

threadfin shad *Dorosoma petenense*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Actinopterygii

Order: Clupeiformes

Family: Clupeidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The threadfin shad's body is compressed side-to-side resulting in a thin appearance. The scales in the middle of its belly are jagged. Its upper jaw projects beyond the tip of the lower jaw. The fins, except for the dorsal fin, are yellow or have some yellow coloration. There is no lateral line. An adult threadfin shad may reach about five inches in length. There are black specks on the chin and the floor of the mouth. A purple spot is present near the edge of the gill cover. The dorsal fin is located well forward of the position of the anal fin. The last ray in the dorsal fin is very elongated.

BEHAVIORS

In rivers, these fish are usually found in open water with a current. They are stocked in several large lakes in Illinois to provide food for other fish species. In the large lakes, they generally stay near the top of the water. They are sensitive to cold and may die at a water temperature of 45 degrees Fahrenheit or below. They do best in lakes that have warm water flow from power plants. They spawn in the spring and early summer, and some of the young may reach maturity and spawn later in the same year that they hatched. The threadfin shad is a filter feeder, straining phytoplankton and zooplankton from the water.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams; lakes. ponds and reservoirs

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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