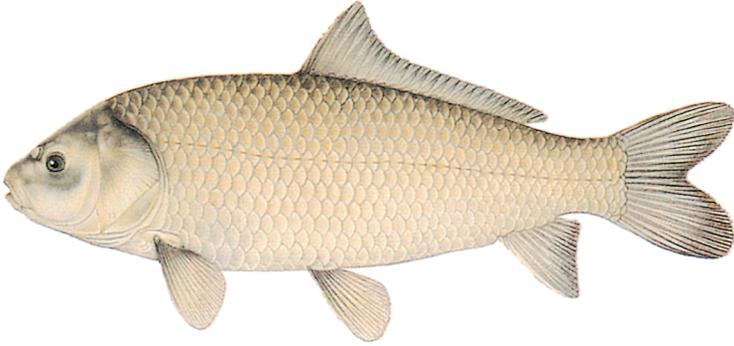


SUCKERS (Family Castostomidae)

Bigmouth buffalo

Ictiobus cyprinellus



Similar Species: Smallmouth buffalo, common carp

Identification: Large mouth with anterior location, no barbels or heavy spines like those of the common carp. (Smallmouth buffalo has more conical head and more horizontal mouth.)

The bigmouth buffalo is the largest and most important commercial species among the suckers and is found throughout most of the Mississippi River drainage and its larger tributaries. In South Dakota, bigmouth buffalo are found in the Missouri River complex and its tributaries, as well as in many of the natural lakes in the eastern part of the state. They commonly aggregate in schools in midwater or near the bottom. Young feed primarily on invertebrates. The adults are planktivores, straining large numbers of zooplankton from the water. Individuals over 30 pounds are not uncommon, and the maximum size reported is about 80 pounds.

