



## largemouth bass

*Micropterus salmoides*

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

### FEATURES

The largemouth bass has an average life span of five to six years. Its average length is 10 to 20 inches. The upper jaw of the large mouth extends behind the eye when the mouth is closed. A dark stripe is present along each side. The body is dark green on the back and upper sides with a white belly.

### BEHAVIORS

The largemouth bass lives in lakes, ponds, swamps, rivers and impoundments. It seeks areas with little or no current. This fish is active at night. Reaching maturity at an age of two years, this fish spawns from May through June. The male builds a nest by fanning his fins near the bottom. The female deposits 2,000 to 100,000 eggs which hatch in three to six days. The male guards the eggs and young, staying with them for some time after they leave the nest. The largemouth bass eats mainly fishes, crayfish and large insects but will eat most any animal in the water that it can swallow.

### HABITATS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bottomland forests                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rivers & streams |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> lakes, ponds & reservoirs | <input checked="" 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"/> <u>native</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>exotic</u> |                                     |

### ILLINOIS RANGE

statewide

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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