

starhead topminnow *Fundulus dispar*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Cyprinodontiformes

Family: Fundulidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The starhead topminnow may attain a length of two to three inches. The female has six to eight thin, dark stripes on each side while the male has from three to 13 dark bars on each side. A wedge-shaped, dark bar extends downward from each eye. The dorsal fin is situated directly above the anal fin. The back is yellow-green with a gold spot on the top of the head and a smaller spot at the front of the dorsal fin. The sides are silver. The male has a blue iris in each eye and red spots in the dorsal, anal and tail fins.

BEHAVIORS

The starhead topminnow may be found in the Mississippi, Illinois and Wabash rivers and in the northern one-fourth of Illinois. This fish lives in standing water bodies with vegetation and in streams. The starhead topminnow spawns in spring and summer. It may be found in pairs or alone, but not in schools. It swims at the surface, eating insects, snails, small crustaceans and algae.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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