A Pocket Guide to Kansas Stream Fishes

By Jessica Mounts
Illustrations © Joseph Tomelleri

Sponsored by Chickadee Checkoff, Westar Energy Green Team, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, Kansas Alliance for Wetlands & Streams, and Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society
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Cover Photo: Photo by Ryan Waters. KDWPT Stream Survey and Assessment Program collected these male Orangespotted Sunfish from Buckner Creek in Hodgeman County, Kansas. The fish were catalogued and returned to the stream after the photograph.
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A bout 120 species of freshwater fish are found in the streams of Kansas. While some stream fish grow quite large, many of them rarely reach lengths of more than a few inches, and limited public access to smaller streams keeps them from the view of the casual angler and naturalist.

Three major streams are open to the public in Kansas: the Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri rivers. Streams located on private land are accessible only with permission from the landowner.

We hope this guide initiates a genuine interest in the fishes of Kansas, and that readers will seek additional information from the resources listed in this pocket guide.

The size ranges and distribution maps for the fish species in this guide were created from data collected since 1994 by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism’s Stream Survey and Assessment Program.
Kansas regulations restrict the transport of live fish and the use of threatened and endangered species for bait. For more information, see www.ksoutdoors.com.

Fish Anatomy

Arkansas Darter

Neosho Madtom
Sturgeons (Family Acipenseridae)

Sturgeon are among the most ancient of fish species in Kansas, with fossil records dating back to the Upper Cretaceous period. They are known for their unique body shape and lack of scales, except for the large, bony plates called scutes that run along the sides of their bodies. The sturgeon of Kansas are small, rarely reaching lengths over 30 inches. However, other species in the Pacific Northwest can reach lengths of up to twelve feet; these larger species are often harvested exclusively for their roe (eggs), which are made into caviar.

Sturgeon are slow-growing, with some species living 100 years. They are sensitive to pollution and environmental changes. Current research suggests that dams block migration, change flow, cause heavy sedimentation and reduce the amount of oxygen available to fish. These factors have contributed to the Pallid Sturgeon being listed as endangered by natural resource agencies.

With their flattened, shovel-shaped snout, sturgeons “stir” the bottom of the stream bed, coaxing small insects and crustaceans from between the small rocks. They use special organs called barbels to sense food, but have no teeth and cannot grab or chew their prey.
Shovelnose Sturgeon

*Scaphirhynchus platorynchus*

**Size:** Common length of <30 inches, maximum length of 35 inches.

**Description:** Long-bodied with five rows of bony scales along the sides. Head flattened with a shovel-shaped snout, mouth located on the underneath side of the head. Four barbels of equal length in a straight line in front of the mouth. Dorsal fin with 30-36 rays, anal fin with 18-23 rays. Top lobe of caudal fin much longer than lower lobe. Tan or buff colored back and sides fading to a pale belly.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Shovelnose Sturgeon is found in large rivers and their tributaries with strong currents and gravel or sandy bottoms, where it feeds on larval insects.
Pallid Sturgeon

*Scaphirhynchus albus*

**Conservation Status:** Federally Endangered

**Size:** Common length of <39 inches, maximum length of 60 inches.

**Description:** Similar to the Shovelnose Sturgeon, except the four barbels are not in a straight line across the snout, the center two being farther forward and only about half as long as the outer barbels. Dorsal fin with 37-43 rays, anal fin with 24-29 rays.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Pallid Sturgeon is found in larger rivers with strong currents and gravel or sandy bottoms, where it feeds on larval insects.
Minnows (Family Cyprinidae)

The minnow family is the largest family of fishes in North America. They have toothless jaws, and rely on unique ways to chew and digest food. Minnows have special structures near the back of the mouth called pharyngeal teeth that help crush food, others feed by filtering microscopic plants and animals from the water. Minnows have scales (except on their heads) and are usually torpedo-shaped with small mouths and soft, spine-less fins.

Most minnow species grow to only a few inches long, but larger minnows, such as carp, are an important source of food and recreational fishing. The smaller fishes of this family are an important part of the stream ecosystem and food web. Many of them are food for larger predators, and some are hosts for larval freshwater mussels.

While they have a lot of things in common, minnows vary greatly in their sensitivity to environmental changes. Some are tolerant of pollution, while others are more sensitive. Minnows vary widely in the ways they reproduce. Some lay eggs in nests, others have free-floating eggs, or lay eggs among the stems of plants.
Southern Redbelly Dace

\textit{Chrosomus erythrogaster}

\textbf{Conservation Status:} Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

\textbf{Size:} Common length of 1½-3 inches, maximum length of 3½ inches.

\textbf{Description:} Slender bodied with dark stripes along the sides. Mouth small and eye large. Body scales tiny to nearly invisible. Typically olive-brown with scattered spots at the back, but breeding males display yellow coloring on their fins and red on their lower bodies.

\textbf{Comments:} Native to Kansas, the Southern Redbelly Dace can be found in small, clear streams near springs, where it feeds on microorganisms and algae that grow on plants and rocks. Eggs are laid in spring in the gravel nests of the Central Stoneroller and/or Creek Chubs.
Western Blacknose Dace

*Rhinichthys obtusus*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 2-3 inches, maximum length of 4 inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with the sides covered with many dark specks. Mouth overhanging with one barbel in each corner, snout pointed. Usually light and dark brown in color, with breeding males showing an orange stripe along the sides.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Western Blacknose Dace can be found in clear streams and small rivers with gravel bottoms in Nemaha County, where it feeds on small insects. Eggs are laid in early summer.
Bluntface Shiner

_Cyprinella camura_

**Size:** Common length of 2½-4 inches, maximum length of 5 inches.

**Description:** Deep bodied with a nearly terminal mouth. Anal fin with 9 rays; rounded dorsal fin with black streaks or blotches between last few rays. Bluish or silvery in color with breeding males showing salmon or pink on the fins.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Bluntface Shiner is found in fast moving and clear waters with gravel bottoms, often near riffles.

