



planarian

representative species

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Platyhelminthes - flatworms
Class: Turbellaria
Order: Tricladida
Family:

FEATURES

Planarians are flatworms. They have a spade-shaped head. A tubelike pharynx on their belly acts to take in food and release wastes. Eyespots on the head allow these animals to detect and react to light. Planarians are grayish brown in color.

BEHAVIORS

Planarians live in spring-fed streams, lakes and rivers or in damp places under logs and decaying leaves. They move by gliding on a layer of mucous and cilia on the belly. They are hermaphrodites, producing both eggs and sperm but at different times. Fertilization is internal. The eggs are released into the water in capsules and drop to the bottom. Eggs hatch in two to three weeks. Planarians may reproduce asexually if injured. They feed on small organisms and dead organisms.

HABITATS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" 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"/> <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.