



## Johnny darter

*Etheostoma nigrum*

Kingdom: Animalia  
Division/Phylum: Chordata - vertebrates  
Class: Osteichthyes  
Order: Perciformes  
Family: Percidae

### FEATURES

The Johnny darter attains a maximum length of about three inches. The "X" and "W" marks along the sides of the body are characteristic. Two dorsal fins are present, the first with spines and a black spot. The anal fin has one spine. The body is light brown or yellow on the back and upper sides. Brown bars are present along the sides. A black teardrop-shaped mark is present under the eye. The breeding male has a black head and black anal and pelvic fins.

### BEHAVIORS

The Johnny darter lives near the bottom of creeks, rivers and lakes. It spawns in May. The female deposits as many as 1,100 eggs under rocks or other objects lying on the bottom. The eggs are laid and fertilized while the fish are upside down. The male guards the eggs. The Johnny darter eats crustaceans and insects.

### HABITATS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bottomland forests                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rivers & streams |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> lakes, ponds & reservoirs | <input type="checkbox"/> swamps                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lake Michigan                        | <input type="checkbox"/> temp water supplies         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> marshes                              | <input type="checkbox"/> wet prairies & fens         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> peatlands                            |  |

### ILLINOIS STATUS

- |  |                                     |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> common | <input type="checkbox"/> endangered | <input type="checkbox"/> threatened |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> native | <input type="checkbox"/> exotic     |                                     |

### ILLINOIS RANGE

statewide

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.  
*Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume I: Aquatic Habitats* CD-ROM.