

pumpkinseed *Lepomis gibbosus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Perciformes

Family: Centrarchidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The pumpkinseed is a deep-bodied, thin sunfish that may attain a length of 10 inches but is usually smaller. Its upper sides and back are green-brown to green with gold or copper specks. There is a round, orange spot at the tip of the gill cover. Wavy blue lines can be seen on the cheeks. The dorsal and anal fins are spotted. The pectoral fins are long and sharply pointed. This fish has a small mouth.

BEHAVIORS

The pumpkinseed may be found in the northern one-fourth of Illinois plus the Illinois River. It lives in natural lakes and pools of rivers where many aquatic plants are present. Spawning begins in May and continues into the summer. A nest is excavated in the bottom substrate. The male guards the nest for the approximately one-week period required for hatching. The pumpkinseed eats invertebrates, particularly snails and other small mollusks.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; Lake Michigan; rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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