

Sonoran Desert Endangered Species Card Game



Gila Topminnow *Poeciliopsis occidentalis occidentalis*

Description:

The Gila topminnow is a small 2 inches long, guppy-like fish. The body is generally tan to olive in color, with the back usually dark while the underbelly is often white. A fairly thick, dark band occurs along both sides of the fish. Males are generally dark to jet black in color.

Habitat:

Gila topminnow occupy headwater springs and vegetated margins and backwater areas of intermittent and perennial streams and rivers. Topminnows can withstand water temperatures from near freezing to 100 degrees F. They can also live in a fairly wide range of salinity, ranging from tap water to sea water.

Range:

Gila topminnow once occupied aquatic habitats below 5000 Ft elevation throughout New Mexico, Arizona and Mexico. At one time, the Gila topminnow was the most common fish found in the Gila River basin. Its numbers have been greatly reduced due to the introduction of introduced fish species, especially the mosquitofish.

Reproduction:

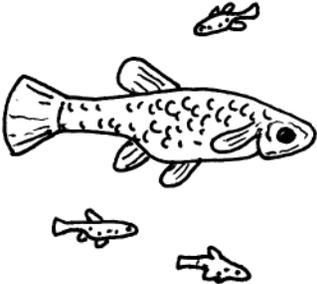
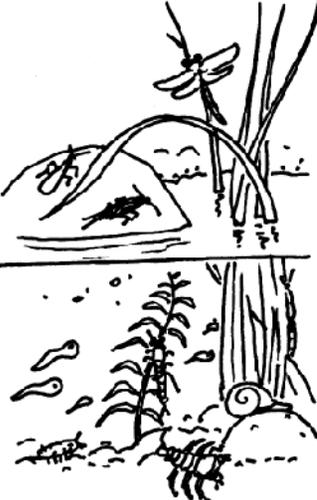
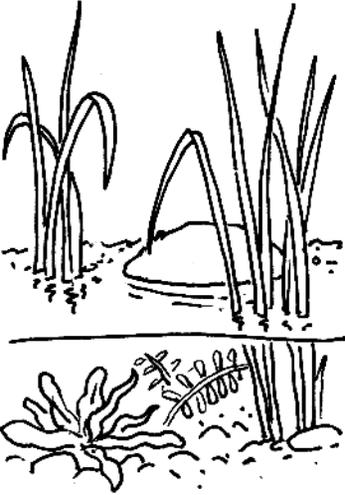
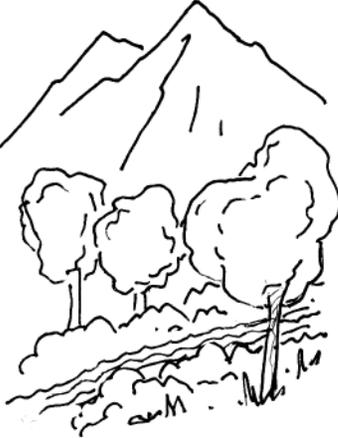
Gila topminnow are live-bearers. The typical brood consists of 10-15 young, with larger broods produced during the summer. Young produced early in the breeding season may reach sexual maturity in a few weeks to several months.

Diet:

Gila topminnows are omnivorous. They likely utilize a broad spectrum of food such as crustaceans and vegetable material, but will feed voraciously on aquatic insect larvae, especially mosquitoes, when abundant.

Status:

In 1967, the Gila topminnow was listed by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service as "endangered" under the Endangered Species Act.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Species</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Gila Topminnow</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Food</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">aquatic insects, plants</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Water</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">ponds, rivers, streams</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Shelter</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">aquatic vegetation</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Habitat</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">ponds and rocky streams</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Range</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">riparian areas</p> |