

longnose sucker

Catostomus catostomus

FEATURES

The longnose sucker has a cylindrical body, a horizontal mouth and thick lips covered with papillae (bumps). The long snout is also distinctive. The body is green or gray above and may have dark-gray, irregular blotches. The belly is white or cream. The breeding male is black with a red stripe along the side and develops tubercles (bumps) on the head, anal fin and bottom half of the tail fin. This fish may grow to 18 inches in length and two pounds in weight in Lake Michigan. Its average life span is eight to 11 years.

BEHAVIORS

The longnose sucker is typically found in shallow water but may move to the deep water of Lake Michigan. This species breeds in spring. The female deposits an average of 26,000 eggs on a rock or gravel substrate. The eggs sink to the bottom. Depending on the water temperature, the eggs hatch in about one to two weeks. This fish is a bot-tom feeder, taking in aquatic insects, algae and small aquatic plants.

Poor water quality and ecological imbalances due to the introduction of exotic species into Lake Michigan have led to the decline of this species.

TAXONOMY

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

state threatened, native

ILLINOIS RANGE





adults

Aquatic Habitats

Lake Michigan

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none