Red Shiner

_Cyprinella lutrensis_

**Size:** Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3 inches.

**Description:** Deep bodied with a terminal mouth. Dorsal fin over or just behind pelvic fin. Breeding males are blue in color with a dark mark behind the head and reddish fins. Females and non-breeding males are bluish-silver.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Red Shiner is common in almost every body of water in the state. It thrives in unstable areas prone to flooding, where it feeds mostly on insects, and spawns in the nests of other fishes.
Spotfin Shiner
_Cyprinella spiloptera_

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 2½-4 inches, maximum length of 4¾ inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with flattened sides and a terminal mouth. Anal fin with 8 rays; dorsal fin with dark streaks between last few rays. Silvery in color, with breeding males being a steely-blue with dusky streak on sides and yellowish coloring on the lower fins.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Spotfin Shiner has been documented only in the Spring River drainage in Kansas. It prefers moderate currents near clean gravel bars, where it feeds on small insects drifting in the current.
Central Stoneroller

*Campostoma anomalum*

**Size:** Common length of 3-6 inches, maximum length of 8½ inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with a blunt snout and a crescent-shaped, overhanging mouth with a scraper-like edge on the lower lip. Fins short and rounded, greenish-gray in color with dark gray flecks.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Central Stoneroller can be found in small streams, usually in slower flowing riffles where it feeds on algae and microorganisms found in rocks and gravel. Spawning occurs over pebbled nests built by the male. Stonerollers can be seen surfacing and jumping vertically out of the water on warm fall and spring days.

Creek Chub

*Semotilus atromaculatus*

**Size:** Common length of 5-7 inches, maximum length of 12 inches.

**Description:** Cylindrical and slender bodied with a large head and large, terminal mouth. Anal fin with 8 rays. Scales near head are small, with dark markings on either side of the upper lip and chin. Dark olive in color with silvery and iridescent sides and a dark blotch at the front base of the dorsal fin. Breeding males show iridescent green and red coloring with a small red spot in front of the dorsal fin.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Creek Chub is found mostly in small, clear, permanent streams, but will survive in pools during drought. It can be caught on hook and line, and feeds mainly on other fishes, insects and small stream animals.
Peppered Chub and Shoal Chub

*Macrhybopsis tetranaema* & *Macrhybopsis hyostoma*


**Size**: Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3 inches.

**Description**: Both species are slender bodied with a mouth located beneath the snout. Scattered dark spots “pepper” the sides and back, with silvery sides fading to a white belly. The Peppered Chub has a small eye and two barbels at each corner of the mouth. The Shoal Chub has a larger eye by comparison to the Peppered Chub, and has one barbel at each corner of the mouth.

**Comments**: Native to Kansas, both species prefer the shallow channels of large, sandy bottomed streams within the river current, where they feed on aquatic insects. The Peppered Chub is found almost exclusively in the Arkansas River Basin, while the Shoal Chub is found almost exclusively in the Kansas River Basin.
Silver Chub

*Macrhybopsis storeriana*

**Conservation Status:** Endangered in Kansas.

**Size:** Common length of 4-6 inches, maximum length of 9 inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with a large eye, small mouth located beneath a rounded snout and one barbel at each corner of the mouth. Yellowish-white with a bright silver patch in front of the eye and bright silver streak running along the sides.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Silver Chub is found in large sandy rivers, preferring deeper water in summer and sandy shallows in spring and fall. It prefers to search for food along the bottom, including small clams, insects and plant seeds.
Hornyhead Chub

and Redspot Chub

*Nocomis biguttatus & Nocomis asper*

**Conservation Status:** Both threatened in Kansas.

**Size:** Common length of 5-6 inches, maximum length of 10 inches.

**Description:** These two species are similar, but are found in different parts of the state. Body cylindrical with a large eye and moderately large scales. Mouth located beneath the snout and a barbel at each corner of the mouth. Greenish to olive on the back fading to yellowish-white sides and belly. A dusky stripe runs the length of the body ending in a dark spot at the base of the tail. Young may have an orange tail fin. Breeding males of both species show a red spot behind the eye, however it is more defined in the Redspot Chub.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, both species are found in streams with a steady flow of clear, cool water in deep runs and pools, especially in areas with aquatic plants at the edges. The **Hornyhead Chub** is found in the Kansas and Marais des Cygnes river basins, while the **Redspot Chub** is found in the Neosho and Spring rivers. Both species feed on small insects, crayfishes and snails.
Gravel Chub

Erimystax x-punctatus

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3½ inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with a mouth located beneath the snout and one barbel at each corner of the mouth. Pale greenish-yellow with scattered X-shaped markings on the sides, fading to a silvery belly.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Gravel Chub is found in gravel bottomed streams with deep riffles. It feeds on small particles found by probing around rocks and spawns on gravel bars with swift current.
Brassy Minnow

*Hybognathus hankinsoni*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3 inches.

**Description:** Stout-bodied with rounded sides and a small, crescent-shaped mouth. Dorsal fin rounded and located directly above pelvic fins. Brassy-yellow in color with a dusky stripe along the sides.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Brassy Minnow is found in small, clear streams with slow currents and organic matter on the bottom, where it feeds on insects and other small creatures.
Plains Minnow and Western Silvery Minnow

*Hybognathus placitus & Hybognathus argyritis*

**Conservation Status:** Both threatened in Kansas.  
**Size:** Common length of 3-4 inches, maximum length of 5-6 inches.  
**Description:** Slender bodied with a small, crescent-shaped mouth. Dorsal fin is high on the body and pointed. Straw-colored to silvery sides. The Western Silvery Minnow has a larger eye, larger scales and a heavier body by comparison to the Plains Minnow.  
**Comments:** Both of these minnows are native to Kansas. The Plains Minnow can be found in all large Kansas streams with shallow, braided channels and shallow backwaters, whereas the Western Silvery Minnow is found almost exclusively in the Missouri River and in the streams and backwaters of the Missouri River floodplain. Both species feed on microscopic plants and animals.
Cardinal Shiner

*Luxilus cardinalis*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 3-3½ inches, maximum length of 4 inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied, silvery in color with a large eye and a thin, dark line running along its sides. Anal fin with 9 rays. Breeding males develop brilliantly red fins and lower sides accompanied with a dark, broad lateral stripe.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Cardinal Shiner is abundant in Shoal Creek and Spring River in Cherokee County, with some being documented in the upper Neosho river drainage. It prefers swift, shallow riffles during the day where it feeds on larval insects and bits of plant matter.
Common Shiner

*Luxilus cornutus*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 3-5 inches, maximum length of 7 inches.

