denison Dam and 10 specimens (260-390 mm standard length)

¹Contribution from the University of Oklahoma Biological Station, Willits, Oklahoma

were collected with electro-fishing gear. Five of the specimens were retained alive for observation purposes in Lake Texoma water at the University of Oklahoma Biological Station until the close of the summer session, 6 August 1967, at which time they appeared in good condition and weighed from 9 oz to 2 lbs. An attempt to visually locate striped mullet below the dam on 12 July 1967 was unsuccessful.

The striped mullet migrates into freshwater streams only during the warm summer months, but survives if landlocked in favorable conditions, and feeds on detritus and periphyton (Nikol'skii, 1961). Thus, since the feeding habits are not conducive to capture by hook and line methods, and the Red River is not fished regularly with appropriate gear, it is reasonable to assume that the occasional records represent chance captures from fairly large populations that were present temporarily during the summers.

Accurate determinations of the frequency and duration of visits and estimates of the number of the striped mullet that utilize the Red River would require extensive effort with special gear, and is probably impractical. Records of observations from the walkways below the dam by trained personnel would be a more feasible method of obtaining information on the status of this species in the Red River.

On the basis of our meager evidence, one might predict the successful survival of the striped mullet in Lake Texoma if access were gained. As in the past, evidence of mullet in the Red River will probably continue in the form of occasional specimens.

LITERATURE CITED

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