

Ozark minnow *Notropis nubilus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Actinopterygii

Order: Cypriniformes

Family: Leuciscidae

ILLINOIS STATUS threatened, native

FEATURES

The Ozark minnow grows to an average length of two to three inches. The female is larger than the male. The top half of this fish is brown, while the bottom half is white or orange-yellow. The two color regions are divided sharply by a dark line that extends onto the snout. The belly is silver-white. There may be a small, black spot at the base of the tail fin. A dark stripe is present in the middle of the back. The fins are clear. The breeding male has an orange-yellow cast to the lower half of the body and all the fins. Projections (tubercles) are present on all of the body except the tail fin. The breeding female also develops these characteristics to some degree. The life span of an Ozark minnow is about two and one-half years.

BEHAVIORS

The Ozark minnow may be found in the northwestern one-fourth of Illinois and the Mississippi River. This fish lives in gravel- or rock-bottomed pools in creeks and rivers. The Ozark minnow schools near the bottom in association with other minnow species. Spawning occurs in late spring and early summer. These fish may spawn over the nests of other minnows. The eggs sink to spaces between the rocks. The Ozark minnow eats plant material, small invertebrates and dead organic matter.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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