**Description:** Deep bodied with a terminal mouth. Large eyes. Olive with silver sides scattered with dark crescent-shaped blotches and dark stripe along the back. Tall, diamond-shaped scales on the sides and much smaller scales on the back in front of the dorsal fin. Breeding males have a deep blue head with the fins and body showing pink.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Common Shiner is found in small to medium sized clear streams with moderate current and gravel bottoms, mostly in northeastern Kansas, where it feeds on insects.
Bigmouth Shiner

*Notropis dorsalis*

**Size:** Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3¼ inches.

**Description:** Stout bodied with an arched back and small, crowded scales behind the head. Large mouth and eye. Sandy-colored fading to silver along sides and a dusky stripe along the middle of the body.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Bigmouth Shiner is found in the northeastern part of Kansas in small, sandy bottomed streams where it feeds on larval insects, small crustaceans and algae.

Redfin Shiner

*Lythrurus umbratilis*

**Size:** Common length of 2-3 inches, maximum length of 3½ inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with flat sides and tiny, nearly invisible scales between head and dorsal fin. Terminal mouth and large eye. Olive to dusky-blue often with a fine sprinkling of dots on the back, fading to silvery sides. Fins may be reddish on the edges. Breeding males show darker blue coloring and reddish caudal fins.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Redfin Shiner is found in small streams with rocky riffles in eastern Kansas. It forms schools near the surface, mainly in pools where it feeds on plankton and small insects.
Carmine Shiner
(formerly Roseyface Shiner)

*Notropis percobromus*

**Size:** Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3 inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with a terminal mouth and pointed snout. Olive fading to silver sides and pale-pink coloring located at the base of the dorsal fin. Head and body flush with red in breeding males.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Carmine Shiner is found in clear, upland streams with limestone bedrock, mostly in the eastern one-third of the state where it feeds on aquatic insects.

Golden Shiner

*Notemigonus crysoleucas*

**Size:** Common length of 3-6 inches, maximum length of 12 inches.

**Description:** Deep bodied with a fleshy keel on the belly behind the pelvic fins. Small, upturned mouth. Greenish to olive back fading to golden sides and a yellowish-white belly.

**Comments:** Native to Eastern Kansas, the Golden Shiner is found in deep pools or lakes with aquatic vegetation where it feeds on microscopic animals and some aquatic insects.
Topeka Shiner

*Notropis topeka*

**Conservation Status:** Federally Endangered, Threatened in Kansas.

**Size:** Common length of 1½-2½ inches, maximum length of 3 inches.

**Description:** Stout bodied, often with a reddish-orange dorsal fin and a tail fin with a tiny, chevron-like spot at its base. Mouth small and terminal. Resembles the Sand Shiner but has a dusky streak along the sides.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas and once widespread, the Topeka Shiner is restricted to small Flint Hills streams and a few others across the state. It prefers clear, open pools of water where it feeds on small insects.
Bluntnose Minnow

*Pimephales notatus*

**Size:** Common length of 1½ -3½ inches, maximum length of 4 inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with a broad back and mouth located underneath a blunt, rounded snout. Scales on back are small and crowded. Olive-yellow with silvery sides. Dusky stripe along the sides extending past the eye. Dark spot at the base of the tail. Similar in appearance to the Slim Minnow.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Bluntnose Minnow is found in the clear, warm pools of small streams where it feeds on organic particles and tiny insect larvae.
Bigeye Shiner

*Notropis boops*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 1-2½ inches, maximum length of 3½ inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with a large eye, sharply pointed dorsal fin, terminal mouth and large back scales. Olive to yellow on back with silvery sides, with a dusky band running the length of the body toward the eye and continuing around the snout. Pores along the lateral line are dark and visible.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Bigeye Shiner is found in clear upland streams with rocky bottoms where it feeds on small insects.
Emerald Shiner

Notropis atherinoides

**Size:** Common length of 2½-3½ inches, maximum length of 5 inches.

**Description:** Slender and streamlined with a terminal mouth. Dorsal fin pointed. Body mostly translucent to pale-yellow or olive with a narrow iridescent streak along the sides.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Emerald Shiner is found in large sandy bottomed rivers, usually in strong currents where it eats a variety of animals and algae.

Sand Shiner

Notropis stramineus

**Size:** Common length of 2 inches, maximum length of 3½ inches.

**Description:** Stout bodied with a narrow black line along back from back of head to dorsal fin, and short black line at the back of the dorsal fin. Silvery in color with a small dusky spot at the base of the tail and a small mouth. Pores along the lateral line are dark and visible.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Sand Shiner is found in nearly all sandy, shallow streams in Kansas where it feeds on a variety of insects and algae.
**Bullhead Minnow**

*Pimephales vigilax*

**Size:** Common length of 1½-3 inches, maximum length of 3½ inches.

**Description:** Stout bodied with a large head and a blunt, rounded snout. Scales small and crowded in front of dorsal fin and fins short and rounded. Pale yellowish-olive in color, with noticeable dark spots at the front edge of the dorsal fin and at the base of the tail. Distinctive but small dark marks on either side of the upper lip.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Bullhead Minnow is found in sluggish pools and backwaters of medium to large streams over sandy or silted bottoms where it feeds on larval insects and small crustaceans.

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**Fathead Minnow**

*Pimephales promelas*

**Size:** Common length of 1½-3 inches, maximum length of 4 inches.

**Description:** Stout bodied with a rounded head and blunt snout. Scales small and fins short and rounded. Olive or brownish with a dusky stripe along the side, fading to a silvery-white on the belly. Breeding males are mostly black but have yellowish bars around the body behind the head and under the dorsal fin.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Fathead Minnow is found in the pools of intermittent creeks with bottoms of mud or firm clay where it feeds on small animals, plants and other organic matter. More tolerant to pollution and habitat disturbances than other fishes, large populations of Fathead Minnows could indicate environmental changes.
Suckermouth Minnow

*Phenacobius mirabilis*

**Size:** Common length of 2-3½ inches, maximum length of 4¾ inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with a sucker-like mouth and lobed lips located under a fleshy snout. Greenish in color fading to yellowish-white with a dusky streak along the length of the body ending in a dark, square spot at the base of the tail. Feeds on larval insects and other tiny organisms.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Suckermouth Minnow is found in streams with permanent flow and mixed sand and small gravel bottoms, especially in riffles.

