



spotted bass

Micropterus punctulatus

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

FEATURES

The spotted bass may grow to a length of 10 to 17 inches. The small black spots in rows on the lower half of the body are distinctive. A black stripe is present on each side of the body, or there may be joined black blotches along each side. A black spot can be seen at the base of the tail fin. The back and upper sides are greenish with dark green blotches while the belly and lower sides are yellow to white. The upper jaw of the large mouth extends to near the rear edge of the eye. A tooth patch is present on the tongue. This fish may live about six years.

BEHAVIORS

The spotted bass may be found in creeks and rivers of east central, southeastern and extreme southern Illinois. It spawns in spring. The male uses the actions of his tail fin to sweep a depression on the bottom. The nest may contain the eggs of several females. Eggs hatch in two or three days then the young hide in the gravel at the bottom of the nest for about one week. The male guards the eggs until they hatch then moves a short distance away. He will stay in the area of the nest until the young leave the nest. The spotted bass eats immature insects, crayfish and fishes.

HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: east central + southeastern 1/4 + southern tip

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.

Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.