

Creek chub	Overall silvery, often with purple iridescence; back olive; underside white. Young have a prominent dark midside band extending from tip of snout to tail fin; band fades on older fish. Black spot at front of dorsal fin base vague or absent in immature specimens. Breeding males usually have a reddish cast. No other Montana minnow has a distinct black spot on dorsal fin.
Emerald shiner	Overall silvery iridescent light green back. Usually has an emerald green or silvery midside stripe, particularly toward the rear. Young are somewhat translucent. Large eye, body slender and flat-sided, fragile looking. Scales easily rubbed off.
Fathead minnow	Back dark olive or brown, sides dusky, pale below. Young are lighter and have a dark midside band. Breeding males nearly black with two light blotches. Body of adult is stout. Lateral line usually incomplete. Scales ahead of dorsal fin are small and crowded. Tolerates turbid water, high temperatures, and low dissolved oxygen.
Flathead chub	Very silvery, shading to brown or dusky on back. Mouth large with a conspicuous barbel at each corner. Pectoral fin sickle shaped with a long, sharply pointed tip that may extend almost to front of pelvic fin. Found in mostly turbid rivers and streams.
Lake chub	Silver gray overall, dusky on back, underside whitish. A midside band is present but often indistinct. Scattered dark scales may be present, giving a speckled appearance. Breeding males develop reddish patches, particularly on the pectoral fin bases. A well-developed, rounded barbel is located slightly above each corner of the mouth.
Longnose dace	Back olive to black, shading to white or yellow underneath. Sides may have dark blotches. Breeding males have reddish orange on head and fins. Juveniles have a black midside stripe starting at the tip of the snout and ending at the base of the tail fin. Adults often have a dark stripe ahead of eye. Small barbel at each corner of mouth.
Longnose sucker	Back, upper sides, and head to below the eye dark olive to slate; underparts white or yellow. Breeding males are nearly jet black on upper half of head and body and may have red midside band. Has 9 to 12 rays in dorsal fin, and more than 15 scales above lateral line.
Plains minnow	Overall very silvery; back dusky or yellowish olive, underside white. Because they are very similar, the plains minnow and western silvery minnow are treated together. The plains is more streamlined than the western silvery. Also, the plains has 15 to 22 scales across the belly from lateral line to lateral line, compared with the western silvery's 11 to 17. Nevertheless, there is no sure method for telling live specimens apart. Dead specimens can be identified by inspecting a bone at the base of the skull and the muscles attached to it.
Western silvery minnow	
White sucker	Dusky olive brown to nearly black above, shading to cream or white below. Dorsal fin has 11 to 13 rays. Scales are medium sized, 60 to 75 in lateral line.

MONTANA BAIT FISH

Information and species identification

Creek chub

Emerald shiner

Fathead minnow

Flathead chub

Lake chub

Longnose dace

Longnose sucker

Plains minnow

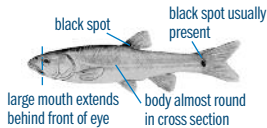
Western silvery minnow

White sucker



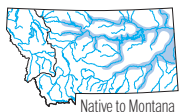


Native to Montana

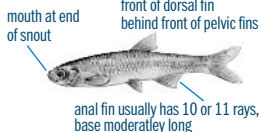


Creek chub 4" (6")
Semotilus atromaculatus

Habitat: Typically creeks. Less common in rivers and shallows of lakes.



Native to Montana

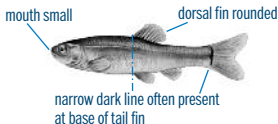


Emerald shiner 3" (4")
Notropis atherinoides

Habitat: Open water of large streams, reservoirs, and lakes.



Native to Montana

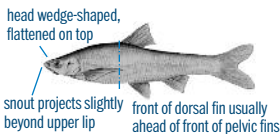


Fathead minnow 2" (3")
Pimephales promelas

Habitat: Ponds, shallow lakes, slow-flowing streams.



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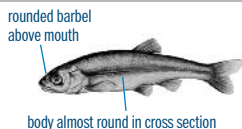


Flathead chub 5" (11")
Platygobio gracilis

Habitat: Mostly turbid rivers and streams.



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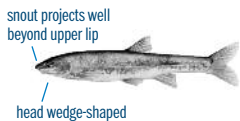


Lake chub 4" (6")
Couesius plumbeus

Habitat: Mostly small streams at lower elevations, some larger streams and lakes.



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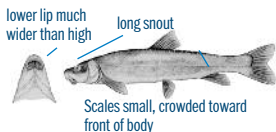


Longnose dace 3" (6")
Rhinichthys cataractae

Habitat: Riffle areas of streams and rivers; to a lesser extent, lakes.



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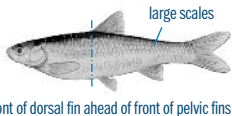


Longnose sucker 13" (22")
Catostomus catostomus

Habitat: Clear, cold streams and lakes; sometimes moderately warm waters



Native to Montana



Plains minnow 4" (6")
Hybognathus argyritis

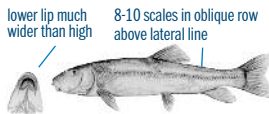
Habitat: Slower portions of medium-sized to large streams. Sometimes found in creeks and impoundments.



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Native to Montana



White sucker 13" (21")
Catostomus commersoni

Habitat: Typically creeks. Less common in rivers and shallows of lakes.

