

suckermouth minnow *Phenacobius mirabilis*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Actinopterygii

Order: Cypriniformes

Family: Leuciscidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The suckermouth minnow grows to an average length of two and one-half to three and one-half inches. Its long, cylindrical body is two-colored. The top half is green-brown while the bottom half is silver-white. A dark stripe along each side marks the division between the two color areas. This stripe ends in a dark spot at the base of the tail fin. There is also a dark stripe in the middle of the back. The scales on its back and upper sides are darkly outlined in pigment. The suckermouth minnow has fat lips on its mouth, which is on the lower surface of the fish. The breeding male has small projections (tubercles) on the front half of its body and some of the fins.

BEHAVIORS

The suckermouth minnow may be found statewide in Illinois except in the northeastern one-fourth. This minnow lives over sand or gravel riffles of creeks and rivers. It spawns in the spring over gravel riffles. It lives on the bottom of its water body and uses its snout and lips to probe the bottom sediments for food. Insect larvae make up most of its diet.

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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