Slim Minnow

*Pimephales tenellus*

**Size:** Common length of 1½-2 inches, maximum length of 2¾ inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with a broad back and small, crowded scales behind the head showing dark edges, creating a cross-hatched appearance. Dusky stripe along the side with noticeable dark spots at the front edge of the dorsal fin and at the base of the tail. Fins may be slightly orange in color. Similar in appearance to the Bluntnose Minnow.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Slim Minnow is found in streams with clear, flowing water over rocky bottoms, where it swims in schools.
Suckers (Family Catostomidae)

Suckers are named for the location of their mouth, which is on the underside of the head (subterminal), with fleshy lips and no barbels. They move along the bottom in search of food, and are mostly found in rivers and streams, but can often be found in ponds and reservoirs. Most suckers prefer benthic (bottom-dwelling) insects, crustaceans and worms, and have a toothy bone in their throats that helps crush food. They have large scales and long, cylindrical bodies, and are often mistaken for carp or other fishes in the minnow family.

Four sucker species in this guide are listed as SINC (Species in Need of Conservation) due to their declining numbers in the state of Kansas. Other suckers in Kansas that are not included in this guide include black buffalo, bigmouth buffalo and smallmouth buffalo, which are often targeted by bow fishing anglers and commercial anglers, and with proper preparation can be eaten smoked, canned or fried.
River Carpsucker

*Carpiodes carpio*

**Size:** Common length of 12-15 inches, maximum length of 20-25 inches.

**Description:** Deep bodied, silvery-white in color with a small mouth. Thin lips with a distinct bump or projection at the center of the lower lip.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the River Carpsucker is the most widespread and common sucker in Kansas. This species is found in a variety of streams, reservoirs and ponds where it feeds in calm water on small crustaceans, insects and algae.

Quillback

*Carpiodes cyprinus*

**Size:** Common length of 12-17 inches, maximum length of 20-26 inches.

**Description:** Similar to the River Carpsucker, but silvery-straw in color; snout length is longer with thicker lips not producing a bump or projection in the center of the lower lip.

**Comments:** Introduced to Kansas but similar to the River Carpsucker and often found together, the Quillback prefers large, sandy rivers where it feeds in calm water on small crustaceans, insects and algae. Widespread reservoir construction in the 1950s and 60s is said to be the cause for the current distribution of the Quillback.
Spotted Sucker

*Minytrema melanops*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 9-16 inches, maximum length of 19½ inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with charcoal and bronze colors fading to a light belly. Scales on sides and back have a black spot creating horizontal lines along the body. Thin but fleshy lips.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Spotted Sucker avoids currents. It inhabits quiet clear pools of small, rocky streams and some lakes where it feeds on aquatic invertebrates.
Blue Sucker

Cycleptus elongatus

Conservation Status: Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

Size: Common length of 16-24 inches, maximum length of 39 inches.

Description: Long and slender bodied with a long, sickle-shaped dorsal fin. Dusky, blue-gray color with an elongated snout; small, subterminal mouth. Lips are fleshy with a bumpy surface.

Comments: Native to Kansas, the Blue Sucker is found in the Missouri, Neosho and Kansas river basins where they occupy the swift currents of the main channel over silt-free gravel and rocky substrates, where it feeds on aquatic insects.
White Sucker

*Catostomus commersonii*

**Size:** Common length of 10-14 inches, maximum length of 15 inches.

**Description:** Long and slender bodied with short dorsal fin. Juvenile white suckers have 3 dark spots on sides; adults lack spots and have a greenish-brown color on body with smaller scales on the back than sides. Lips have a bumpy surface.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the White Sucker prefers limestone and bedrock streams, where it feeds in riffles for invertebrates and algae.

Golden Redhorse

*Moxostoma erythrurum*

**Size:** Common length of 8½-14 inches, maximum length of 18 inches.

**Description:** A stout bodied, coarse scaled sucker with a blunt snout and grooved lips. Sides are a plain golden-straw color, dorsal and caudal fins dusky.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Golden Redhorse prefers clear pools of small, unpolluted streams with bedrock or coarse gravel bottoms where it feeds on small insect larvae.
River Redhorse

*Moxostoma carinatum*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 10-16 inches, maximum length of 18 inches.

**Description:** With a large head, this species most resembles the Golden Redhorse, but has bright red dorsal and caudal fins. The biggest difference between the two is the presence of large molar-like throat (pharyngeal) teeth, found near the back of the gills in the River Redhorse.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the River Redhorse is found in deep-flowing runs and pools of large rivers. Large, bony pharyngeal teeth are used to crush clams, snails and large aquatic insects. Recent efforts by the Kansas Stream Survey and Assessment Program found juvenile and large adult River Redhorse in the Elk River above Elk City Lake, where they were thought to be extirpated.
Northern Hog Sucker

*Hypentelium nigricans*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 8-14 inches, maximum length of 24 inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied tapering from a large, flat, square head to a slimmer tail. Lips are fleshy with a bumpy surface. Brown sides with dark saddles across the body.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Northern Hog Sucker is currently found only in Shoal Creek and the Spring River of Cherokee County. The flattened head acts as a hydrofoil (opposite of an airplane wing which provides lift), pushing the fish to the bottom. The Northern Hog Sucker feeds on aquatic insects over rocky bottoms.
Pealip Redhorse/Shorthead Redhorse

*Moxostoma pisolabrum / Moxostoma macrolepidotum*

**Size:** Common length of 9-16 inches, maximum length of 18 inches.

**Description:** Fins red, head small and cone-shaped. Pealip: mouth small, upper lip with a smooth, swollen bulb. Found in the Arkansas River Basin. Shorthead: upper lip grooved and not swollen. Found in the Kansas River Basin. Dark crescent marking between scales on upper surface of back.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, both species are found mostly in large streams with moderate current where they feed mostly on larval insects. Both migrate upstream in spring to small tributaries where they spawn in shallow flowing water over gravel.
Catfishes (Family Ictaluridae)

The catfish family in Kansas includes larger species of catfish such as the Blue Catfish, Flathead Catfish, Bullhead Catfishes and Channel Catfish, which are all prized by anglers. Catfish are named for their four pairs of long “whiskers,” which are actually barbels used as sensory organs to find food. There are around 40 species of catfish in North America, with 12 of them inhabiting the waters of Kansas. This guide includes the smaller and less commonly seen catfish called madtoms. They share many common traits with their larger cousins. An adipose fin connected to their tail fin distinguishes the madtoms from juveniles of larger catfish species.

