Central Mudminnow

Umbra limi

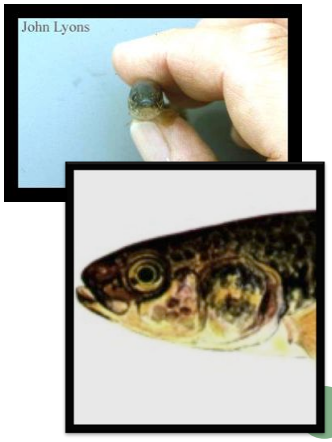
By: Sean O'Mara

Taxonomy

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
  Sub-phylum: Vertebrata
Class: Actinopterygii (Ray-finned Fishes)
  Super Order: Procanthopterygii
Order: Esociformes (pikes and mudminnows)
Family: Umbridae (mudminnows)
Genus: Umbra
Species: *U. limi*

Identification and Characteristics

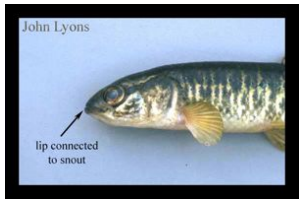
- Body type: Fusiform
- Cross Section: Approximately round
- Typically 50-100mm in length; maximum of about 140mm
- Terminal, slightly oblique mouth with small teeth
  - Lower jaw slightly longer than upper

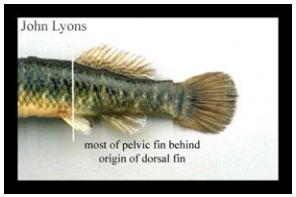


Identification and Characteristics

- Body is tan, olive or brown, with numberous irregular mottling/bars that are dark brown or black. The belly is cream, tan, or yellow brown.
- Fins Reddish-brown to Greenish-brown.
  - Rounded Caudal
  - Dorsal with no spines, 13-15 rays
  - Anal with 7-9 rays
  - Pelvic Fins Abdominal

Key Features





- Lack of a lateral line; 34-37 lateral scales
- Distinguished by its dark brown mottled or thickly barred color pattern
- Lacking continuous groove between upper lip and snout (Frenum)
- Majority of Pelvic fins behind Dorsal fin origin

Similar Species

- Banded Killifish (*Fundulus diaphanus*)
  - Silvery with faint vertical bars on flanks

- Blackstripe Topminnow (*Fundulus notatus*)
  - Olive with thick, dark lateral stripe

- Starhead Topminnow (*Fundulus dispar*)
  - Olive or Silvery with either dark vertical bars or lateral stripes

Similar Species

- Western Mosquitofish (*Gambusia affinis*)
  - Solid Tan or Olive, sometimes with fine dorsal spots

For all similar species

- Continuous groove between upper lip and snout
- Most or all of pelvic fin anterior to dorsal fin origin

Mating Habits

- Spawn in the spring when waters are between 10˚-15˚ C
- Gather in spring flooded areas where there is plenty of vegetation
- No Nest is built
- Females lay one egg at a time on the vegetation and the males fertilize it, up to about 425 eggs
- Females guard the eggs till they hatch in 7-10 days

Ecology

- Commonly found in slow moving creeks, ditches, streams and ponds with a plethora of vegetation and a soft bottom layer of organic material and detritus
- Mostly forages on benthic invertebrates (e.g. copepods, gastropods, and water fleas) and the occasional small fish
- Found with Northern Redbelly Dace, Pearl Dace, Brook Sticklebacks, and others

Home Range and Status

St. Lawrence-Great Lakes, Hudson Bay (Red River), and Mississippi Riverbasins

Very Common and Widespread species with no special Conservation Status

Ecological and Economic Importance

- Used as a bait fish by anglers because it survives so well in a bait bucket
- Also used as an aquarium species due to its robustness

"Cool Facts"

- Central Mudminnows can survive periods of low water levels by burrowing into soft sediments
- Facultative Air Breathers