

ghost shiner

Notropis buchanani

FEATURES

The ghost shiner has a white body. Ghost shiners that live in clear water may have some dark outlining of the scales of the back and some dark speckles on the body. Individuals from water that is not clear do not have dark coloring at all. The snout is rounded. The body is deepest at the dorsal fin origin and tapers to a thin area in front of the caudal fin. The head has large eyes and a small mouth. The fins are pointed. The dorsal fin origin is above the pelvic fin origin. When pressed against the body, the pelvic fins reach or go past the base of the anal fin (except in females who are carrying many eggs). The lateral line is complete, the depth of the scales in it becoming greater toward the head. Teeth are present in the throat. Breeding males have tubercles on much of the front half of the body. Adults range from about one and one-half to two and one-half inches in length.

BEHAVIORS

Ghost shiners live in rivers in areas where there is a sand bottom and low current. They swim in schools, often with other minnow species. They eat small aquatic invertebrates. Spawning occurs in spring and early summer.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Actinopterygii
Order: Cypriniformes
Family: Leuciscidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE





Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none