

Bronx River General Biological Survey (#222006)

FIN: ER-3

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6/6/2023

The Bronx River is NYC’s only freshwater river, beginning at Davis Brook and the Kensico Dam, becoming tidal at the 182nd Street dam in Bronx County, and eventually emptying into the East River between Hunts Point and Clason Point Park. DEC Fisheries has executed backpack electrofishing surveys of the Bronx River, in both Bronx and Westchester Counties, since 1998. Objectives of all surveys were to document fish species. Two surveys, in 2012 and 2021 included fish collection as part of DEC’s Toxic Substance Monitoring Program (TSMP). One survey, in 2020, included fish collection for fish disease screening, as part of DEC’s statewide fish disease surveillance.

This backpack electrofishing survey was executed 21 June 2022, to document fish species at three sites. Sampling sites consisted of the NYC Parks dock at 219th Street in Bronx County; Scout Field south of Midland Avenue in Westchester County; and Paxton Avenue, off the Bronx River Parkway in Westchester County. All three had been sampled in past Bronx River electrofishing surveys.

Thirty-five fish of four species were captured and five American eel were observed. Fish species, number, and catch per hour is shown in Table 1.

Location and species	Total catch	Time fished (h)	Catch/hr
219th Street			
white sucker	1	0.33	3
yellow bullhead	2	0.33	6.06
redbreast sunfish	6	0.33	18.18
Scout Field			
yellow bullhead	3	0.25	12
redbreast sunfish	4	0.25	16
tessellated darter	6	0.25	24
Paxton Avenue			
redbreast sunfish	12	0.25	48
tessellated darter	1	0.25	4

Number of redbreast sunfish at the Scout Field site was low, compared with the number found in surveys in 2012, 2014 and 2020. In contrast, the Paxton Avenue site had the greatest number of redbreast sunfish of all survey years. Eastern blacknose dace was not captured at any of the above sites but had been caught at each location in past surveys.

Future surveys should include backpack fisher on-times to allow for catch rate comparisons between sites and take note of Eastern blacknose dace catches.

