

STATE Texas  
PROJECT NO. F-5-R-2. Job B-11 & A-3  
PERIOD July 22, 1954 - May 1, 1955

Job Completion Report

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and

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TITLE

*Basic Survey and*

Inventory of Species Present and their Distribution in Terlingua Creek,  
Brewster Co., Texas

OBJECTIVE

To determine the distribution of species present, their relative abundance and the ecological factors influencing their distribution.

PROCEDURE

As no pools were located with sufficient volume to permit netting only seining collections were taken.

FINDING

Eleven seining collections were attempted in the only pools of water found on the watershed at the time this job was done. Terlingua creek was once a spring fed, semi-permanent tributary of the Rio Grande River System of Texas. The stream is now entirely intermittent; surface flow is dependent on the annual run-off resulting from inconsistent annual rainfall. There are virtually no permanent pools in the stream bed, and with the exception of small diversions used in irrigation near the confluence, there are no dams or other water conservation facilities for the stream. Sub-surface flow is extensive in the stream bed.

Most seining effort failed to capture any fish and the most productive collections were taken near the mouth of the creek. On the O-2 ranch about 45 miles south of Alpine, in a pool near Hen Egg mountain, and at the crossing near Terlingua Post Office, apparent relic spring areas were located. However there was no surface flow from these areas and all were estimated at less than one-fourth acre ft. volume. Only six species of fish were taken during work on this job. These were: red shiners (*Notropis lutrensis*), spottail shiners (*N. venustus*), southern channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*), river carp suckers (*Carpiodes carpio*), and gizzard shad (*Dorosoma cepedianum*). One specimen of the rather rare Mexican stoneroller (*Campostoma ornatum*) was collected. Terlingua Creek may be regarded as devoid of water and fish life for practical purposes. Red shiners and spottails were the most abundant of the species taken. The presence and abundance of these forage fishes is believed to result from migration from the river when the stream was flowing.

## SUMMARY

1. Terlingua was once a semi-permanent, spring fed tributary of the Rio Grande River.
2. Although a few relic spring areas are still present, they do not sustain a surface flow, and the stream may be regarded as entirely intermittent.
3. For practical purposes, Terlingua Creek may be regarded as being devoid of water and fish life.