

white bass *Morone chrysops*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Perciformes

Family: Moronidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The average size of a white bass is nine to 15 inches in length and one-fourth to one and one-fourth pounds in weight. Its average life span is five years. Teeth are present on the back of the tongue. The sides have dark stripes, but they may be hard to see. The first stripe below the lateral line is not continuous; it has spaces between the dark sections. This fish has a deep body, two dorsal fins, spines in the anal and dorsal fins and a spine on the gill cover. The body is blue-gray on the back and silver on the sides. This fish has yellow eyes.

BEHAVIORS

The white bass lives in lakes, rivers and reservoirs, preferring those with a sand or rock bottom. This fish lives in schools that hunt together. Small fishes may sometimes be seen jumping out of the water to avoid being eaten by this predator. The white bass reaches maturity at an age of two to three years. It moves to shallow, tributary streams to spawn in April or May. The female deposits 18,000 to 970,000 sticky eggs which are scattered and attach to the bottom. Eggs hatch in two to five days. The white bass feeds near the surface in the early morning and late evening, eating fishes and insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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