

## longnose gar *Lepisosteus osseus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Lepisosteiformes

Family: Lepisosteidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

### FEATURES

The longnose gar commonly grows to a length of about three feet but may grow to five feet long. Females are larger than males. The back is olive-brown with the color gradually shading to white on the belly. Dark spots may be seen on the back, anal and tail fins. It has one row of teeth on the upper jaw.

### BEHAVIORS

The longnose gar may be found statewide in Illinois. This fish lives in large rivers and lakes, usually near aquatic plants. Spawning occurs in spring (May through June). The adults move out of the lakes and rivers into smaller streams to spawn. Large numbers of longnose gar gather in gravel riffles to spawn. The movements of the adults mixes the eggs into the gravel. Eggs hatch in six to eight days. The longnose gar eats other fishes.

### HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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