

# Fish

## OF SCHIFF NATURE PRESERVE



Brook Trout

Headwaters are the upland regions where a river begins. The Schiff and McVickers Brook Nature Preserves lie in the headwaters region of the Raritan River watershed. The springs, seeps, wet meadows and mountain creeks running through Schiff and McVickers Brook join together into small streams that feed into the Raritan River and eventually flow into the Atlantic Ocean. At Schiff and McVickers, these creeks and streams provide outstanding habitat for 19 species of freshwater fish.

Headwaters are critical to the health of the entire river, delivering water and nutrients to downstream regions, providing habitat for breeding and feeding, and sustaining aquatic life. Headwaters also help maintain the biodiversity of a watershed, supporting rich and varied communities of plants and animals.

In the summer of 2009, NJ's Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish & Wildlife's Bureau of Fisheries found reproducing brook trout in several of Schiff's headwaters streams. As a result of the fish surveys, the DFW upgraded the classification of McVicker's Brook from trout maintenance to trout production. This is the highest designation of water quality in the state. Brook trout only reproduce in the highest quality stream environments, and their presence at Schiff demonstrates not only that the water is clean, but that we must continue our stewardship efforts to maintain habitat for native species.

### Fish Checklist of Schiff Nature Preserve Area

#### Key To Status

(\*) Species last observed on the Schiff Nature Scout Reservation by the Boy Scouts in 1962

N - Non-Native

C - Common; seen in proper habitat at proper time

U - Uncommon; visitor or occasionally seen

R - Rare; Seen at preserve, but unexpected

E - Extirpated

#### Common Name

Latin Name

Current Status

## Freshwater Fish

### Salmonidae

- Rainbow Trout\***  
*Oncorhynchus mykiss* R/E
- Brown Trout\***  
*Salmo trutta* U
- Brook Trout**  
*Salvelinus fontinalis* C

### Cyprinidae

- Common Carp\***  
*Cyprinus carpio* U
- Golden Shiner\***  
*Notemigonus crysoleucas* U
- Blacknose Dace**  
*Rhinichthys atratulus* C
- Creek Chub**  
*Semotilus atromaculatus* C
- Longnose Dace**  
*Rhinichthys cataractae* C

### Catostomidae

- White Sucker**  
*Catostomus commersoni* C

### Ictaluridae

- Brown Bullhead**  
*Ameiurus nebulosus* C
- Channel Catfish\***  
*Ictalurus punctatus* R/E

### Centrarchidae

- Pumpkinseed Sunfish**  
*Lepomis gibbosus* C
- Bluegill Sunfish - N**  
*Lepomis macrochirus* C
- Smallmouth Bass\***  
*Micropterus dolomieu* U
- Largemouth Bass - N**  
*Micropterus salmoides* C

### Percidae

- Tessellated Darter**  
*Etheostoma olmstedii* C
- Yellow Perch\***  
*Perca flavescens* U

### Esocidae

- Chain Pickerel**  
*Esox Niger* U

Work still needs to be done to add to our understanding of fish distribution at Schiff. Please send your comments or sightings to: [info@schiffnaturepreserve.org](mailto:info@schiffnaturepreserve.org) or call the Nature Center at 973-543-6004. Reports should include sighting date, exact location, observed behavior and photographs, if possible.

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