

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

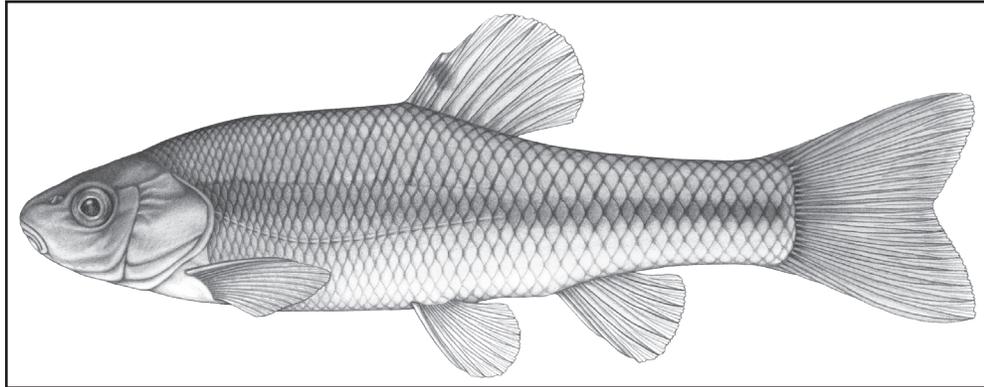
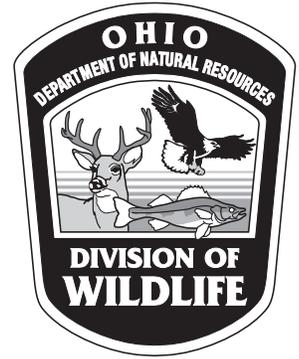
**Division of Wildlife**

## Life History Notes

# Fathead Minnow

**Common Names:** Blackhead minnow

**Scientific Name:** *Pimephales promelas*



Publication 5183  
(R0413)

### Identification:

Fathead minnows have short bodies with a triangular shaped head. The upper jaw overhangs the snout and the lateral line is incomplete. Coloration ranges from olive to olive-yellow on back tinged with copper or purple in larger fish.

### Range and Habitat:

Historically the fathead minnow was widely populated only in the western part of Ohio. They prefer muddy brooks and creeks, as well as ponds and small lakes. However, fatheads can tolerate a wide range of water conditions.

### Life History:

Fathead minnows spawn in the spring and may continue into August. Males select the spawning site, usually under logs, branches or rocks in shallow water. Females lay adhesive eggs which the males guard. Fatheads eat mainly organic debris, aquatic insects, and zooplankton.

### Adult Size:

Fathead minnows range from 1.6 to 3 inches in length.

### Fishing Methods:

Fathead are not targeted by anglers.