

# PLAY



SPRING  
1999

Pennsylvania • League • of • Angling • Youth

## Spring Cleaning

Each spring, many people clean their homes, garages, and backyards to get ready for another year. One tool they may use indoors is a vacuum cleaner. Some fish use their mouths like vacuum cleaners. Their name says it all—the suckers!

Suckers are fish that live in many streams and rivers in Pennsylvania. Some may also live in lakes and ponds. They use their down-turned mouths to feed on the bottom. Young suckers eat zooplankton (zo-a-plank-ton) and algae. Adult suckers use their thick, fleshy lips to eat bugs, worms, snails and mussels. In Pennsylvania, there are about 12 different kinds of suckers. The white sucker is the most common. One species, the longnose sucker, is an endangered species in Pennsylvania.

Spring is also the most active time for suckers. This is the time when they



move to small tributary (tri-bu-tar-y) streams of larger streams and rivers and begin to spawn. They lay their eggs on the rocks and gravel on the stream

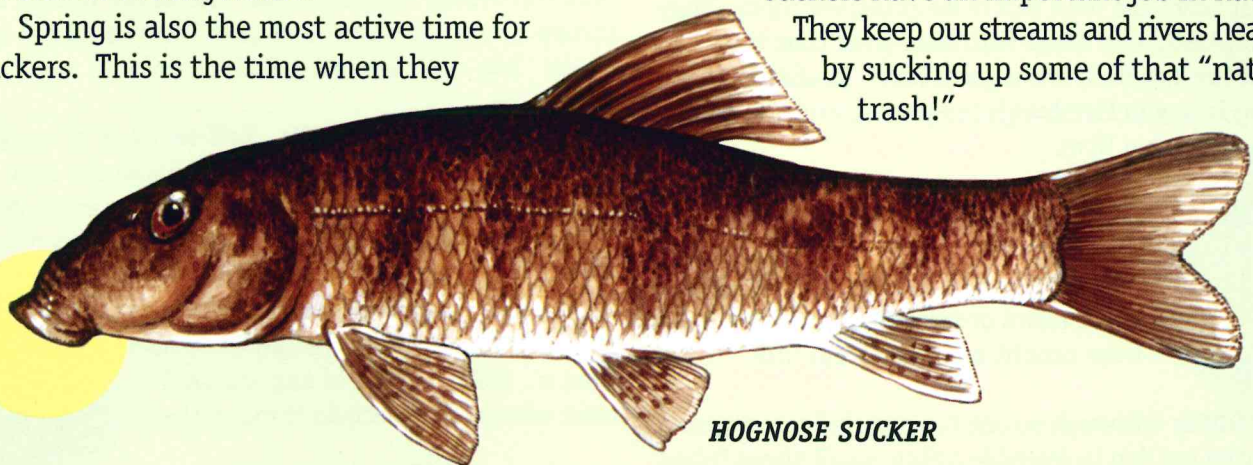
bottom. Most suckers do not

build a nest or guard their eggs.

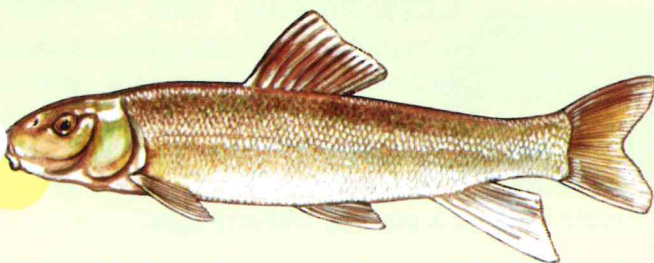
Suckers can be a lot of fun to fish for in the early spring. They eat many different baits, but worms are still your best bet. Some suckers can grow up to 24 inches! If you hook one of these big "vacuum mouths," you're in for a good battle!

Many people call suckers "trash fish," because they do not like to eat them. When you hear someone call them trash fish, remind them that suckers have an important job in nature.

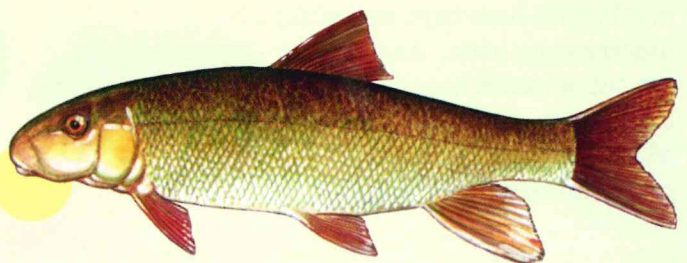
They keep our streams and rivers healthy by sucking up some of that "natural trash!"



**HOGNOSE SUCKER**



**WHITE SUCKER**



**REDHORSE SUCKER**