taillight shiner *Notropis maculatus*

- **Kingdom**: Animalia
- **Phylum**: Chordata
- **Class**: Actinopterygii
- **Order**: Cypriniformes
- **Family**: Leuciscidae
- **ILLINOIS STATUS**: endangered, native

**FEATURES**
The taillight shiner has a black spot at the base of the caudal fin. The edges of the scales on its back and sides are darkly pigmented, making a cross-hatching pattern. There is a black blotch on the front of the dorsal fin, and the origin of the dorsal fin is behind the origin of the pelvic fins. There is green-brown coloration on the back. A dark stripe on each side continues around the snout. The sides are silver-white. The snout may show red coloration. Teeth are present in the throat. The lateral line is incomplete. Breeding males have bright-red coloration of the body and head with black-red fin edges. They also have tubercles on the head and pectoral fins. Adults range from about two to three inches in length.

**BEHAVIORS**
Taillight shiners live in swamps, ponds, oxbow lakes and rivers usually with many aquatic plants present. They form schools in mid-water. Their diet is composed of small aquatic animals and algae. Spawning occurs in early spring and summer. The life span of this species is about one year.

**HABITATS**
- **Aquatic Habitats**
  - rivers and streams; swamps; lakes, ponds and reservoirs
- **Woodland Habitats**
  - southern Illinois lowlands
- **Prairie and Edge Habitats**
  - none