

stonecat *Noturus flavus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Siluriformes

Family: Ictaluridae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The stonecat grows to an average length of three to five and one-half inches. It has a long, thin body with a noticeable light spot in front of the dorsal fin and a white spot behind the dorsal fin. There is a white blotch on the upper edge of the gray tail fin. If sawlike teeth are present on the rear edge of the spine in the pectoral fin, they are weak. The back edge of the tail fin is straight. The back is yellow, gray or green while the belly is white or light yellow. The lower body fins are gray, and the other fins are dark at the base and lighter at the edge. The upper jaw extends beyond the lower jaw. A tooth pad on the upper jaw has a backward projection from each side.

BEHAVIORS

The stonecat may be found statewide in Illinois. This fish lives in creeks, rivers and lakes with a gravel or sand substrate. The stonecat spawns in summer. The eggs are deposited under a stone and guarded by the male. This fish feeds at night on immature insects and small fishes.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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