# GEORGIA AQUARIUM ANIMAL FACT SHEET

## Bigmouth Buffalo

*Ictiobus cyprinellus*

### Range /Habitat

- The bigmouth buffalo is a North American fresh water fish found from the Hudson Bay, the lower Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins and Montana south to Louisiana. It can also be found in river basins from Ontario to Saskatchewan in Canada.
- It mainly inhabits channels, deep pools and backwaters of small to large rivers, as well as lakes and large impoundments. It occurs in schools in mid-water and near the bottom.

### Physical Characteristics

- The bigmouth buffalo has a deeply rounded body with a large head and a sucker-type mouth with large lips. Its mouth is oriented forward rather than downward, distinguishing this species from other buffalo fish.
- Its coloration is bluish-green on the back, shading to coppery-blue sides and a light, bluish-grey belly.
- This species can reach a maximum length of approximately 50 inches (1.3 m) and can weigh 70 lbs. (32 kg).
- Its name refers to the size of its mouth in relationship to other species of buffalo.

### Diet/Feeding

- The bigmouth buffalo is a benthic feeder that consumes copepods, cladocerans, bottom plants, aquatic insects, small fish and fish eggs.

### Conservation Status

- The bigmouth buffalo is not on the IUCN Red List.

### Additional Information

- The bigmouth buffalo is similar to the smallmouth buffalo but with a mouth that is oriented forward rather than downward.
- This species reaches sexual maturity in about three years and has a lifespan of seven to eight years.
- It spawns in the spring and the female scatters about 400,000 eggs over the bottom in shallow water.
- It is preyed upon by northern pikes, black bullheads and walleyes.

### Sources


www.fishbase.org
http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fish/infish/species/sucker/bmb.phtml
www.iowadnr.com/fish/iafish/bmb-card.html
*Grzimeks Animal Life Encyclopedia*, *2nd Edition*, pg. 330