



# Station Note

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## Forest, Wildlife, and Range Experiment Station

### First Record of black bullhead, *Ictalurus melas* (Rafinesque) from northern Idaho

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During the summer of 1965, several specimens of the black bullhead, *Ictalurus melas* (Rafinesque) were collected from Round Lake, a shallow backwater contiguous to Lake Coeur d'Alene. The specimens were intermingled with a large population of brown bullhead, *Ictalurus nebulosus* (LeSueur) which were collected in trap nets during the course of a fish population study. The specimens constitute a new record of black bullhead from northern Idaho. Smith (1896, U. S. Fish Comm. Bull. 15: 379-475) reported the black bullhead present in the Columbia River basin as early as 1888. In the summary of fresh-water fishes of British Columbia by Carl, Clemens and Lindsey (1959, British Columbia Provincial Museum Handbook Number 5: 1-192) the black bullhead was noted to be present in the Columbia River system and the Flathead River valley in western Montana. Bond and Bisbee (1955, Copeia, No. 1, p. 56) collected black bullhead from Dunaway Pond at Nyssa on the Oregon side of the Snake River. Our specimens represent the first legal record of black bullhead from the Idaho interior. Due to the difficulty experienced in identifying members of this species, it is quite possible that the black bullhead is more common than reported in the Pacific Northwest and is confused with the brown bullhead. We are indebted to Dr. Robert R. Miller, of the Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan, for confirmation of the species.

Identifying characteristics of the brown bullhead (*Ictalurus nebulosus* — LeSueur) and the black bullhead (*I. melas* — Rafinesque) found in Round Lake, Idaho, in September 1965.

#### BROWN BULLHEAD

1. Color brown above and pale white belly; sides mottled
2. No light bar at base of caudal fin
3. Gray-black chin barbels
4. Fin membranes not conspicuously blackened
5. Anal rays — 21 (including rudiments)
6. Strong serrae on posterior edge of pectoral spines

#### BLACK BULLHEAD

1. Color brown-black above and yellow belly; sides uniform and not mottled
2. Light bar present at base of caudal fin
3. Black chin barbels
4. Fin membranes conspicuously blackened
5. Anal rays — 19 (including rudiments)
6. Weak serrae on posterior edge of pectoral spines

<sup>1</sup>Cooperative Fishery Unit, Univ. of Idaho and Idaho Fish and Game Dept., respectively.