

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

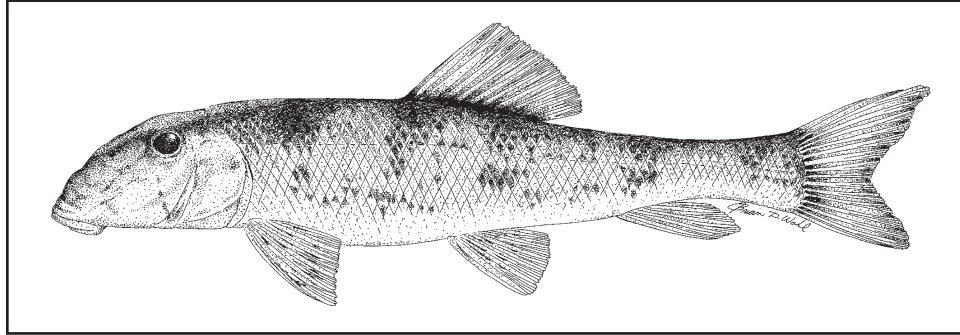
Division of Wildlife

Life History Notes

Northern Hog Sucker

Common Names: Hog molly, Boxhead

Scientific Name: *Hypentelium nigricans*



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Identification:

Hog suckers have a bony head that tapers abruptly into a slender body. Its most distinctive characteristics are the sucker mouth and the concave depression between the eyes. Hog suckers are a mottled reddish brown with 4 to 6 oblique saddle bands.

Range and Habitat:

The Northern hog sucker is native to Ohio and is found throughout the state. However, it occurs in abundance only during certain times of the year. During summer, this fish prefers moderate to swift flowing streams with sandy riffles, gravel, boulders, and bedrock. In winter, hog suckers move to quieter waters in deep pools.

Life History:

Hog suckers spawn in April or early May. A female and possibly several males stir up the bottom sediments to form a slight depression where the eggs are deposited. Spawning can last for an extended period with the female laying eggs at irregular intervals. Hog suckers are active feeders that use their mouth to overturn rocks and stir up the sediment as they seek aquatic insects.

Adult Size:

Hog suckers average between 7 and 14 inches, but specimens up to 22 inches have been collected.

Fishing Methods:

Anglers seldom seek Northern hog suckers, but they are sometimes caught inadvertently on small hooks baited with worms.