

freckled madtom *Noturus nocturnus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Siluriformes

Family: Ictaluridae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The freckled madtom may grow to a length of two to three and one-half inches. Its belly is mostly without markings. The rear edge of the spine in the pectoral fins has two to three weak, sawlike teeth. There is a black edge on the anal fin. The back and sides are brown or gray while the belly is white or yellow. The fin bases are dark. The upper jaw projects beyond the lower jaw. The life span is about four years.

BEHAVIORS

The freckled madtom may be found in the southern three-fourths of Illinois. This fish lives in creeks and rivers around submerged objects or undercut banks. The freckled madtom spawns from spring through summer. Unlike other madtoms, the breeding adults develop tiny, white projections on their head and body. The yellow egg mass is placed in or under an object on the bottom and guarded by the male. This fish feeds at night on or near the bottom, eating immature insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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