

The Rudd, *Scardinius erythrophthalmus*, a New Fish in Oklahoma Waters

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On 26 February 1989 two live specimens of the rudd were collected by a dip net from a boat ramp at the Willow Springs area of Lake Texoma in Bryan County (S4TS7SR7E). Others were observed in the area, apparently discarded by striped bass fishermen. The specimens were cataloged into the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) reference collection as Number 2878. The sizes were 11.3 cm and 12.7 cm in total length, and they weighed 14.56 g and 24.9 g respectively.

In seeking a possible source for the species I visited several bait shops including one near Willow Springs resort, where I purchased 12 rudd. The fish, referred to as red tail shiners or Arkansas shiners, ranged from 9.6 cm to 12.3 cm in length. These fish were cataloged into the OSDH collections as Number 2879.

Eight bait shops in Bryan, Marshall and Love Counties sold rudd. I also purchased 12 large specimens at a bait shop in Willis, one mile north of Lake Texoma. The size range was from 12.7 cm to 15.7 cm in total length. These specimens were cataloged into OSDH collections as Number 2880.

I first became aware of the rudd in discussions with Ken Erickson of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) in March 1987. I first observed the species in October 1987 in a bait shop at the Great Salt Plains State Park. Greg Summers of the ODWC Fisheries Laboratory at Norman stated that a minnow jobber from Purcell brought two small rudd into the laboratory and asked about selling them in Oklahoma. Greg also reported that some local minnow farmers were raising rudd near Norman and some were used to feed bass at the Fisheries Laboratory. Other specimens were found in a bait shop in Oklahoma City. The rudd has been reported in 14 other states (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, unpubl. data).

On 2 June 1989 Winston, Matthews, *et al.* from the University of Oklahoma Biological Station Ichthyology class seined a single specimen (55 mm TL) from the Mayfield Flats area of Lake Texoma adjacent to the Biological Station.

Interviews with fishermen and bait shop owners indicated that this minnow was introduced into Oklahoma during the winter of 1987-1988. Most of the fishermen said that this fish was an excellent bait minnow for the striped bass because it was very hardy and could stay alive for a long period on the hook.

On 6 June 1989 a single specimen was collected from the Arkansas River north of Ralston in Pawnee County (S1T23NR5E). This specimen (10.2 cm TL) was cataloged as number OSDH 2996. This is the first known record of the species in a major river in Oklahoma.

The rudd was introduced into New York in 1936, but since then it has not become very abundant (1). The fish is a common European cyprinid very similar to the golden shiner in appearance and food habits. In fresh specimens the scarlet color of the pectoral and caudal fins of the rudd separate the two species.

REFERENCES

1. C.L. Smith, *The Inland Fishes of New York State*, The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Albany, NY, 1985.