

trout-perch *Percopsis omiscomaycus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Percopsiformes

Family: Percopsidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The trout-perch may attain a length of three to five inches. Its back and sides are yellow-green with silver flecks while the belly is white. There are seven to 12 dark spots along the upper half of the body. Silver-white chambers may be seen along the lower jaw and the edge of the cheek. The tail fin is forked, and an adipose fin is present. There are no scales on the head, but ctenoid (rough-edged) scales cover the body. The average life span is four or five years.

BEHAVIORS

The trout-perch may be found statewide in Illinois, including Lake Michigan. This fish lives in lakes and rivers, usually over a sand or gravel bottom. The trout-perch spawns in spring. No parental care is given to eggs or young. This fish is sensitive to pollution and sedimentation and increases in both processes have led to the trout-perches' decline. It is active at night, eating insects and other small invertebrates that it finds while feeding on the bottom.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; Lake Michigan

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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