

# Outdoor Recreation

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# Outdoor Education

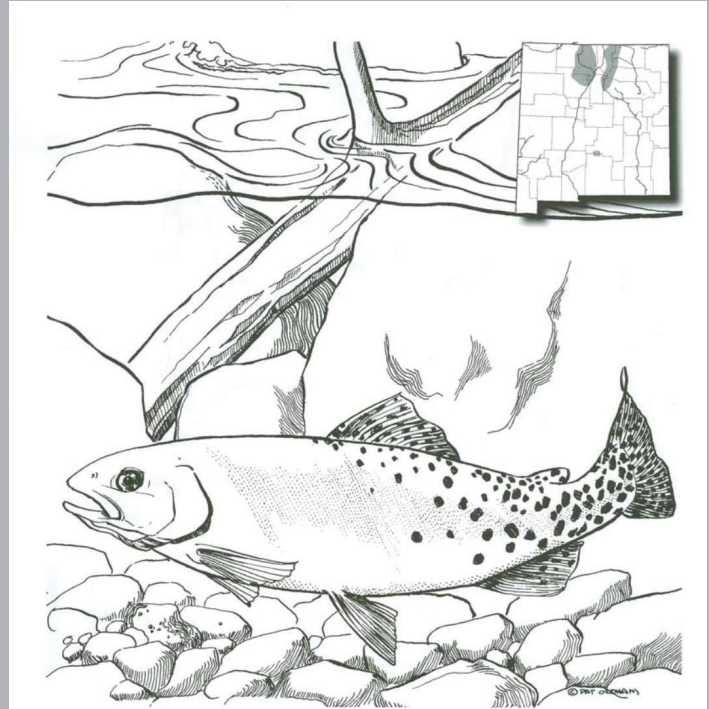
## Learning by Coloring - Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout

### Grade level:

Pre-K to 4th

### Objective:

Learn about Rio Grande cutthroat trout in New Mexico by coloring the following illustration while reading about them. The Rio Grande cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki virginalis*), classified in the Salmoni-dae family, is New Mexico's state fish and one of only two trout native to the state. The other is the Gila trout (*Oncorhynchus gilae*). It was first described in 1857, based on specimens collected by members of the Pacific Railroad Survey in 1853 from Ute (Utah) Creek in the Rio Grande drainage in the San Luis Valley of Colorado. One of 14 subspecies of cutthroats, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout gets its name from the yellowish-orange slash marks on the lower jaw.



#### Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout

Our New Mexico State fish, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout was once much more widespread and abundant. Yet, today, it lives only in isolated, *headwater streams*. The Rio Grande cutthroat trout, one of two native trout in New Mexico (the other being the Gila trout) is found in small, swift-running, cold streams. Able to live only in the very cleanest of waters, it faces threats from hybridization (mating) with non-native rainbow trout. Other threats include livestock overgrazing and trampling of the banks, which results in muddy water. Cutthroat trout like to eat stoneflies, mayflies and caddisflies. Females lay between 200-4,500 eggs between March and July on a gravel nest in flowing water. The Department is striving to make the Rio Grande cutthroat a major component of the state's trout fishery.



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

[www.wildlife.state.nm.us](http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us)

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