Neosho Madtom

©Ryan Waters
Slender Madtom

*Noturus exilis*

**Size:** Common length of 3-4 inches, maximum length of 4½ inches.

**Description:** Lower jaw nearly even with upper jaw with mouth closed. Anal fin long and narrow; caudal fin squared without a notch. Fins are dark-edged, body grey to brown and often mottled with dark brown and yellow, fading to a pale yellow on the belly.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Slender Madtom is found in cool, shallow riffles of small, permanent streams with clear water and rocky bottoms. It feeds at night on insects, crustaceans and snails.
Stonecat

*Noturus flavus*

**Size:** Common length of 3-5½ inches, maximum length of 8 inches.

**Description:** Lower jaw slightly shorter than upper jaw with mouth closed. Anal fin short and rounded; caudal fin squared without a notch. Body yellowish-brown with a dusky streak running horizontally through the center of tail.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Stonecat is found in shallow riffles of large, clear streams with rocky bottoms where it feeds on insects, crustaceans and occasionally other small fishes.
Freckled Madtom

*Noturus nocturnus*

**Size:** Common length of 2-3½ inches, maximum length of 4½ inches.

**Description:** Lower jaw slightly shorter than upper jaw with mouth closed. Anal fin short and rounded; caudal fin broad and round without a notch. Body light tan, brown or grey with underside of head and body finely freckled.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Freckled Madtom is found in debris along stream banks, rocks, shallow backwaters, or in the roots of vegetation. It feeds on insects and small crustaceans.
Brindled Madtom

*Noturus miurus*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3 inches.

**Description:** Lower jaw slightly shorter than upper jaw with mouth closed. Anal fin short and rounded; caudal fin squared without a notch. Adipose fin with a dark, vertical splotch. Body yellow to brown with dark saddles on body; dorsal and caudal fin tipped with black.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Brindled Madtom is found in pools of clear streams with mud, sand or fine graveled bottoms, usually over leaf litter, where it feeds on insects and crustaceans.
Neosho Madtom

*Noturus placidus*

**Conservation Status:** Federally Threatened, Threatened in Kansas.

**Size:** Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3 inches.

**Description:** Lower jaw slightly shorter than upper jaw with mouth closed. Anal fin short and rounded; caudal fin square to rounded without a notch. Some pigment in the adipose fin, but without a distinct vertical bar. Body mottled with dark and light brown with dark bars on caudal fin. Dusky streaks on dorsal and anal fins.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Neosho Madtom is found exclusively in the Neosho River basin in sloping gravel bars in moderate to strong currents. This species feeds along the bottom of the stream on larval insects, and are often missed by seines as their small size allows them to hide in between the larger pieces of gravel.
Topminnows & Killifishes
(Family Fundulidae)

Topminnows and killifishes are small fish with bold or colorful markings. They have a flattened head and back, upturned mouth, large eyes and a dorsal fin located far back toward their tail. Their name refers to their mouth position and specialized shape that allows them to eat larval insects from the top of the water by attacking from below. Males in this family are often much more brightly marked or colored than the females, especially during their breeding season. Both of the species in this guide are common in Kansas streams, tend to school in large groups and are often used as bait by anglers.
Blackstripe Topminnow

*Fundulus notatus*

**Size:** Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3-4 inches.

**Description:** Slender bodied with large eye and rounded fins. Dorsal fin located above anal fin. Caudal fin rounded and unforked. Wide and distinct black stripe along sides of body extending through eye. Mouth small and upturned.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Blackstripe Topminnow is found in clear, small streams with rocky or muddy bottoms in a variety of habitats, where it feeds on insects and larvae at the water’s surface.

Northern Plains Killifish

*Fundulus kansae*

**Size:** Common length of 1½-3 inches, maximum length of 4 inches.

**Description:** Stout bodied and straw-colored with vertical bars or stripes along the body. Stripes are darker and wider in breeding males, which may also show an orange tint on their fins. Dorsal fin located above the anal fin. Caudal fin squared and unforked. Mouth slightly upturned.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Northern Plains Killifish is widely found in shallow streams with sandy bottoms in strong currents where it feeds on insects such as midge and mayfly larvae.
Livebearers (Family Poeciliidae)

This family of fish also includes common aquarium fish such as the guppy and molly. The adult female (top) and adult male (bottom) Western Mosquitofish are pictured above.

Western Mosquitofish

*Gambusia affinis*

**Size:** Common length of 1-2 inches, maximum length of 2½ inches.

**Description:** Females are stout bodied with a rounded anal fin. Males are smaller in size, and more slender with an elongated anal fin. Strongly upturned mouth and dorsal fin positioned above the anal fin. Caudal fin rounded and unforked. Greenish-gray and iridescent in color, pregnant females show a dark spot on the belly above the anal fin.

**Comments:** An introduced species to Kansas, the Western Mosquitofish is the only Kansas fish species to give birth to live young. They are common in most waters in Kansas and do well in warm, shallow waters making them fairly drought-resistant. Widely found in the warm, shallow pools and calm backwaters of streams where it feeds on insect larvae, larval fishes, plants and crustaceans, mostly at the surface.
Silversides (Family Atherinopsidae)

Although Silversides are mainly a marine family with around 50 species in North America, four species do occur in freshwater across the continent.

Brook Silverside

*Labidesthes sicculus*

**Size:** Common length of 2½-3 inches, maximum length of 4 inches.

**Description:** Long, slender fish with transparent sides, small scales and a beak-like snout. Dorsal fin tiny, caudal fin forked. Upturned mouth. They have two widely-spaced dorsal fins as well as a fairly large eye and a broad, silvery stripe along their sides. The silversides tend to school in groups.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Brook Silverside is found in calm, clear waters with rocky bottoms where it feeds on insects and small crustaceans at the water’s surface. Silversides are attracted to light, and may be collected at night when drawn to the shine of a flashlight.
Sunfishes (Family Centrarchidae)

The sunfishes are a large family of fishes in Kansas that includes fish species such as black basses and crappies in addition to the sunfish in this guide. They vary in size and color, but have at least 3 anal fin spines as well as sharp dorsal fin spines. Sunfish are often called “perch” or “bream” by anglers, but are quite different from the perch family of fishes. Sunfish spawn in late spring and early summer with the male making a bowl like depression as a nest, then protecting the eggs until they hatch. Sunfish are usually flattened, and because of their shape and size sometimes also called “panfish.” They are fairly aggressive when eating and defending their nests, and are easily caught by hook and line. Sunfish are the foundation of the diet of larger predators in ponds and lakes, including Largemouth Bass.
Bluegill

*Lepomis macrochirus*

**Size:** Common length of 6 inches, maximum length of 11 inches.

**Description:** Pale blue-green to rust in color, with dark vertical bars on the sides. Smallest mouth of all sunfish, with pectoral fins shorter than the Redear Sunfish.

