

# banded pygmy sunfish

*Elassoma zonatum*

Kingdom: Animalia  
Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Actinopterygii  
Order: Perciformes  
Family: Elassomatidae

## ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native



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adult

## FEATURES

The banded pygmy sunfish has no lateral line. Its tail fin is rounded. This fish attains a maximum length of about one and one-half inches. The dark, green body has black markings, vertical dark bars on the sides and a large black spot below the front of the dorsal fin. Black pigment colors the tail, dorsal and anal fins. The breeding male is black. The banded pygmy sunfish has a life span of about two years.

## BEHAVIORS

The banded pygmy sunfish lives in clear water with little or no current and many plants. This sunfish spends much of its time hiding near submerged plants. It is a solitary animal. This fish matures at about one year of age. Spawning occurs March through April. The female scatters about 300 eggs over the bottom during a period of several days. Eggs hatch in about seven days. The banded pygmy sunfish eats small crustaceans and insects.

## ILLINOIS RANGE



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**Aquatic Habitats**

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; swamps

**Woodland Habitats**

none

**Prairie Habitats**

none