

## spotted sucker *Minytrema melanops*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Cypriniformes

Family: Catostomidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

### FEATURES

The spotted sucker is a slender fish with a short dorsal fin. The lateral line is absent or very short. Parallel rows of dark spots along the side are easily seen. The rear edge of the lower lips forms a "V" shape. The back is green-brown, the sides silver or yellow-brown and the belly silver-white. The dorsal and tail fins are green or gray while the lower fins are white. A breeding male has two dark stripes on the side with a pink band between them and large tubercles (bumps) on the snout and anal fin. The spotted sucker averages nine to 16 inches in length and one-half to two pounds in weight. Its maximum life span is about five years.

### BEHAVIORS

The spotted sucker lives in clear, warm waters with little current, much vegetation and a soft bottom. This fish matures at an age of three years. It spawns April through May. The male defends a small territory from other spotted suckers. Eggs hatch in seven to 12 days. This fish feeds at dawn and dusk on zooplankton, insects and organic debris.

### HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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