

The Tennessee River Watershed

The Tennessee River Watershed stretches across seven states: Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, and covers 13% of Alabama. It provides habitat for 176 species of fish, including some unique to Alabama, such as the Palezone Shiner, Slackwater Darter, Snail Darter, Spottfin Chub, Boulder Darter, Alabama cavefish, Lollipop Darter, and Spring Pygmy Sunfish. The Tennessee River watershed also has a great diversity of mussels, with 89 species identified, and is a major source of commercial mussels. Seventy species of aquatic snail have habitat in the Alabama portion of the Tennessee River watershed, including 35 that are only found here. Alabama has four major reservoirs along the Tennessee River. In addition, the Tennessee River watershed is extensively used for water recreation, including boating, kayaking, and fishing for largemouth bass, bream, catfish, perch, drum, sauger, and crappie.

Iconic Species



Slenderclaw crayfish



Spotfin Chub



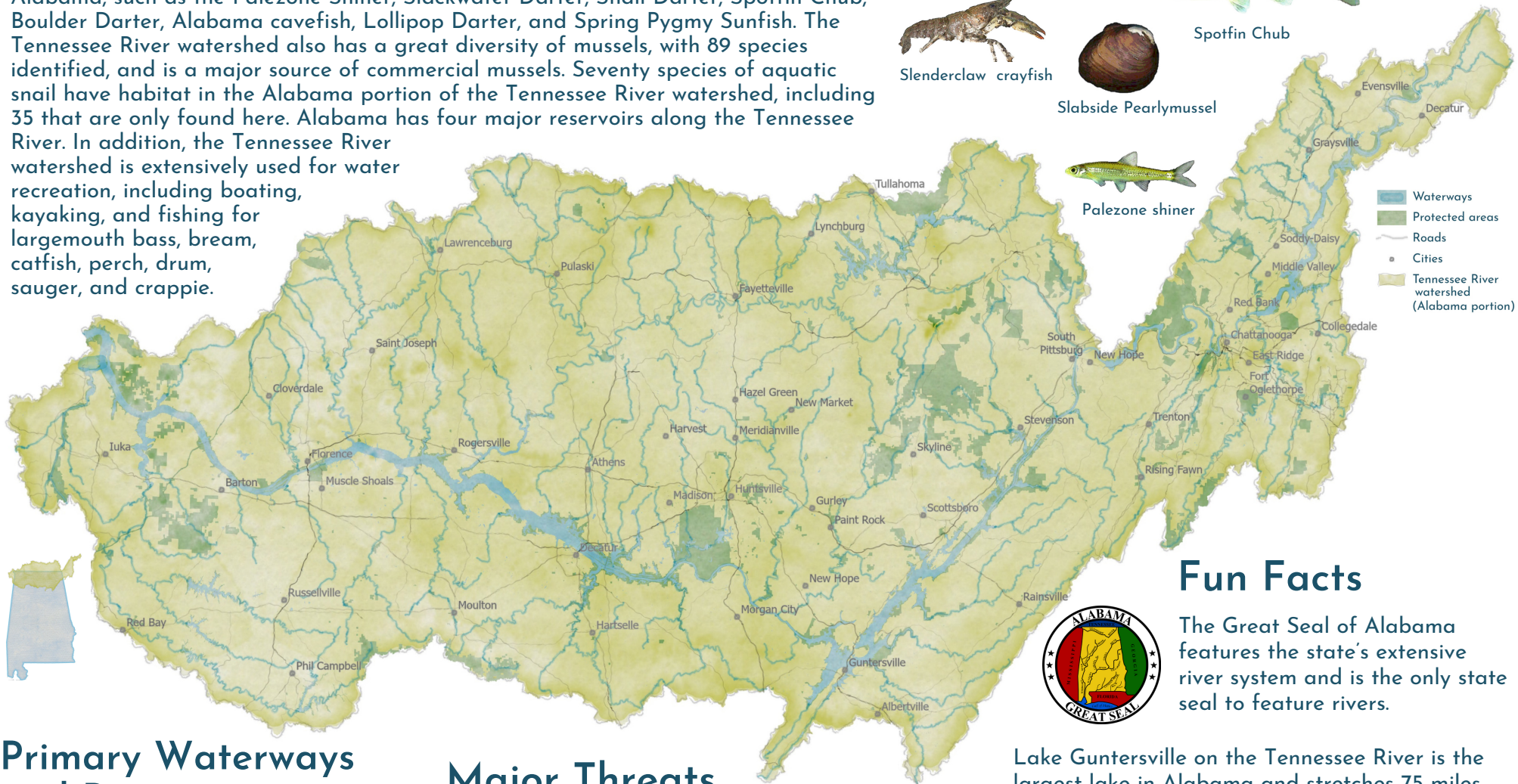
Boulder darter



Slabside Pearlymussel



Palezone shiner



Fun Facts

The Great Seal of Alabama features the state's extensive river system and is the only state seal to feature rivers.



Lake Guntersville on the Tennessee River is the largest lake in Alabama and stretches 75 miles across northeast Alabama

The Paint Rock River and its tributaries are home to 98 species of fish and is one of the most diverse streams in the United States.

Primary Waterways and Reservoirs

- Guntersville Lake
- Wheeler Lake
- Wilson Lake
- Pickwick Lake
- Paint Rock River
- Flint River
- Elk River
- Bear Creek

Major Threats

The Tennessee River watershed in Alabama has more impaired waterways than any other watershed in the state. Major threats include industrial pollution, agricultural runoff, and siltation from development.

