

eastern blacknose dace *Rhinichthys atratulus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Actinopterygii

Order: Cypriniformes

Family: Leuciscidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The eastern blacknose dace is about four inches in length. It is brown-olive on the back and upper sides and silver-white below. At the dorsal fin base, there is a black spot followed by a silver spot. Many black blotches can be seen on the back and sides. The breeding male has pads on its pectoral fins, yellow-white pectoral and pelvic fins and a white or red stripe below the black side stripe. The dace's long, slender body is flattened on the bottom. The scales are small. A small barbel is present on each side of the mouth. The pointed snout slightly overhangs the mouth. Teeth are present in the throat.

BEHAVIORS

The eastern blacknose dace may be found in the northern one-half and southern tip of Illinois. It lives in clear, fast, gravel brooks or runs and sand-gravel areas in pools with tree roots overhanging or rock outcrops. This fish is intolerant of silt and high temperatures. Spawning occurs from late April through June in shallow, fast water. The male spawns with several females over a period of a few days. After spawning, he carries small stones in his mouth and deposits them on top of the nest. The eastern blacknose dace feeds mostly in the morning, eating immature aquatic insects, small crustaceans and plant materials. This fish has a life span of about three years.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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