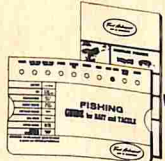


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adult fishermen thoroughly enjoy the bream's eager nibbling at a bait and game qualities of fighting a hook.

The common bream usually has a dark greenish-olive overcast with a purplish, luster on the back. The belly has a reddish cast, and there are dark transverse bars on the sides. The cheeks and jaws are purplish-blue, while a black spot is present on the flap of the gill covers. This distinguishing mark has given the bream another handle, "black spot", in many sections, of Florida's back-waters.

In spite of the fact that many a youngster has plodded his way homeward after a day's workout with a cane pole, lugging a mess of bream over his shoulder, one of the best ways to catch this tasty tidbit is by fly casting. The fly casters swear that, when taken on a light fly rod, bream are worthy opponents for any fisherman, resisting vigorously by yanking at right angles to the pull of the line, and kicking up white caps like a minature bass at his fighting best.

The bream is quite often taken with worms, especially the so-called "bonnet worms" found in the upper stalks of "bonnets" or lily pads. Earthworms, small minnows, and insects are also effective baits, but many youngsters will stick by that good old household bait, plain dough or wet bread.

When full grown, the bream may attain a length of 12 inches, perhaps slightly more, and on rare occasions may weigh over four pounds, though the average is much less.

The brightly colored bream is a prolific spawner all year round, and is especially valuable from an angling point of view because it composes a large portion of the food taken by the large-mouth black bass. Like the bass, Florida's bream are nest-builders, but they

differ in the fact bass are more solitary and space their nests well apart, while bream are more gregarious and prepare their nests in groups or "beds" with the individual nests being very close to each other.

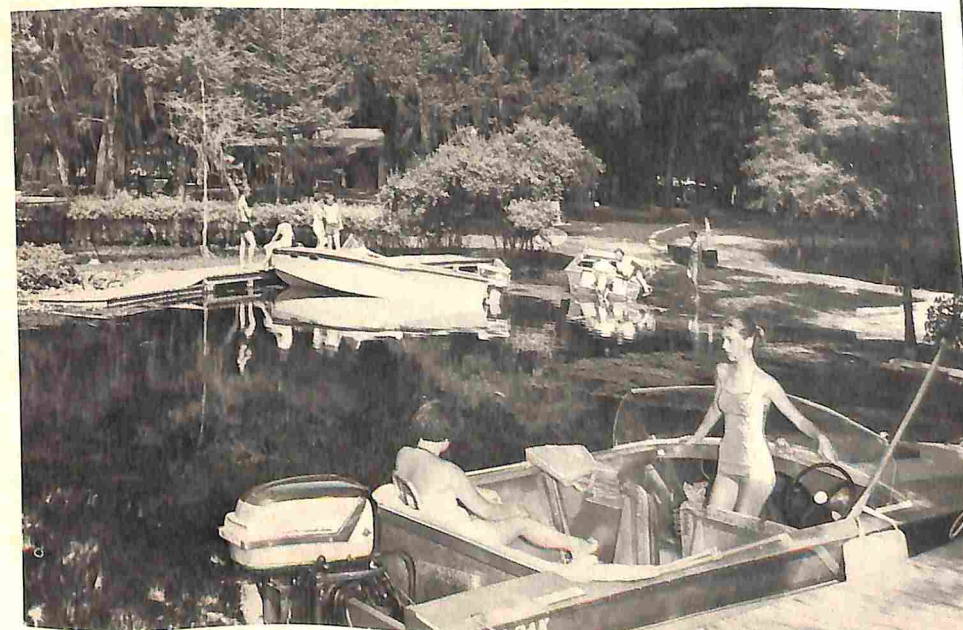
Florida's inland streams and rivers are more and more beckoning the fly caster who wants to get a crack at the sporty and tasty bream. In the past the fly-boys usually confined their angling to the trout streams, but the bream is starting to cut into the trout's exclusive domain, and as long as the little scrappers abound in great numbers and offer the fisherman one of the tastiest dishes in seafood parlance, the fly fishermen will increase in number in Florida and the bream will soon become a household word when fish is on the menu.

Shellcracker: If you think a shellcracker is a wandering beach gypsy looking for the spoils of crustaceans cast up from the sea, it isn't so. Fact is, a shellcracker is one of Florida's favorite angling targets, because he's game and he's tasty.

This plump little fresh water fish inhabits the state in untold numbers, and there isn't a day in the year that most of Florida's countless lakes, streams, creeks and rivers aren't fairly well inhabited by local and visiting citizenry searching for shellcracker.

The shellcracker name comes from the fact that a substantial portion of his diet is comprised of mollusks (usually tiny snails) and the hard shells are crushed by the hard-grinding teeth located in the shellcracker's throat. Some Floridians call him "red ear" because of the bright red or orange spot on his gill flap, and his true name is actually Readear Sunfish.

Soaking wet, he'll tip the scales at an average weight of about one-half to



A favorite spot for campers and boatmen in Florida is at Manatee Springs State Park in northern Florida.

JANUARY, 1970

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Rabbit Hunting U.S.A.—Bass Bite in Winter—Trail to Beaverdam

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