

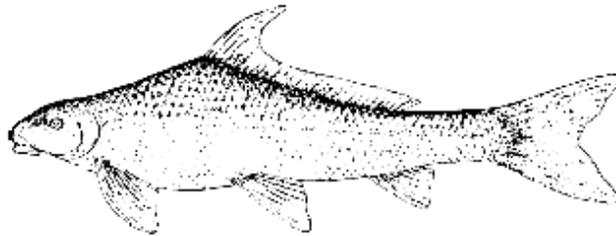


## Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Natural Heritage Program

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### *Cycleptus meridionalis* Southeastern blue sucker

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S. Mettee

**Identification:** The blue sucker is an elongate and large fish. The head is short and slender with a long snout and heavy lips. The eyes are posterior in position. This species is blue to grey on back and sides but white below.

**Measurements:** Maximum size is about 24 inches.

**Taxonomic comments:** In 1999 the southeastern blue sucker, *Cycleptus meridionalis*, was determined to be a separate species from *Cycleptus elongatus*, the blue sucker.

**Status:** Global ranking of **G3G4** and state rank of **S1**.

**Habitat:** Medium-large sized rivers with moderate to swift currents.

**Range:** Southeastern United States including the Pearl, Pascagoula (Mississippi and Louisiana), and Mobile (Alabama and Mississippi) river systems.

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**Food habits:** insect larvae and nematodes.

**Life expectancy:** Has been reported to live as long as 33 years.

**Reproduction:** Eggs are released in February and April (water temperature is at 53° - 57° F). Research indicates that this species migrates 150 – 350 miles throughout the course of an annual spawning trip.

**Reason of decline:** Dredging of large waterways or removal of dams in areas used by the southeastern blue sucker would prove detrimental to populations. This species often returns to the same river to breed. Therefore, any changes that would impede their arrival to these favorite breeding habitats would threaten the species.

**Interesting facts:** The record 350 miles (in the Alabama River) traveled by this species for its annual migration makes it one of the longest spawning runs of any freshwater fish in North America.

**Known distribution in Louisiana:**



**Dates of documented observations are:** 1966, 1967, and 1969

**References**

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