

sand shiner *Notropis stramineus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Actinopterygii

Order: Cypriniformes

Family: Leuciscidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The sand shiner grows to an average of two to two and one-half inches long. This fish has a dark stripe in the middle of its back that expands to a wedge in front of the dorsal fin. The lateral line curves downward and is outlined by a row of dark spots above and below it along its front half. The yellow back has scales outlined with dark pigment while the silver sides have a dark stripe that fades toward the head. There is a dark spot at the base of the tail fin. The breeding male has projections (tubercles) on his head and some of the fins. The sand shiner has a life span of about three years.

BEHAVIORS

The sand shiner may be found statewide in Illinois except for the southeastern one-fourth. This minnow lives over sand and gravel areas of creeks and rivers. The sand shiner swims in schools in midwater or near the bottom in association with other minnow species. Spawning occurs from spring through summer. This fish eats insects, dead organic matter, plants and small crustaceans.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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