# spotted gar Lepisosteus oculatus

Kingdom: Animalia Phylum: Chordata Class: Actinopterygii Order: Lepisosteiformes

Family: Lepisosteidae

#### **ILLINOIS STATUS**

common, native

#### FEATURES

The spotted gar may grow to about three feet in length. It has obvious black spots on its fins and the top of its head. Its back is brown or olive, gradually lightening along the sides to white on the belly. One row of teeth is present on the upper jaw. Males reach maturity at two to three years of age while females become mature at three to four years.

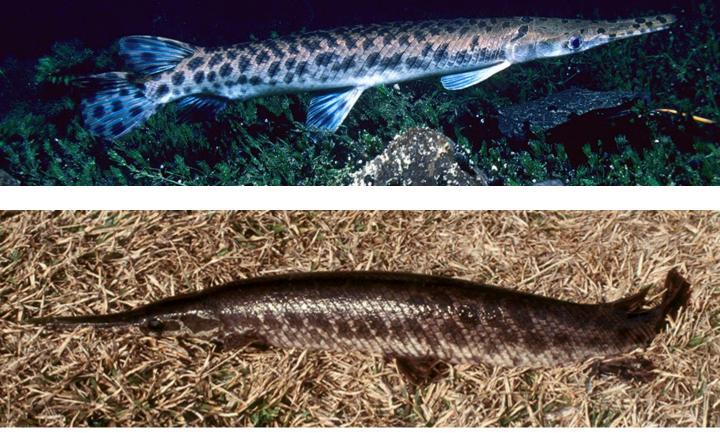
#### BEHAVIORS

The spotted gar may be found in the Mississippi, Illinois, Ohio, Wabash and Kaskaskia rivers and the southern tip of Illinois. This animal lives in pools and backwaters of creeks, rivers, lakes, swamps and sloughs. It is most frequently found in areas with many aquatic plants and/or trees in the water. The spotted gar spawns in the spring. This fish eats mainly other fishes but will take crayfish, freshwater shrimp and insects.



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### **ILLINOIS RANGE**



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Aquatic Habitats rivers & streams

# **Woodland Habitats**

none

# **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

none

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