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# DISTRIBUTION AND RELATIVE ABUNDANCE OF FISHES IN WISCONSIN

## I. Greater Rock River Basin

By

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## ABSTRACT

A statewide survey of the inland waters of Wisconsin was initiated in 1974 by the Bureau of Research, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, to establish a comprehensive data base on the distribution and abundance of all fish species.

The Greater Rock River basin was sampled from 1974 through 1981 at 1,015 stations by research personnel and 107 stations by fish management personnel to extend our knowledge of fish distribution in Wisconsin. An additional 113 stations were partially sampled by fish management personnel and other collectors.

A total of 102 species (excluding the grass carp and coho salmon) were collected in the Greater Rock River basin; 93 in the Rock River basin, 72 in the Sugar River basin, and 61 in the Pecatonica River basin. Included were the endangered gravel chub, striped shiner, slender madtom, and starhead topminnow as well as the threatened Ozark minnow and black buffalo. Eleven species on the Department's watch list were also collected.

Data from the 1974-81 period for the Greater Rock River basin and for each of its 3 sub-basins (Rock, Sugar, and Pecatonica) were compared to the 1900-28 and the 1960-73 periods. Five species were collected which were not previously reported and 6 species have apparently been extirpated.

While this report includes numerous tables, distribution maps of the species, and discussion on many aspects of fish distribution in the Greater Rock River basin, the continued use of this data base for the preparation of environmental impact assessments, for the development of master plans for the aquatic resource, and for research on nongame species, fish communities, and ecosystems is recommended.