

Fish Facts

Endangered Fish



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Humpback Chub (*Gila cypha*)

The humpback chub is a large-river minnow found only in canyon sections of the Colorado River Basin. It was first listed as endangered in 1967 and was given full protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1973. There are six known populations. Individuals may reach 20 inches in length and live 30 years. Adults are capable of reproducing at 2 to 3 years of age, and spawning occurs in spring and early summer. Humpback chub feed on insects, plankton, and plant matter.



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Bonytail (*Gila elegans*)

The bonytail is a large-river minnow found only in the Colorado River Basin. It was listed as endangered and given full protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1980. Historically common throughout the Colorado River Basin, wild populations no longer exist. Individuals may reach 22 inches in length and live 50 years. Adults are capable of reproducing at 2 to 3 years of age, and spawning probably occurred in spring and early summer. Bonytail feed on insects, plankton, and plant matter. The species is being reintroduced into the Colorado, Green, and Yampa Rivers, and into Lake Havasu and Lake Mojave.

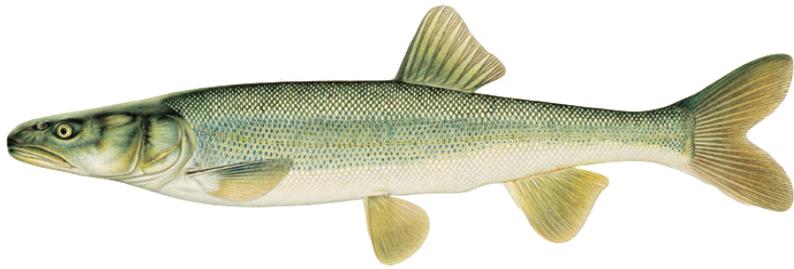


Illustration © Joseph R. Tomelleri

Colorado Pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus lucius*)

The Colorado pikeminnow is a large-river minnow found only in the Colorado River Basin. It was first listed as endangered in 1967 and was given full protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1973. Valued as food by early settlers and miners throughout the basin, wild populations now only occur in rivers upstream of Glen Canyon Dam, Arizona. Individuals may reach 6 feet in length, weigh 80 pounds, and live 40 years. Known for long-distance spawning migrations of up to 200 miles in late spring and early summer, adults are capable of reproducing at 5 to 7 years of age. Young Colorado pikeminnow feed on insects and plankton, whereas adults feed mostly on fish.

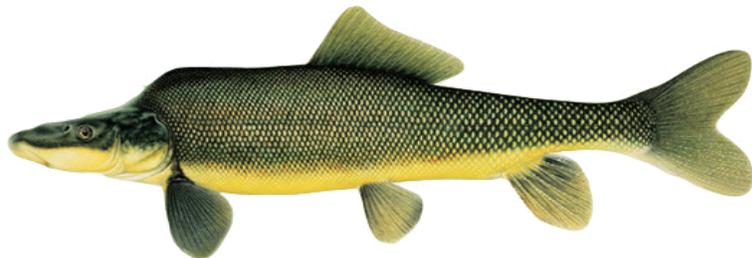


Illustration © Joseph R. Tomelleri

Razorback Sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*)

The razorback sucker is a large-river fish found only in the Colorado River Basin. It was listed as endangered and given full protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1991. Valued as food by early settlers and miners, wild populations of razorback sucker are now extremely rare, declining, and consist primarily of adults. Poor survival of young has been attributed to loss of habitat and predation by nonnative fishes. Individuals may reach 36 inches in length, weigh 14 pounds, and live 40 years. Adults are capable of reproducing at 3 to 4 years of age, and spawning occurs during high spring flows. Razorback sucker feed on insects, plankton, and plant matter. The species is being reintroduced into the Colorado, Gunnison, Green, and San Juan rivers, and lakes Havasu and Mohave.