**Comments:** Native to eastern Kansas, but widely introduced to western Kansas, the Bluegill is found throughout the state. It does best in ponds and lakes with clear water or streams with deep pools, where it feeds on small crustaceans and insects, and occasionally smaller fishes.

Green Sunfish

*Lepomis cyanellus*

**Size:** Common length of <8 inches, maximum length of 11½ inches.

**Description:** Greenish with a dull orange breast and pale blue streaks on the head. Mouth large, fins showing yellow on the edges.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Green Sunfish is found in many types of habitats, and does well at surviving drought. It is often found alone and not in schools, and prefers rocks, stems and woody debris at the water’s edge, where it feeds on insects and smaller fishes.
Warmouth

*Lepomis gulosus*

**Size:** Common length of 4-6 inches, maximum length of 10½ inches.

**Description:** Dorsal fin with 10 spines, connected broadly to the soft dorsal fin. Mouth large, with a toothy patch on the tongue. Body brown and yellow with red eye and brown streaks on the side of the head.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Warmouth is found in pools and backwaters and most often in ponds with soft mud bottoms and dense weed beds. Usually solitary, it feeds on aquatic insects, crayfishes and smaller fishes.

Orangespotted Sunfish

*Lepomis humilis*

**Size:** Common length of 3-4½ inches, maximum length of 6 inches.

**Description:** Mouth smaller, body silvery with scattered brown and red (orange) spots. Coloring is more noticeable in breeding males, which may also display a red eye and the belly showing orange or yellow. Earflap is round, with dark spot and white margin.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Orangespotted Sunfish is found in sandy streams. It is abundant across the state of Kansas feeding mainly on insects as well as some smaller fish species. Spawning occurs in spring, and the abandoned nests of Orangespotted Sunfish are often used by the federally endangered Topeka Shiners. These sunfish are sometimes caught on hook and line with flies and are often a food source for larger predators.
Longear Sunfish

*Lepomis megalotis*

**Size:** Common length of 4-6 inches, maximum length of 9½ inches.

**Description:** Mouth small. Body bluish-green with amber colored fins and belly. Dark ear flap with a narrow white margin is flexible and elongated, most noticeably in males.

**Comments:** Native to much of Kansas, the Longear Sunfish is found in clear flowing water and stream bottoms of stone or firm clay, where it feeds primarily on insects.
Darters (Family Percidae)

The perch family is one of the most spectacularly colored groups of fishes, and includes the Walleye and Sauger as well as the darters included in this guide. Darters are a slender-bodied fish with a cylindrical body and spiny fins. Many of them have teeth which help grip their prey. Males in this family are brightly colored, especially during breeding season, and their lively colors are comparable to marine fish of the coral reefs! Darters tend to be found on the bottom of streams and are not often caught by anglers because of their small size and their tendency not to school in groups. There are several darters in Kansas listed as SINC (Species in Need of Conservation), and the Arkansas Darter is listed as threatened due to loss of habitat from drought and the transpiration of water by increasing numbers of trees along smaller prairie streams.
Greenside Darter

*Etheostoma blennioides*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 2½-3½ inches, maximum length of 4 inches.

**Description:** Snout short, blunt and rounded. Mouth small and crescent-shaped. Caudal fin fan-shaped with a shallow notch. Sides with greenish or brown w-shaped markings and some orange-red spots. Breeding males are solid green with 5-6 green or brown bands around the body.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Greenside Darter is found in clear, cool water with deep, swift riffles where it feeds on small animals including insects that live along the bottom of the stream.
Arkansas Darter

_Etheostoma cragini_

**Conservation Status:** Threatened in Kansas.

**Size:** Common length of 1½-2 inches, maximum length of 2¼ inches.

**Description:** Cylindrical and stout bodied with spiny fins and large, fan-shaped pectoral fins. Head short and without scales, snout blunt. Dorsal fin with 9 spines and 11-13 soft rays. Caudal fin square, rounded and without a notch. Mottled brown in color with dark, horizontal blotches, but never with vertical bands that encircle the body. Dark bar beneath the eye. Breeding males are orange along the belly with an orange band on the dorsal fin.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Arkansas Darter is found in small prairie streams, springs or seeps with aquatic vegetation; in shallow clear water with a slow current where it feeds on insects.
Bluntnose Darter

*Etheostoma chlorosoma*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 1½-2 inches, maximum length of 2½ inches.

**Description:** Head small and densely scaled, with snout short and rounded. Mouth small and horizontal, with a black bar crossing the upper lip from eye to eye. Caudal fin squared and without a notch. Straw colored with a few dark, w-shaped markings.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Bluntnose Darter is found in small slow creeks with mud or clay bottoms where it feeds on larval insects and small crustaceans.

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Fantail Darter

*Etheostoma flabellare*

**Size:** Common length of 1½-3 inches, maximum length of 3¼ inches.

**Description:** Cylindrical and slender bodied with spiny fins and large, rounded pectoral fins. Head small and without scales, snout pointed. Mouth small and pointing upward. Spiny dorsal fin with 8-9 spines and much shorter than the soft dorsal fin. Caudal fin broad and rounded and without a notch. Olive brown in color with thin, dark stripes along the length of the body. Vertical dark bars on tail and body. Breeding males are dark brown with a black head.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Fantail Darter is found in small, clear tributaries over small gravel or stones where it feeds on small insects.
Johnny Darter
*Etheostoma nigrum*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 1½-2 inches, maximum length of 2¾ inches.

