

gravel chub *Erimystax x-punctatus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Cypriniformes

Family: Cyprinidae

ILLINOIS STATUS threatened, native

FEATURES

The gravel chub is a slender fish with an average length of two and one-half to three and one-half inches. The "X"-shaped marks on the back and sides are distinctive. A small, cone-shaped barbel (whiskerlike projection) is present at each corner of the mouth. The snout extends beyond the upper lip. The back is green-yellow with a dusky stripe in the center while the sides are silvery, sometimes with a faint stripe. A small, black spot is often present at the base of the tail. The breeding male is covered with tubercles (bumps) on the head and front portion of the body.

BEHAVIORS

The gravel chub lives in streams that are clear or with moderate turbidity, permanent flow and a gravel bottom. The gravel chub lives on or near the bottom of the stream, resting behind or under rocks. It spawns in early spring in gravel riffles. This fish is an omnivore, feeding on both plant and animal materials it finds in crevices on the bottom.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie Habitats

none

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