



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Peppered Chub

Arlington, Texas Ecological Services Field Office

Peppered Chub

Macrhybopsis tetranema

Description

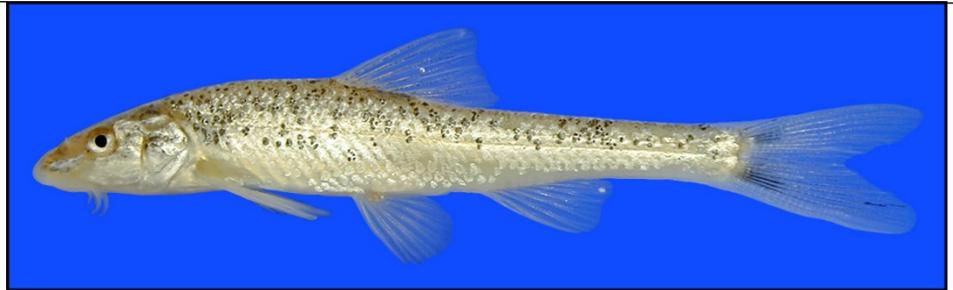
The peppered chub is a small freshwater minnow (less than 3 inches in overall length) belonging to the Cyprinidae family. It has a slender body nearly transparent in appearance, with small, dark dots scattered on its back. Peppered chubs are found in reaches of prairie streams with shallow water, swift current, and typically with sand substrate.



Biologists seining fish (Photo Credit: USFWS)

Distribution

This species historically occurred in the Arkansas River from Pueblo, Colorado to Tulsa County, Oklahoma. Records are available from the Ninnescah River, Salt Fork of Arkansas River, Cimarron River, North Canadian and South Canadian River drainages in Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. The peppered chub is currently believed to occur in two widely disjunct areas: the South Fork Ninnescah River in Kingman, Kansas and an associated portion of the Arkansas River in Sumner County, Kansas; and the South Canadian River between Ute



Peppered Chub (Photo Credit: Chad Thomas)

and Meredith reservoirs in New Mexico and Texas. The extent of its distribution in Kansas is not known.

Life History

The peppered chub is a pelagic broadcast spawner that may spawn multiple times per reproductive season (May through August) under high and low river flows. The fish release eggs and sperm into the deeper part of the stream current, where fertilization occurs. The semi-buoyant eggs drift in the water column for 24 to 48 hours before hatching. Hatched larval fish drift in stream currents for about 3 days before becoming free swimming juvenile fish. Peppered chubs generally live for 2 years, and few fish survive past their third summer.

Diet

Peppered chubs are generalist feeders that forage among sediments on the river bottom. These fish have a number of adaptations, including taste buds scattered across their bodies, to help them detect prey in turbid waters. Their diet consists of aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates, plant materials, and detritus.

Habitat

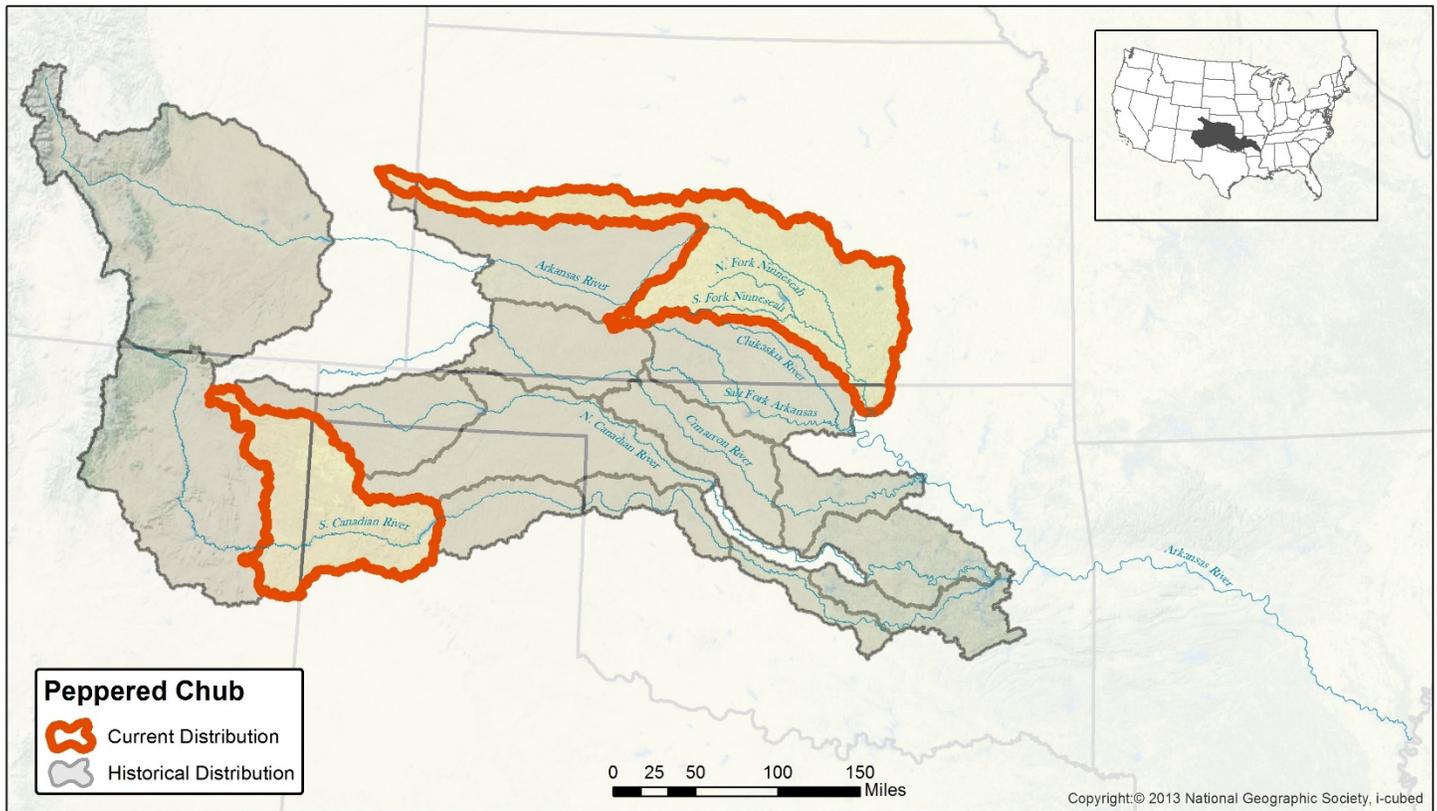
The peppered chub seems to prefer shallow channels where current flows over sand, although they show some preference for cobble substrate during the spring and gravel substrate during the summer. Peppered chubs are more adapted for headwaters of streams than other closely related chub species.



Canadian River habitat (Photo Credit: USFWS)

Conservation

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) was petitioned in 2007 to list the peppered chub as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. In 2009, a 90-day finding determined there was substantial information in the listing petition and otherwise readily available to indicate that listing as threatened or endangered may be warranted. The Service is currently evaluating the biological status of the species.



Distribution of the peppered chub.

References

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