**Description:** Head small and snout blunt. Mouth small and horizontal. Caudal fin square without a notch. Translucent and yellow in color with dark, w- or x-shaped marks along the sides and a barred tail. Breeding males are dark brown or black in color.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Johnny Darter is found in small, clear tributaries in shallow slow-moving pools where it feeds on bloodworms and other small insects.
Orangethroat Darter

*Etheostoma spectabile*

**Size:** Common length of 1-2 inches, maximum length of 2¾ inches.

**Description:** Head short and snout blunt with a terminal mouth. Caudal fin squared. Mottled yellow-brown in color with vertical bars that are blue and orange. Breeding males are darker, with blue bands and fins bright blue and orange.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Orangethroat Darter is found in small streams over shallow riffles with fine gravel or sand, where it feeds on insect larvae, insects and the eggs of other fishes.

Ozark Logperch

*Percina caprodes fulvitaenia*

**Size:** Common length of 4-6 inches, maximum length of 7¼ inches.

**Description:** Head elongated with a pointed and fleshy snout overhanging the lower jaw. Caudal fin rounded with a shallow notch. Yellow-green in color with dark vertical bars on the sides and caudal fin, and a dark blotch at the base of the tail. Breeding males are darker, with an orange band in the dorsal fin.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Ozark Logperch is found in large, clear tributaries in deep riffles or pools over gravel where it feeds on larval insects, crustaceans, algae and occasionally small fishes.
Redfin Darter

*Etheostoma whipplei*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 2-2½ inches, maximum length of 3½ inches.

**Description:** Cylindrical and moderately slender with spiny fins and large, fan-shaped pectoral fins. Head elongated with a blunt snout and terminal mouth. Dorsal fin with 10-12 spines and 13-15 soft rays. Caudal fin squared and rounded. Mottled brown in color with dusky bars on the back, sides scattered with pale spots. Breeding males are darker, with scattered red spots and fins showing red, white and blue bands.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Redfin Darter is found in small streams with a variety of substrates in slower flows with gentle riffles where it likely feeds on insects.
Banded Darter

*Etheostoma zonale*

**Conservation Status:** Species In Need of Conservation (SINC)

**Size:** Common length of 1½-2½ inches, maximum length of 3 inches.

**Description:** Head short with a blunt snout and a small, horizontal mouth. Caudal fin squared without a notch. Mottled brown in color with dark green or brown vertical bars on the sides. Breeding males are darker, with bright green bars around the body, blue-green on the belly and a brick-red splotch at the base of the dorsal fin.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Banded Darter is found in clear, moderately sized streams with deep riffles over rocky bottoms where it feeds on larval insects.
Channel Darter

*Percina copelandi*

**Size:** Common length of 1½-2 inches, maximum length of 2½ inches.

**Description:** Snout blunt and short with a small mouth. Caudal fin elongated with a shallow notch. Olive-brown in color with a series of dark blotches connected by a thin line along the sides. Breeding males are darker, with belly and fins being nearly black.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Channel Darter is found in tributaries of the Arkansas River in shallow pools with rocky bottoms, where it feeds on larval insects and crustaceans.

Slenderhead Darter

*Percina phoxocephala*

**Size:** Common length of 2-3¼ inches, maximum length of 4 inches.

**Description:** Head elongated with a pointed snout and terminal mouth. Caudal fin elongated with a shallow notch. Mottled brown with dark blotches in a line along the sides and a small black dot at the base of the tail. Breeding males are darker, with an orange band in the dorsal fin.

**Comments:** Native to Kansas, the Slenderhead Darter is found in large streams in swift, shallow water over gravel, where it feeds on aquatic invertebrates.
Aquatic Nuisance Species

Aquatic nuisance species are animals and plants not native to Kansas that can threaten lake and river ecology, harm native or desirable species and interfere with our economy.

How Can I Help?

• **Clean, Drain, Dry** – learn how to banish aquatic hitchhikers from your boat and equipment.

• **Recognize Aquatic Nuisance Species** – pictures and information about several of Kansas’ most unwanted follow in this guide.

• **Know Where They Are** – find out if your favorite lake or river has aquatic nuisance species

• **Don’t Move Live Fish** – in Kansas, if White Perch, Black Carp, Silver Carp or Bighead Carp are caught it is illegal to release them alive. Instead, eat or dispose of them properly.

• **Get Bait from Certified Bait Dealers**

• **Take the Aquatic Nuisance Species Certification Course**

• **Know the Laws and Regulations**

• **Be a Responsible Aquarium Owner** – don’t release anything from your aquarium into the wild

• **Keep Up with the News** – from KDWPT and other agencies

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Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers

ProtectKSWaters.org
Zebra Mussel

*Dreissena polymorpha*

**Status:** Invasive to Kansas waters.

**Size:** Small, about the size of a fingernail.

**Description:** Black and white striped with a D-shaped shell, often with visible byssal “threads” which help it to attach to almost any surface.

**Comments:** Zebra Mussels were accidentally introduced into North America in 1988. Since then, they have spread across many states and have invaded several of our Kansas lakes. They reproduce quickly, spawning in the summer months and can quickly colonize across rocks and any stationary underwater surface. Unfortunately, no solution exists to permanently rid our waters of Zebra Mussels once they have been introduced. Preventing the spread of zebra mussels by following the Clean, Drain, Dry steps is our key defense.

White Perch

*Morone americana*

**Status:** Invasive to Kansas waters.

**Size:** Rarely larger than 10-12 inches.

**Description:** Similar in appearance to the White Bass, with no lines or stripes on the body. The spiny and soft dorsal fins are connected, and the anal fin has 3 spines: 1 short and 2 long. Two narrow tooth patches at the edges of the tongue, but no tooth patch in the center of the tongue (as in a White Bass.)

**Life History:** White Perch were accidentally introduced into Kansas in 1995, and have since spread across the state into several lakes and reservoirs. They have been associated with declines in both Walleye and White Bass. White Perch reproduce quickly, and may hybridize with White Bass. They also eat the eggs of other fish species. In Kansas, it is illegal to release White Perch alive if caught. Instead, eat or dispose of them properly.
- Black Carp
- Silver Carp
- Bighead Carp
Black Carp

*Mylopharyngodon piceus*

**Status:** Invasive to Kansas waters.

**Size:** May grow to longer than 3 feet.

**Description:** Black in color with large scales, similar to the Grass Carp only darker in color.

**Life History:** Black Carp prefer large rivers and lakes. As adults, they feed almost exclusively on native snails and mussels. They are a strong threat to the survival of native freshwater mussels in Kansas.

Silver Carp

*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*

**Status:** Invasive to Kansas waters.

**Size:** May grow to longer than 4 feet.

**Description:** Grey or olive in color fading to silvery sides with small body scales. Low-set eyes and a large upturned mouth without barbels. Young Silver Carp are silver in color and resemble Gizzard Shad. Also resembles Bighead Carp in appearance.

**Life History:** Silver Carp prefer large rivers and reservoirs. They have been found in the Kansas and Missouri rivers in Kansas, and in the Nemaha River basin. When disturbed by boat motors, silver carp jump out of the water, potentially injuring boaters.

Bighead Carp

*Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*

**Status:** Invasive to Kansas waters.

**Size:** May grow to longer than 4 feet.

**Description:** Dark gray with splotched fading to a silvery or white belly and small body scales. Low-set eyes and a large upturned mouth without barbels. Young Bighead Carp are silver in color and resemble Gizzard Shad.

**Life History:** The Bighead Carp prefers large rivers and reservoirs. They have been found in the Kansas and Missouri rivers in Kansas, and in the Nemaha River basin. They grow quickly and eat up to 40 percent of their bodyweight in a day.
Glossary

Aquatic Nuisance Species: invasive animals and plants not native to Kansas that can threaten lake and river ecology, harm native or desirable species and interfere with our economy.

Backwater: a part of the river or stream not reached by the current, where the water has little or no movement.

Barbel: a fleshy but slender or whisker-like projection near the mouth of some fish that acts as a sensory organ.

Byssal threads: a group of strong filaments secreted by Zebra Mussels and some clams, used to attach the organism to hard surfaces.

Invertebrate: an animal that does not have a backbone, such as insects, mollusks, worms, etc.

Lateral line: a visible line along the sides of a fish made up of a series of sensory organs that detect pressure and vibrations.

Plankton: small or microscopic plants and animals drifting or floating in the water.

Snout: the nose and mouth of an animal.

Subterminal Mouth: a mouth which opens on the underside of the snout rather than straight forward from the head.

Terminal Mouth: a mouth which opens at the front or tip of the snout and head.

Body shapes

Cylindrical: a body type with parallel sides and a circular or oval cross-section.

Deep bodied: a body type that is deeper from top to bottom than its width from side to side.

Slender bodied: a body type that is much longer in length than the height from top to bottom or width from side to side.

Stout bodied: a body type that is short in length compared to the height from top to bottom and width from side to side.
Conservation Status

**Endangered:** in Kansas, any species of wildlife whose continued existence as a viable component of the state’s wild fauna is determined to be in jeopardy; at the federal level, any species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

**Threatened:** in Kansas, any species of wildlife that appears likely, within the foreseeable future, to become an endangered species; at the federal level, any species likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

**Species in Need of Conservation (SINC):** in Kansas, any non-game species deemed to require conservation measures in attempt to keep the species from becoming a threatened or endangered species.

**Invasive:** non-native or exotic species whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm.

Kansas Rivers and Streams

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References:


Kansas Fishes was published in 2014. More than 50 biologists have summarized the natural history of 144 Kansas species and 28 additional species from adjacent states on the Great Plains. The book is written for a broad audience interested in the state’s aquatic resources. Detailed species accounts include color illustrations by Joseph Tomelleri and distribution maps. The 541-page hardcover book is available from the University Press of Kansas or retail booksellers for $39.95.

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Jessica Mounts is a Fisheries Biologist with the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism.

Joseph R. Tomelleri is a Kansas artist specializing in scientifically accurate illustrations of fish. All the fish illustrations in this pocket guide were done by him. His work can be viewed at www.americanfishes.com.
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**Great Plains Nature Center**

The Great Plains Nature Center is a cooperative project between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism, and the City of Wichita Department of Park and Recreation. The Nature Center features the Koch Habitat Hall, Owl’s Nest gift shop, Coleman Auditorium, and 2 miles of Chisholm Creek Park nature trails. The Friends of the Great Plains Nature Center is a support organization formed to increase awareness and help sustain the Center’s environmental education programs, organize and promote special events, recruit volunteers to assist staff, and raise funds for long-term viability. For more information visit the Great Plains Nature Center web site at www.gpnc.org. Please visit or contact us at Great Plains Nature Center, 6232 East 29th Street North, Wichita, KS 67220 or phone us at 316-683-5499.
Chickadee Checkoff
The Chickadee Checkoff program is a voluntary donation program for nongame projects sponsored by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. Kansas taxpayers are able to contribute on their individual state income tax form. Donations can also be made by sending a check to Chickadee Checkoff Program, 512 SE 25th Ave., Pratt, KS 67124. Since 1980, the Chickadee Checkoff program has distributed over $4 million to projects that help endangered species, assist in reintroduction efforts of sensitive species, supports wildlife education projects at schools and nature centers, and supports hundreds of other nongame conservation projects.

Westar Energy Green Team
Westar Energy, Inc. is the largest utility in Kansas serving nearly 700,000 customers with about 35,000 miles of transmission and distribution lines. Since 1989, their employees have operated an environmental team. The Green Team members volunteer hours to improve wildlife habitat through wetland creation and restoration and native grass and tree planting. They build bridges and trails and work to protect and reintroduce sensitive plant and animal species. The Green Team can be contacted at 785-575-8125 or at Ben.Postlethwait@Westarenergy.com.

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism
The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism is a cabinet-level agency in the State of Kansas, with a Secretary appointed by the Governor. A seven-member bipartisan commission, also appointed by the Governor, advises the Secretary and approves regulations governing outdoor recreation and fish and wildlife resources in Kansas. www.ksoutdoors.com.

The Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams
The Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams (KAWS) is a 501.C.3 not-for-profit organization that coordinates conservation projects, organizes educational events, demonstrates innovative practices, conducts applied research, and interacts with a large range of stakeholders, interests, governments and NGOs to support local efforts to solve priority watershed, wetland and stream issues. The mission of KAWS is to ensure the future of wetlands, streams, riparian areas and prairies as an integral part of our Kansas heritage and landscape. We work with our partners and citizens of Kansas towards a vision of a healthy, sustainable ecosystems and watersheds that preserve a high quality of life and water for us all and future generations. The Stream Fish Pocket Guide highlights some of the important native species that are part of our natural heritage, and KAWS is proud to be involved in work to conserve these important fish species in Kansas. Learn more by visiting, www.kaws.org.